

# FROM THE BEGINNING

---

## A VISUAL HISTORY OF CONSOLE GAMES

**VOLUME 1:  
THE BIRTH OF JAPANESE CONSOLES**

**EPOCH CASSETTE VISION  
NINTENDO FAMILY COMPUTER  
SEGA SG-1000  
OTHELLO MULTIVISION  
EPOCH SUPER CASSETTE VISION**

Intro text goes here

Intro

Indicia

Frontispiece

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Epoch Cassette Vision</b> .....	<b>6</b>	Sinbad Mystery .....		Excitebike.....	
Kikori no Yosaku.....	10	Golgo-13.....		Safari Race .....	
Baseball [Cassette Vision].....	11	Orguss.....		Champion Boxing [Cartridge].....	
Galaxian [Cassette Vision] .....	12	Monaco GP [Cartridge].....		SG-1000 II.....	
Big Sports 12.....	13	Sega Flipper .....		Champion Soccer .....	
<b>Mauser</b> .....	<b>14</b>	Pop Flamer .....		Hustle Chummy.....	
Battle Vader .....	16	Pacar.....		Flicky .....	
PakPak Monster.....	17	Sega-Galaga .....		Girl's Garden .....	
New Baseball .....	18	SJ-200.....		<b>Epoch Super Cassette Vision</b> .....	
Monster Mansion.....	19	Space Slalom .....		Astro Wars .....	
Astro Command.....	20	Pachinko.....		Astro Wars II: Battle in Galaxy .....	
Monster Block.....	21	Exerion [SG-1000] .....		Super Golf.....	
Elevator Panic.....	22	Pachinko II .....		Super Mahjong .....	
<b>Nintendo Family Computer</b> .....	<b>24</b>	Tennis.....		Super Baseball .....	
<b>Sega SG-1000</b> .....	<b>26</b>	Pinball .....		Giants Hara Tatsunori no Super Baseball..	
<b>SC-3000</b> .....	<b>28</b>	<b>Gun</b> .....		Punch Boy.....	
<b>SK-1100</b> .....	<b>30</b>	Wild Gunman .....		Elevator Fight .....	
Donkey Kong .....	32	Duck Hunt.....		Lupin III .....	
Donkey Kong Jr. ....	33	<b>SH-400</b> .....		Nebula.....	
Popeye .....		<b>SR-1000</b> .....		Balloon Fight.....	
Borderline .....		Golf.....		Ice Climber .....	
Safari Hunting .....		Hogan's Alley.....		Exerion [Famicom].....	
N-Sub.....		Zippy Race [Cartridge].....		Galaga .....	
Gomoku Narabe Renju .....		Sannin Mahjong .....		Raid on Bungeling Bay .....	
Mah-Jong [Famicom] .....		Challenge Derby .....		Formation Z.....	
Mahjong [SG-1000].....		Okamoto Ayako no Match Play Golf.....		Soccer .....	
Golf.....		Space Armor .....		Space Invaders.....	
Serizawa Hachidan Tsumeshogi .....		James Bond .....		Championship Lode Runner [Famicom].....	
Congo Bongo.....		Donkey Kong 3.....		Zaxxon .....	
Yamato .....		Nuts & Milk .....		Champion Pro Wrestling.....	
Champion Tennis [Cartridge].....		Lode Runner [Famicom] .....		GP World .....	
Mario Bros.....		Galaxian [Famicom] .....		Konami no Shinnnyushain Tooru-Kun.....	
Popeye no Eigo Asobi.....		Devil World.....		Konami no Hyper Sports.....	
Donkey Kong Jr. no Sansuu Asobi .....		4 Nin Uchi Mahjong .....		Star Force [SG-1000/Cartridge] .....	
Baseball [Famicom] .....		Home Mahjong.....	94	Othello [SG-1000] .....	
Star Jacker.....		Lode Runner [SG-1000] .....	96	Space Invaders [SG-1000] .....	
Champion Baseball.....		F1 Race.....		Wheelie Racer.....	
<b>Othello Multivision</b> .....		Pac-Man .....		Boulder Dash .....	
Q*Bert.....		Xevious .....		Miner 2049.....	
Guzzler.....		Mappy .....		Super Soccer.....	
Space Mountain .....		Urban Champion .....		Card Catcher .....	



---

Champion Golf [MyCard] .....	146	Super Mario Bros.....	189
Monaco GP [MyCard].....	147	TonTon Ball.....	190
Zippy Race [MyCard].....	148	Super Sansu-Puter .....	191
Champion Boxing [MyCard].....	149	Shogi Nyuumon .....	192
Star Force [MyCard] .....	150	Doraemon.....	193
Dragon Wang.....	151	Basic Nyuumon.....	194
Kekkyoku Nankyoku Daibouken .....	152	Dragon Slayer.....	195
Yie Ar Kung-Fu.....	153	Rock'N Bolt.....	196
Ninja-Kun.....	154	Elevator Action [SG-1000].....	197
Chack'N Pop [Famicom] .....	155	Soukoban .....	198
Dig Dug .....	156	Championship Lode Runner [SG-1000] ....	199
Flappy .....	157	H.E.R.O.....	200
Wrecking Crew .....	158	Champion Ice Hockey .....	201
Hyper Olympic.....	159	Hang On II.....	202
Spartan X.....	160	Bomb Jack.....	203
Star Force [Famicom] .....	161	Pooyan.....	204
Elevator Action [Famicom] .....	162	City Connection.....	205
Zoom 909 .....	163	Hyper Sports.....	206
Choplifter .....	164	Route 16 Turbo.....	207
Pitfall II.....	165	Challenger.....	208
Doki Doki Penguin Land.....	166	<b>Nintendo Entertainment System.....</b>	<b>209</b>
Drol .....	167		
Chack'N Pop .....	168		
Milky Princess.....	169		
Pop'N Chips .....	170		
Nekketsu Kung-Fu Road.....	171		
Star Speeder .....	172		
Field Combat.....	173		
Road Fighter .....	174		
Warpman .....	175		
Door Door .....	176		
Super Arabian.....	177		
Robot Block Set.....	178		
Front Line.....	179		
The Tower of Druaga .....	180		
Astro Robo SASA.....	181		
Honshougi: Naitou Kudan Shougi Hiden ...	182		
Robot Gyro Set.....	183		
Geimos.....	185		
10-Yard Fight.....	186		
Battle City.....	188		

**1981**



# EPOCH CASSETTE VISION

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

**T**ext here

**K**een-eyed video game import enthusiasts have undoubtedly noticed at once time or another that Japanese consoles uniquely refer to cartridges as "cassettes"—a curiosity in large part because the word "cassette" is invariably rendered in English. If Japan had to adopt an English loanword to describe this media format, why not use the English word used elsewhere in the world?

The answer goes back to 1981 and Epoch's Cassette Vision console. As the first con-

sole to make use of interchangeable cartridges to have hailed from Japan, the Cassette Vision set that country's standard for terminology. Epoch's choice of foreign terms becomes far less confusing once you actually see the design of their carts and packaging. The Cassette Vision's cartridges closely resembled 8-track cassettes in size, shape, color, storage cases, and even the exposed opening on one end to allow media access. And so, a quirk of industrial design became a fact of life.

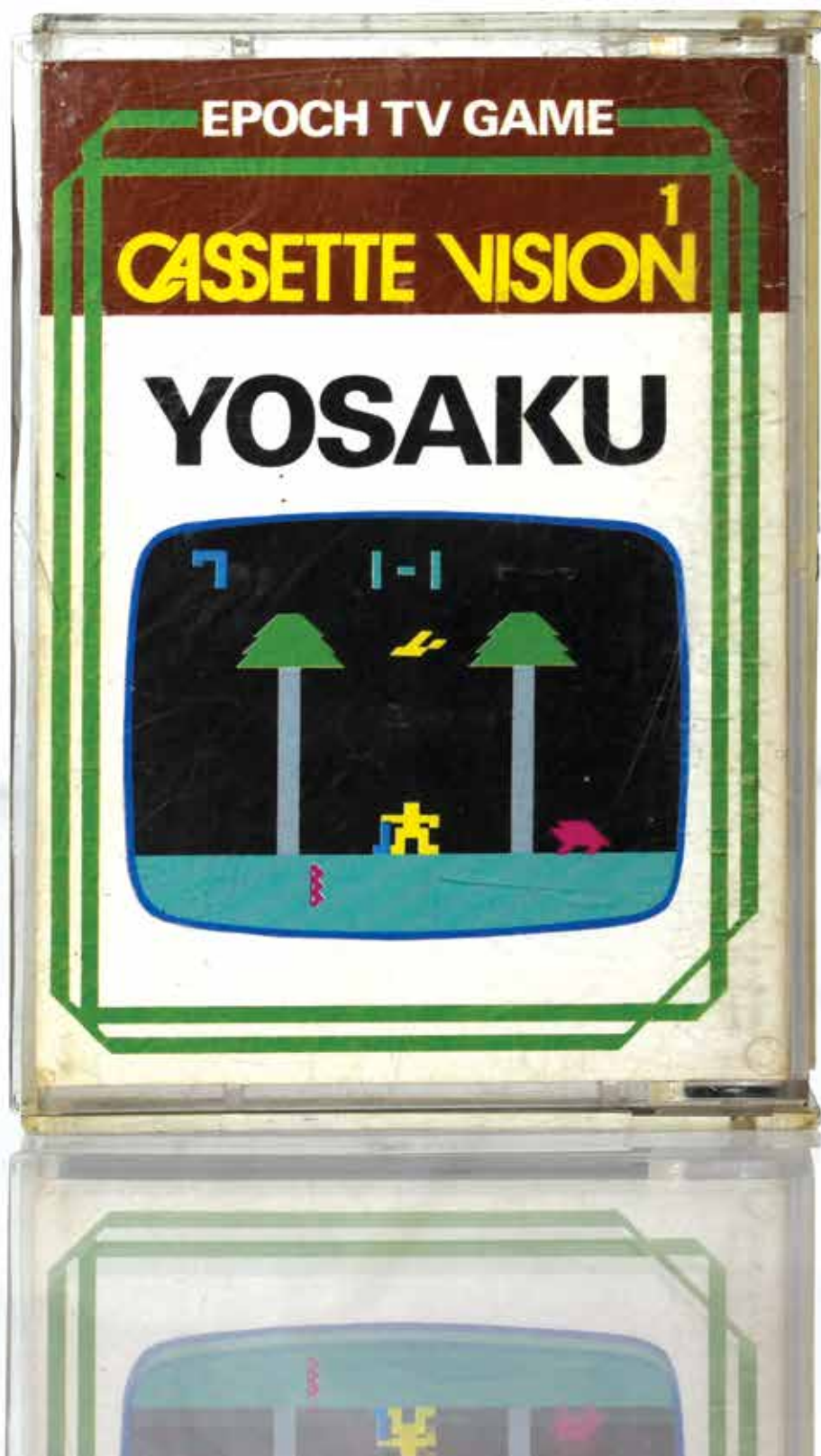






# KIKORI NO YOSAKU

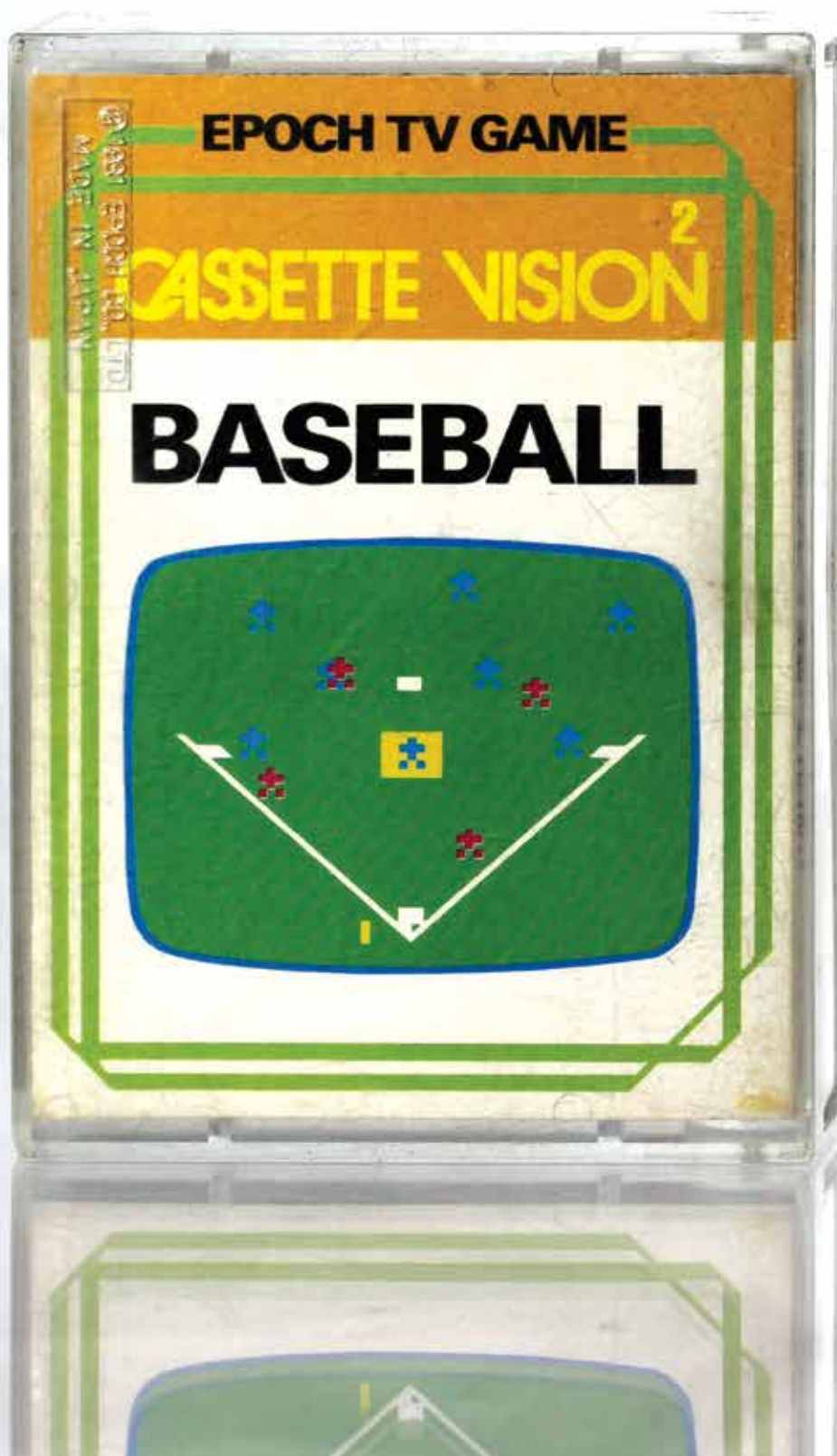
Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO





# BASEBALL

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



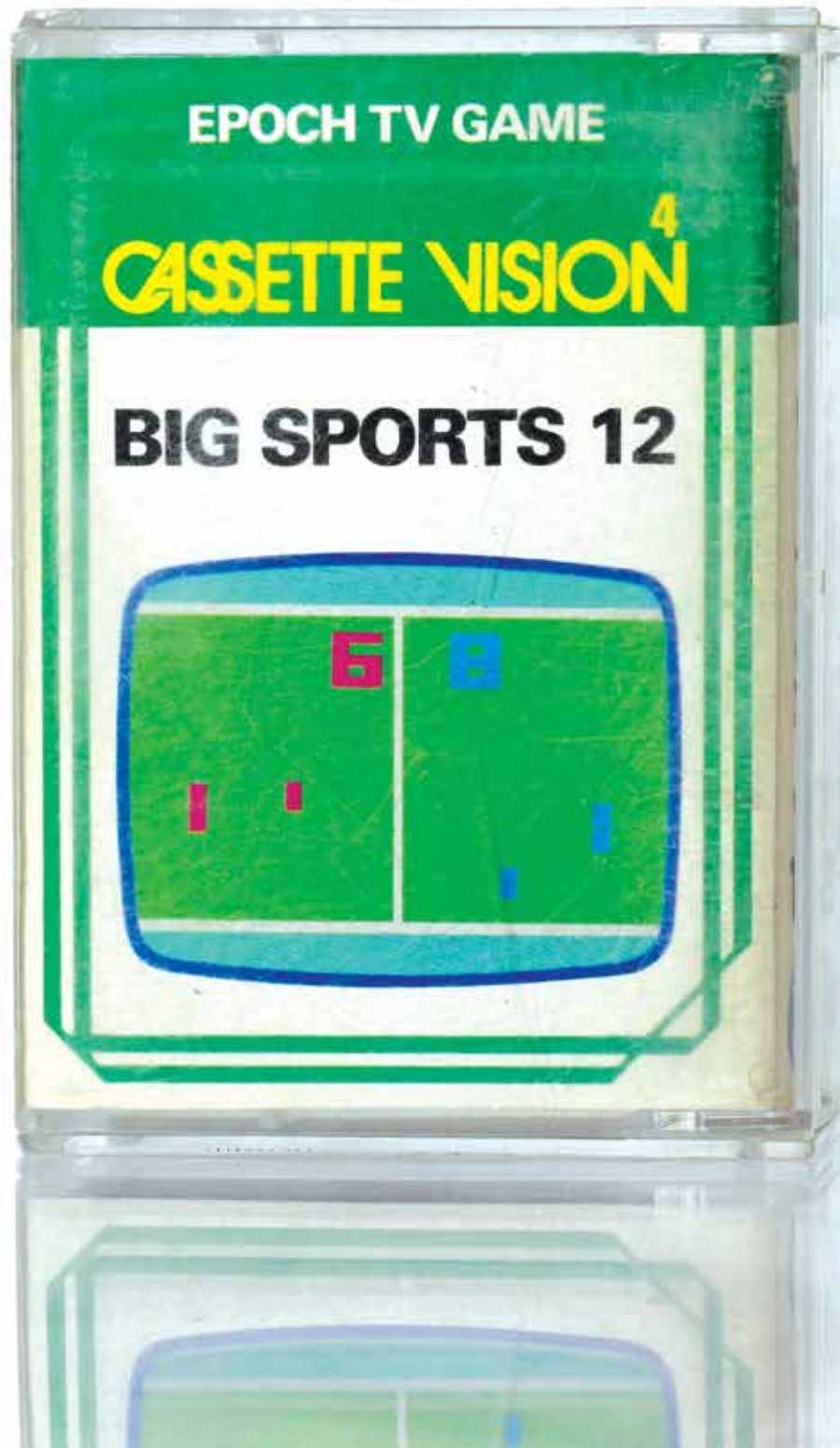
# GALAXIAN

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



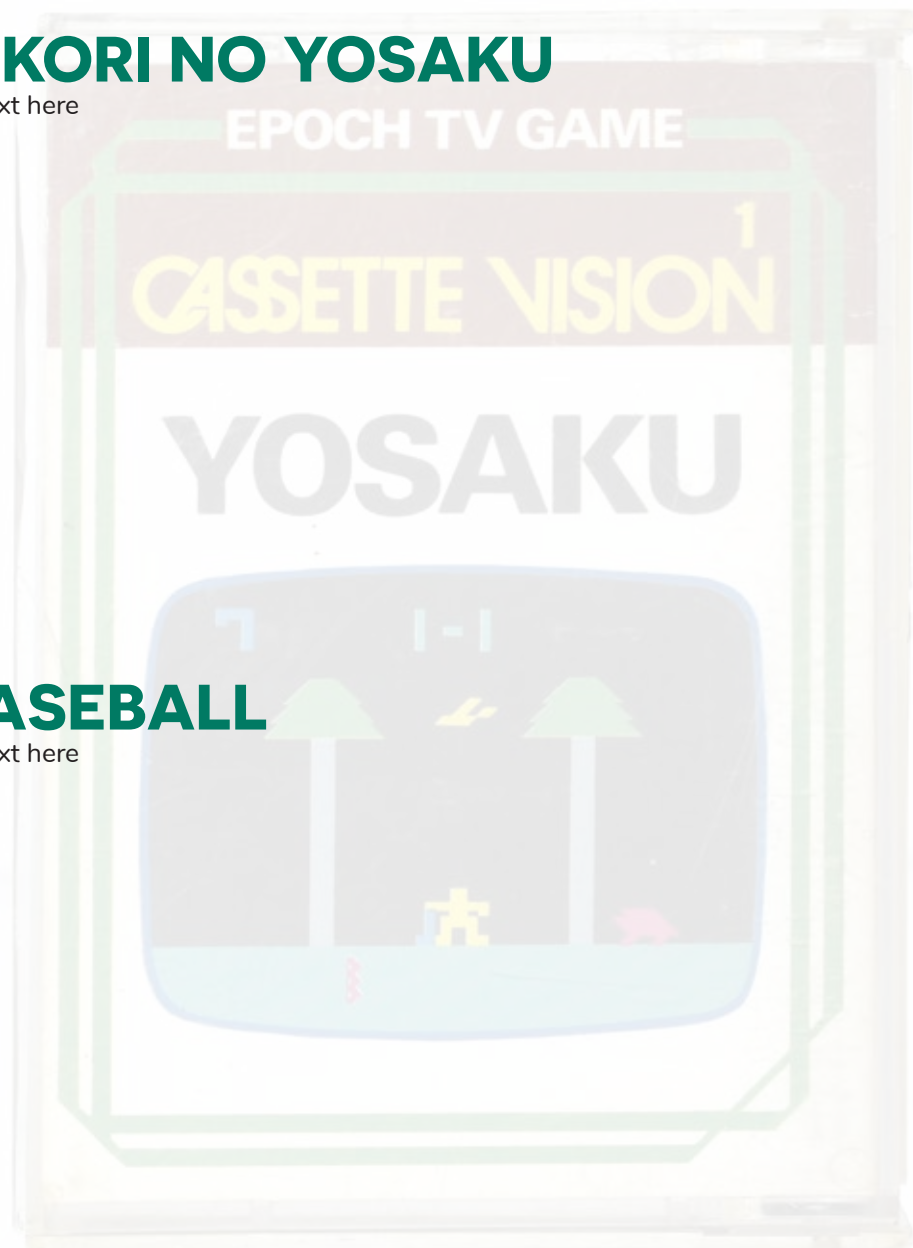
# BIG SPORTS 12

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



## KIKORI NO YOSAKU

T<sub>ext here</sub>



## BASEBALL

T<sub>ext here</sub>





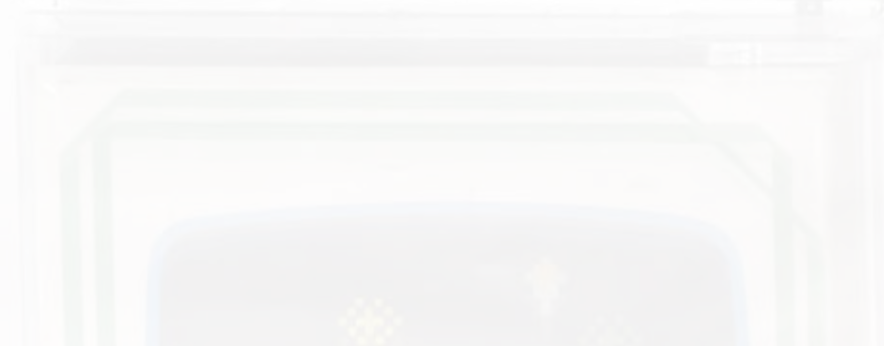
# GALAXIAN

T<sub>ext here</sub>



# BIG SPORTS 12

T<sub>ext here</sub>



# MAUSER

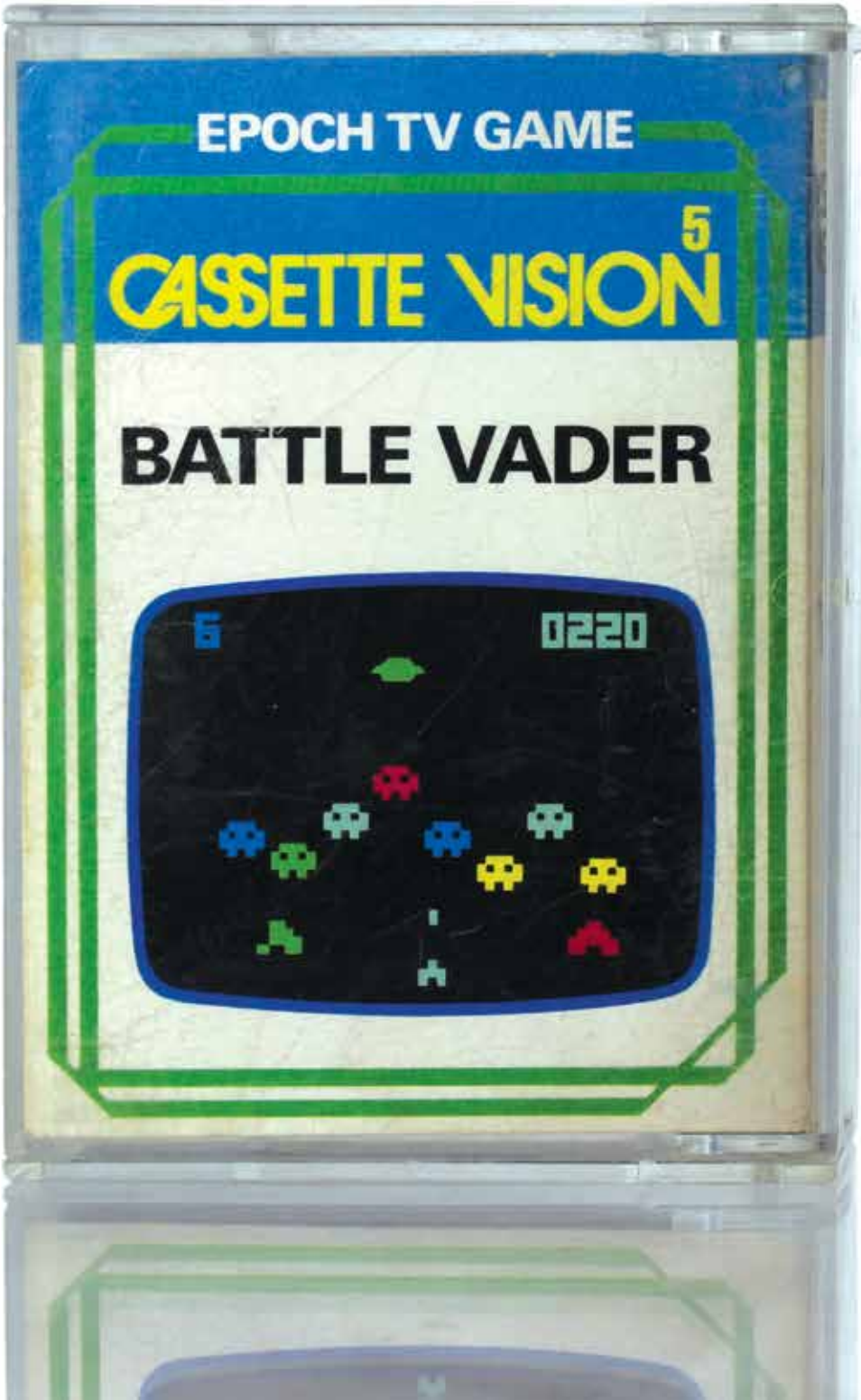
Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



**T**ext here

# BATTLE VADER

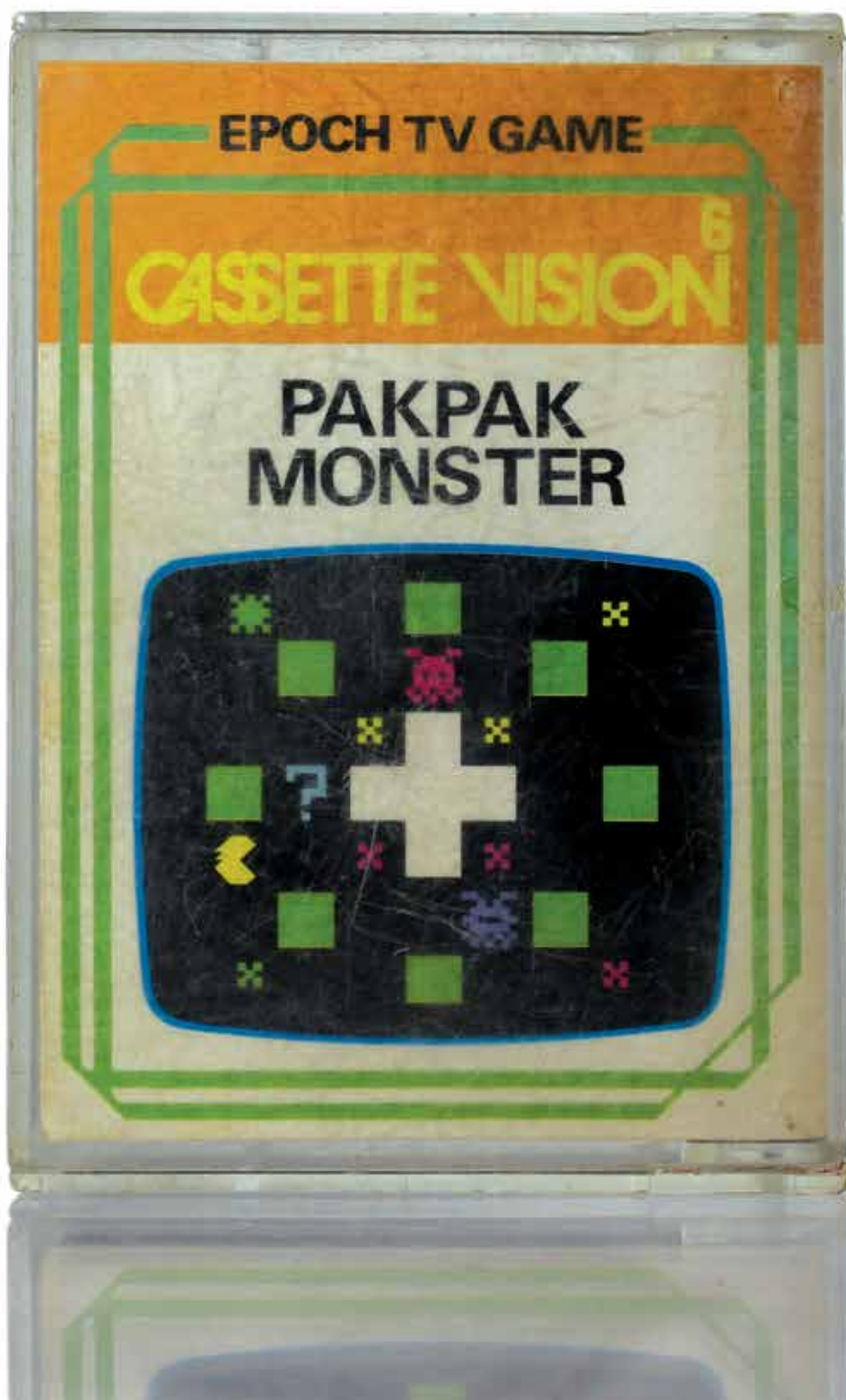
Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO





# PAKPAK MONSTER

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



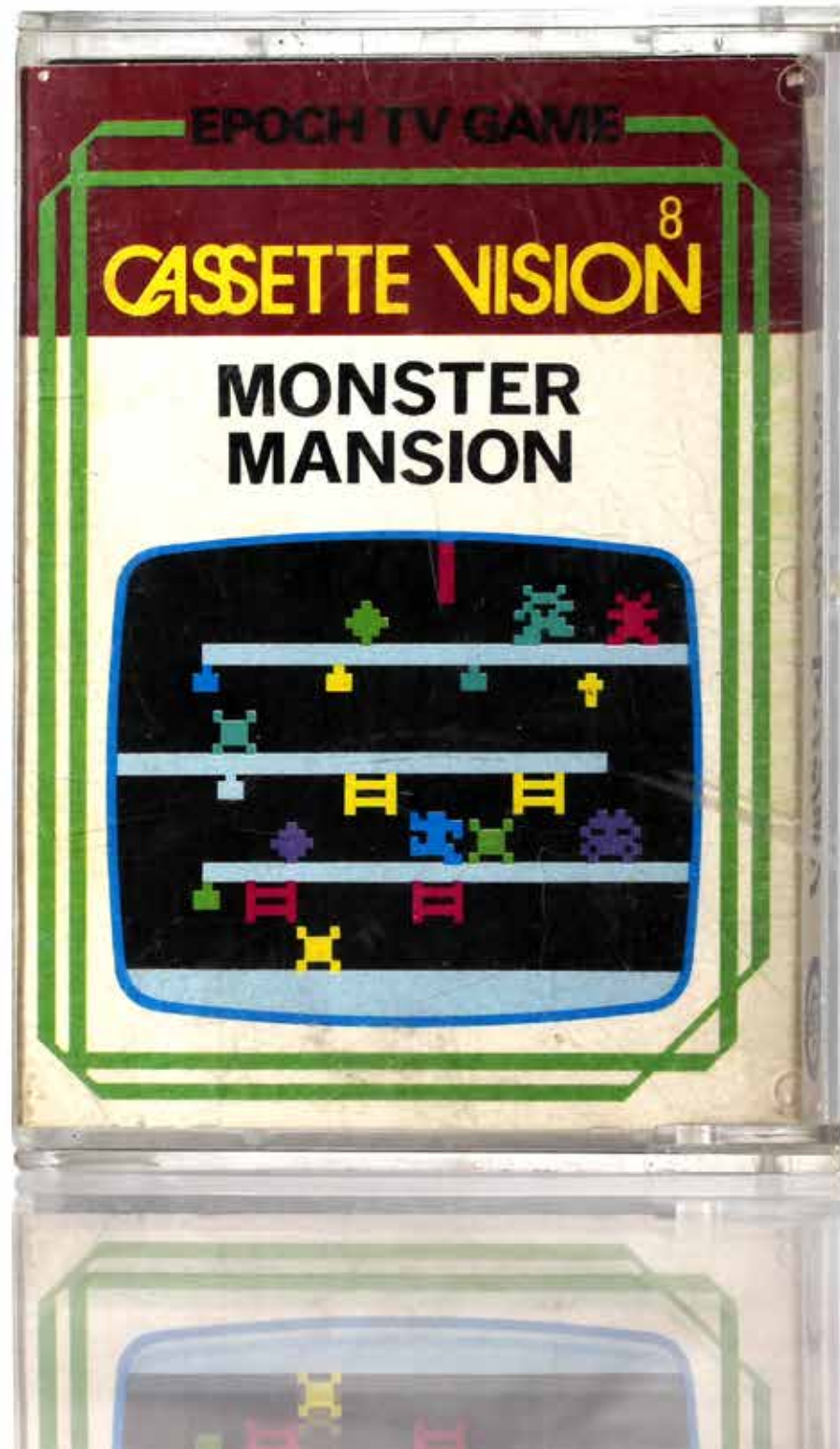
# NEW BASEBALL

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



# MONSTER MANSION

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



## BATTLE VADER

**T**ext here



## NEW BASEBALL

**T**ext here





## PAKPAK MONSTER

T<sub>ext here</sub>



## MONSTER MANSION

T<sub>ext here</sub>

# ASTRO COMMAND

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



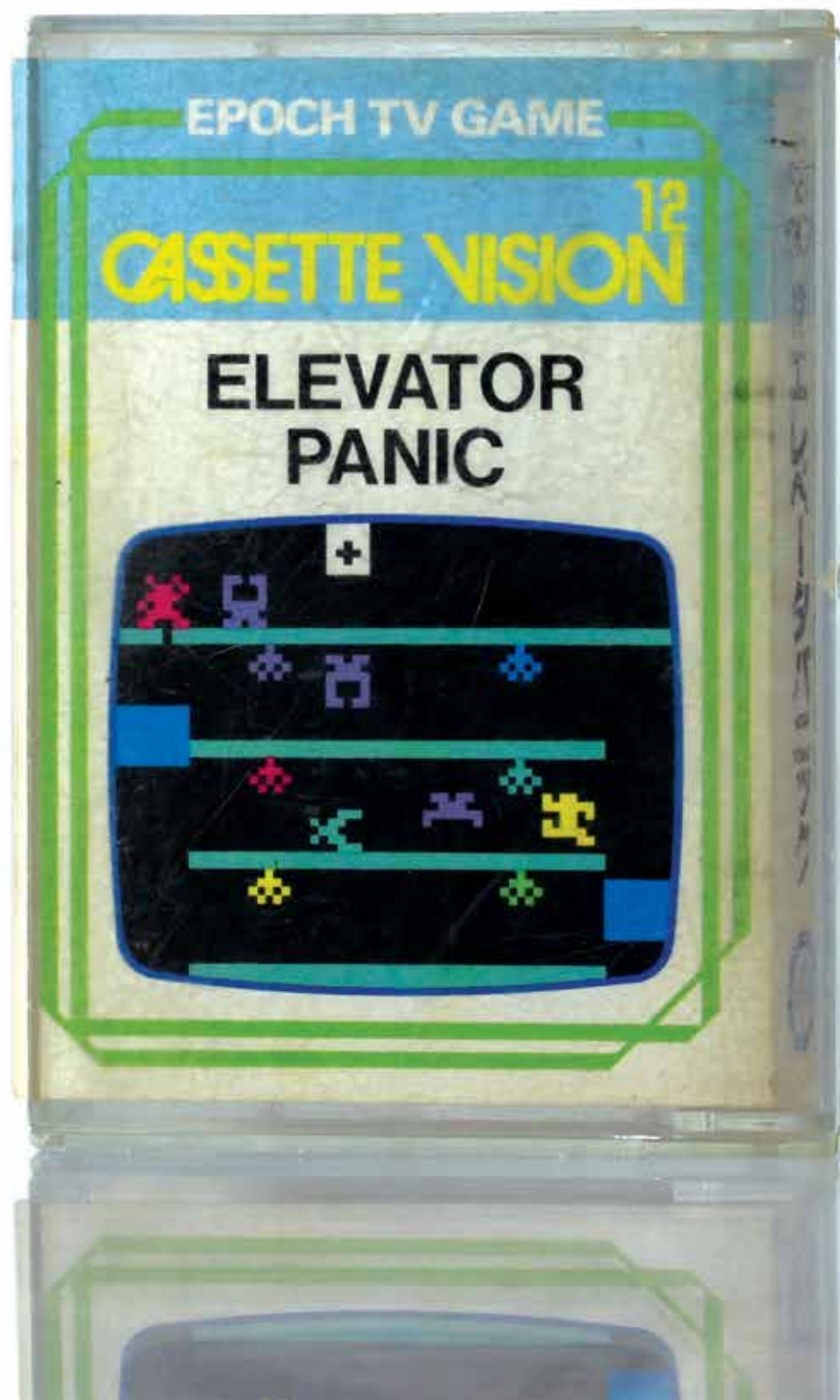
# MONSTER BLOCK

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



# ELEVATOR PANIC

Developer: Epoch Publisher: Epoch Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO





# ASTRO COMMAND

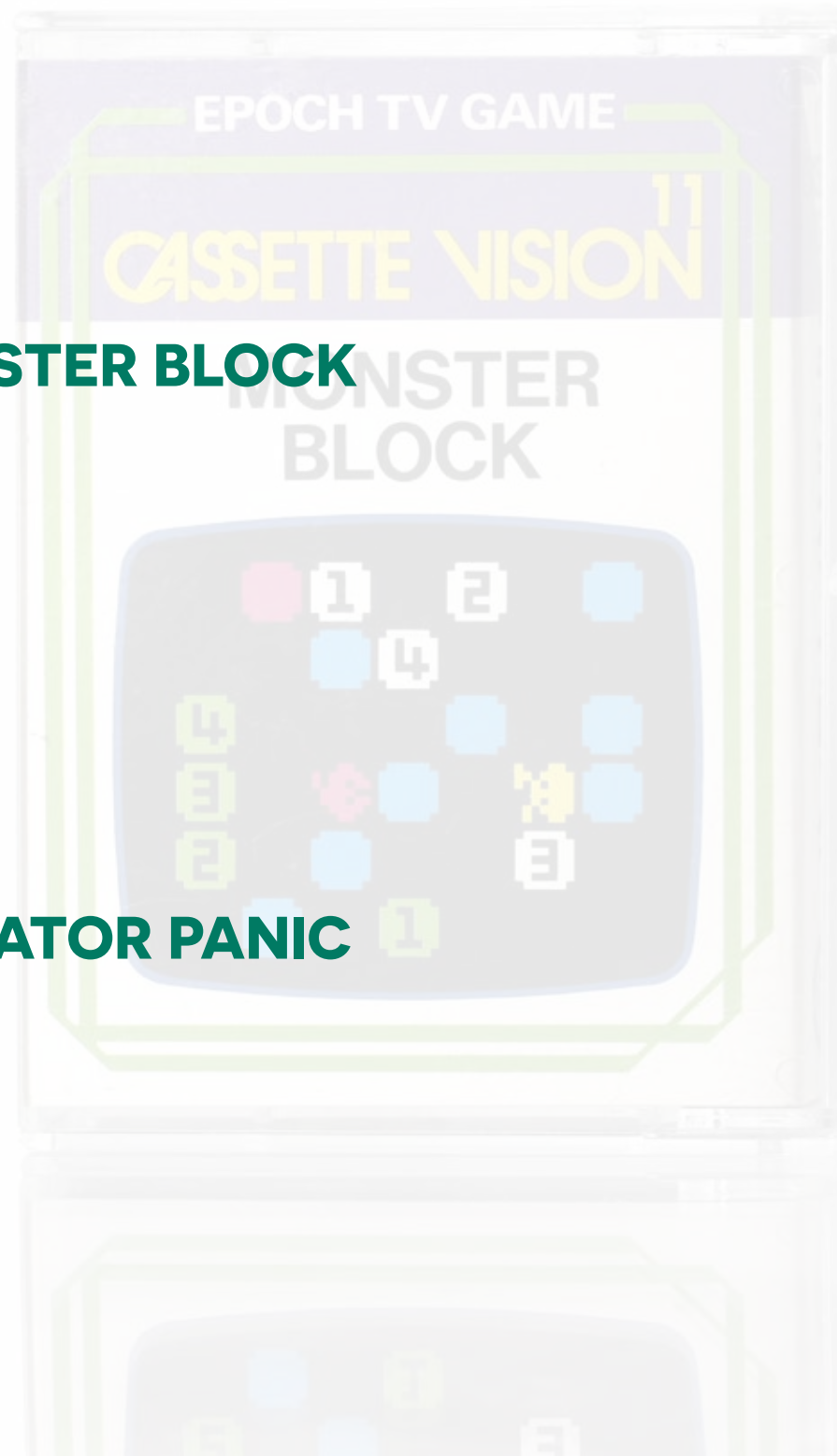
T<sub>ext here</sub>

# MONSTER BLOCK

T<sub>ext here</sub>

# ELEVATOR PANIC

T<sub>ext here</sub>



**1983**



Famicom box



# FAMILY COMPUTER

Developer: *Nintendo* Manufacturer: *Nintendo* Catalog no.: *HVC-001*

**N**intendo's Family Computer, or "Famicom" for short, revolutionized the video games industry. Going by appearances, it's hard to believe this unassuming little system had such upheaval in it. Cast in a glossy, cream-white plastic with maroon accents, it gives off an almost toy-like impression, compact and cheerful. Its earliest games matched the kid-friendly stylings of the system, containing the simple gameplay and cartoonish sprites found in

Japanese arcade games of the era. In time, the system's library would diversify immensely to cover all genres, ages, and tastes. Still, the sight of this console surely evokes a different sort of nostalgia in those who grew up playing it than the staid, grey, boxy Nintendo Entertainment System does for American and European Nintendo fans. For a mere hunk of plastic and silicon, the Famicom certainly packs plenty of charm.





SG-1000 box






SG-1000



# SG-1000

Developer: [Sega](#) Manufacturer: [Sega](#) Catalog no.: [SG-1000](#)



**T**he same day Nintendo launched the Family Computer, Sega shipped its own debut console, as well as an *actual* computer: The SG-1000 (Sega Game 1000) and SC-3000 (Sega Computer 3000). Almost completely identical internally to America's ColecoVision console from the year prior, the SG-1000 lacked power compared to the Famicom in most respects. Externally, however, it evoked the same sense of toylike cuteness as the Famicom, with a lower profile and friendly, rounded

contours. Like Nintendo's system, it shipped with hardwired controllers. Cartridges plugged into the slot on the top surface of the console, and they could also operate in compatible devices such as the SC-3000. Original SG-1000 models have become fairly scarce and quite expensive on the aftermarket. Happily, later revisions of the console are not only more widely available, they also tend to be much less expensive, more stylish, and offer a superior play experience in all respects.

# SC-3000

Developer: *Sega* Manufacturer: *Sega* Catalog no.: *SC-3000*

The similarities between Sega's SG-1000 and Coleco's ColecoVision console didn't simply end with their internals. Much like the ColecoVision's expanded personal computer variant ADAM, the SG-1000 also shipped in the form of an upgraded model that functioned as both a games console and a simple home computer: The SC-3000. As consumer products go, the SC-3000 saw considerably greater success than the ADAM had. For one thing, the ADAM suffered a string of design and production delays that pushed its launch back to 1984, well after the ColecoVision's fortunes

had begun to fade in the wake of the American market crash, whereas the SC-3000 showed up day-and-date with the SG-1000. Sega's computer also took up considerably less desk space than ADAM, with its processing core shipping in a single-unit keyboard barely larger than the console itself. The ADAM, on the other hand, consisted of multiple large add-ons to the bulky ColecoVision and consumed an entire desktop. Where ADAM came out on top was in terms of its unique software library, as Sega never shipped SC-3000 exclusive games, only educational and productivity applications.





SG-1000



セガ・キーボード

# SK-1100

SG-1000 Series Keyboard



SG-1000

# SK-1100

Developer: [Sega](#) Manufacturer: [Sega](#) Catalog no.: [SK-1100](#)

**T**orn between purchasing an SG-1000 console or investing the extra cash into the SC-3000 to gain access to computer applications? Luckily, Sega didn't make this an either/or proposition for its early customers, providing a simple upgrade path from console to computer for those who wanted to take it in increments. For those who bought the console system only to decide they wanted a proper home computer after the fact, Sega offered the SK-1100: That is, Sega Keyboard 1100.

The SK-1100 plugged into the rear expansion port of the SG-1000, effectively transforming it into an SC-3000 by simply making available a keyboard interface—the only meaningful hardware difference between the console and computer versions of the system. A compact little add-on, it tidily boosted the console's capabilities and looked sleek doing it. In keeping with the established trend between Coleco and Sega devices, this was a far smaller (and much less expensive) device than the ColecoVision





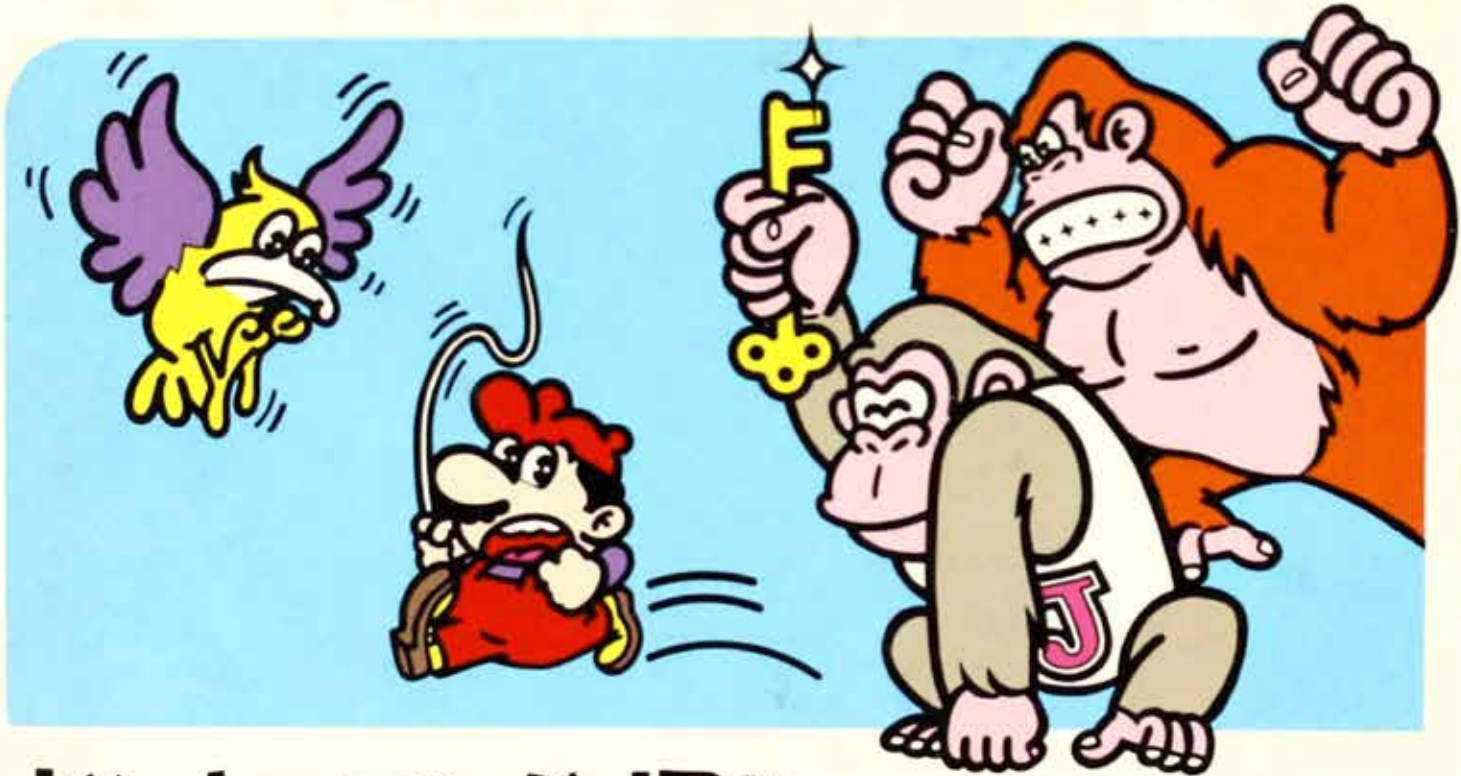
# DONKEY KONG

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Platforming Catalog no.: HVC-DK



# DONKEY KONG JR.

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Platforming Catalog no.: HVC-JR



ドンキーコングJR.™

Nintendo®

ドンキーコングJR.™

Nintendo®



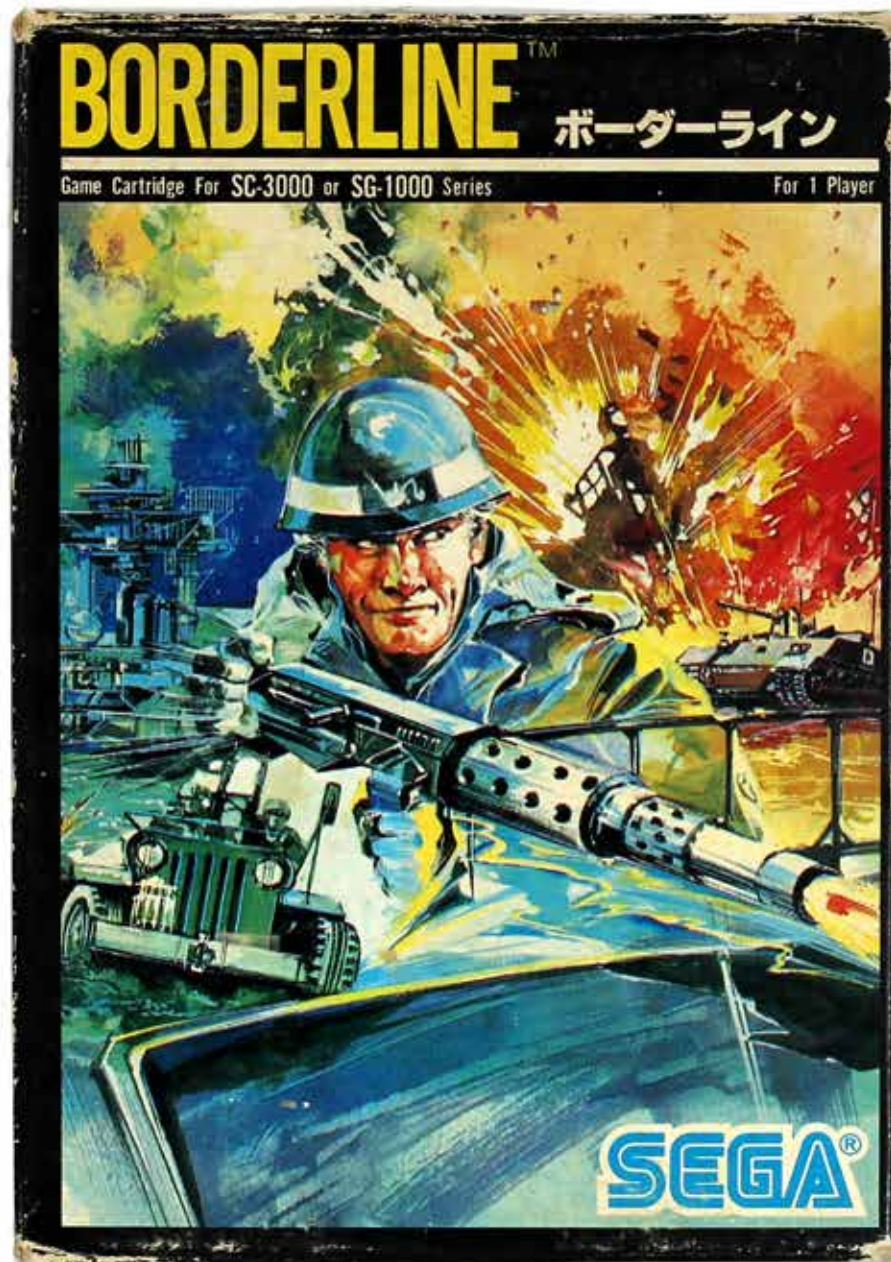
# POPEYE

Developer: *Nintendo* Publisher: *Nintendo* Genre: *Platforming* Catalog no.: *HVC-PP*



# BORDERLINE

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1001



SG-1000



## DONKEY KONG

**W**hat more appropriate lead-off for the July 1983 debut of Nintendo's first-ever console than the game that put the company on the map in the first place: *Donkey Kong*? No game from this era more directly represented Nintendo's dreams than this console conversion of an arcade classic. Perhaps their most famous creation, *Donkey Kong* needs little introduction. Who doesn't know the epic tale of a brave plumber who ascends a construction site (braving barrels, fireballs, and ladders) in his attempt to win back a winsome lass

abducted by a grimacing gorilla? Although the arcade game was two years old by the time this version arrived, no one could deny that Nintendo put together the most faithful and impressive home port yet seen. That fidelity was priority one: Nintendo's engineers purpose-built the Famicom hardware to recreate the coin-op hit as closely as possible. *Donkey Kong* for Famicom wasn't 100% accurate to its upright sibling—for one thing, it omitted an entire stage due to storage limitations—but it still made for a stunning Famicom sales pitch.

## DONKEY KONG JR.

**N**intendo's second launch title for Famicom, *Donkey Kong Jr.*, sees a rare villainous turn for Mario as he shackles and cages Kong in order to transport and sell him to the circus. Somehow, the younger Kong's efforts to rescue his father take the form of a journey through a spring-loaded jungle before the scene changes to a strange electrical structure and a vertiable forest of manacles. *Donkey Kong Jr.* is reputed to be a bit of heel turn for Nintendo as well: They're been accused of having built the game on the program code of the original *Donkey Kong* without involving (or paying) the contractors who designed the first

game's coin-op hardware. Unlike the original *Donkey Kong*, this sequel's Famicom port falls well short of the coin-op's visuals. Character sprites, especially that of Junior, appear much smaller on console, though this version does at least contain all four of the arcade machine's stages (compared to the truncated *Donkey Kong*). It shipped clad in striking, all-white packaging on Famicom, a great contrast to its companion release's all-red design (though difficult to acquire in pristine condition nearly four decades later).

## POPEYE

The third and final Famicom game to hit shelves alongside the console, *Popeye* also hailed from arcades. Despite being the only one of Famicom's launch titles not to include "Donkey Kong" in its title, *Popeye* shares a close relationship with Nintendo's monkey-chasing hit. The designer of all three games, Shigeru Miyamoto, originally conceived *Donkey Kong* as a *Popeye* title, but ultimately designed original characters to avoid licensing complications. That worked out to Nintendo's benefit; *Donkey Kong* launched the powerful, influential, Mario video game dynasty. Where would Nintendo be if *Super Mario Bros.* and all

that came after had belonged to King Features Syndicate? Here at the Famicom launch, the game in which Popeye did eventually appear suffered the most severe technical compromises in coming to the console. The arcade game featured an eye-catching graphical style in which backgrounds appeared as simple geometric shapes behind huge, double-resolution sprites that looked like actual cartoon characters. While the game played almost exactly like the coin-op version on Famicom, its character sprites looked comparatively dinky, lacking the punch of their coin-op selves. Naturally, *Popeye* shipped in spinach-green packaging.

## BORDERLINE

While Sega did not document the exact launch dates of its SG-1000 releases, the company did conveniently number the system's games in a simple, sequential series from G-1001 to G-1063. In that sense, their history as a console superpower begins here with catalog no. G-1001, *Borderline*. Based on an arcade shooter that had also appeared (with slightly modified graphics) under the name *Star Raker*, *Borderline* did not have the international best-selling clout of *Donkey Kong*. Still, in its way, it was every bit as ambitious as

Nintendo's big game. Each stage of *Borderline* featured a different form of gameplay from the last, with mechanics ranging from auto-scrolling shoot-em-up action to a free movement format akin to *Dig Dug*. Sega shipped many SG-1000 games in multiple package variations. Shown here is the later "small box" revision of *Borderline*, in which the entire package was sized to fit the cartridge and manual more snugly than the larger, more wasteful early game boxes.

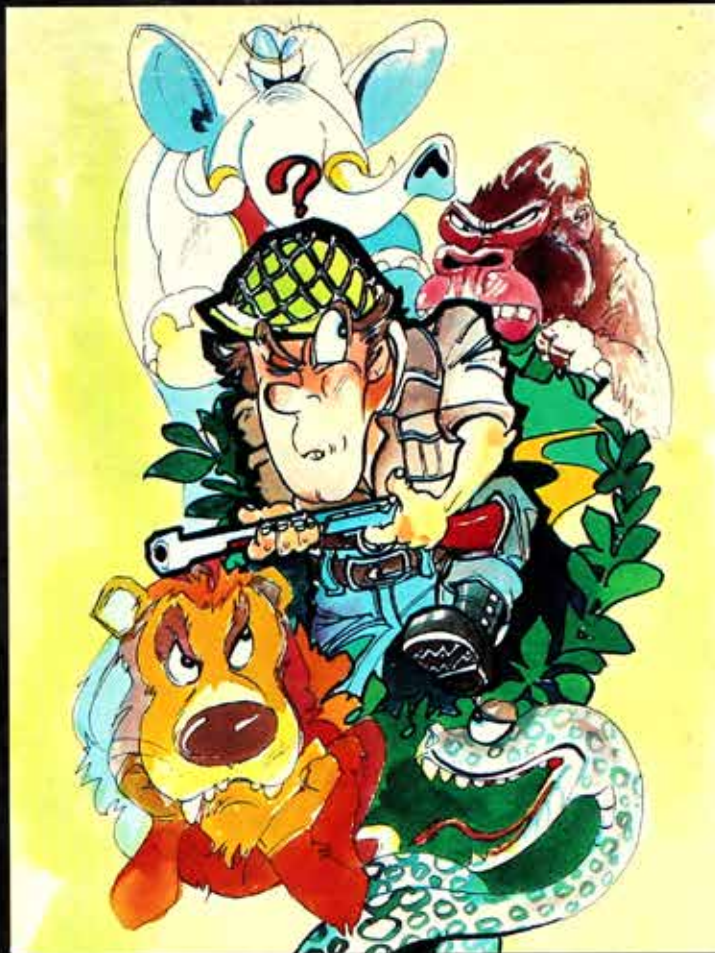


# SAFARI HUNTING

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002

## SAFARI HUNTING™

サファリハンティング



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

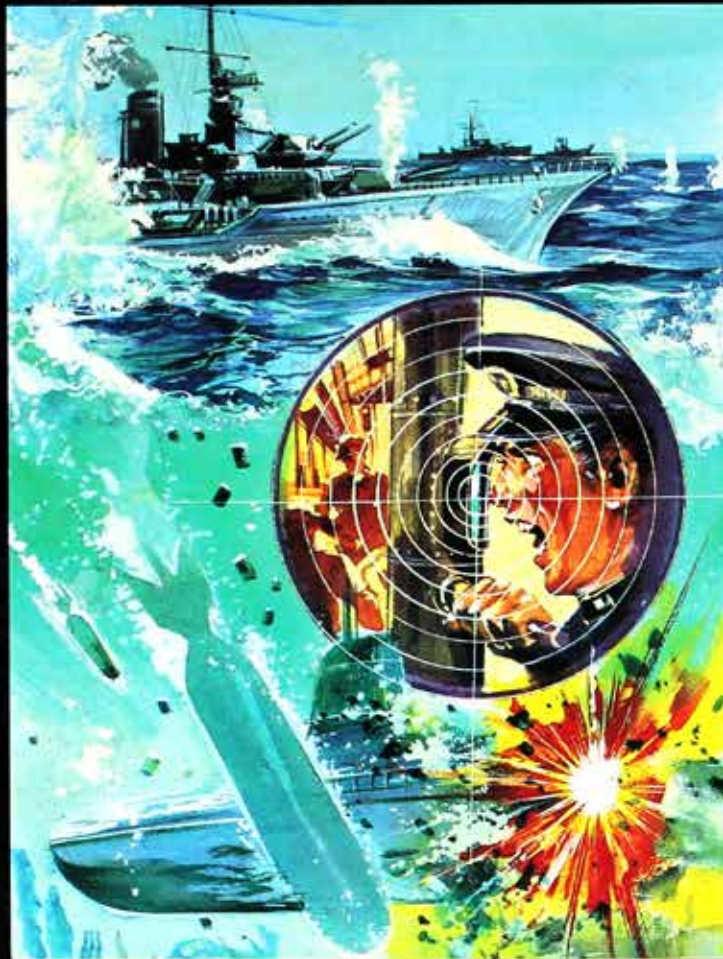
SEGA®



# N-SUB

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003

## N-SUB™



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

SG-1000

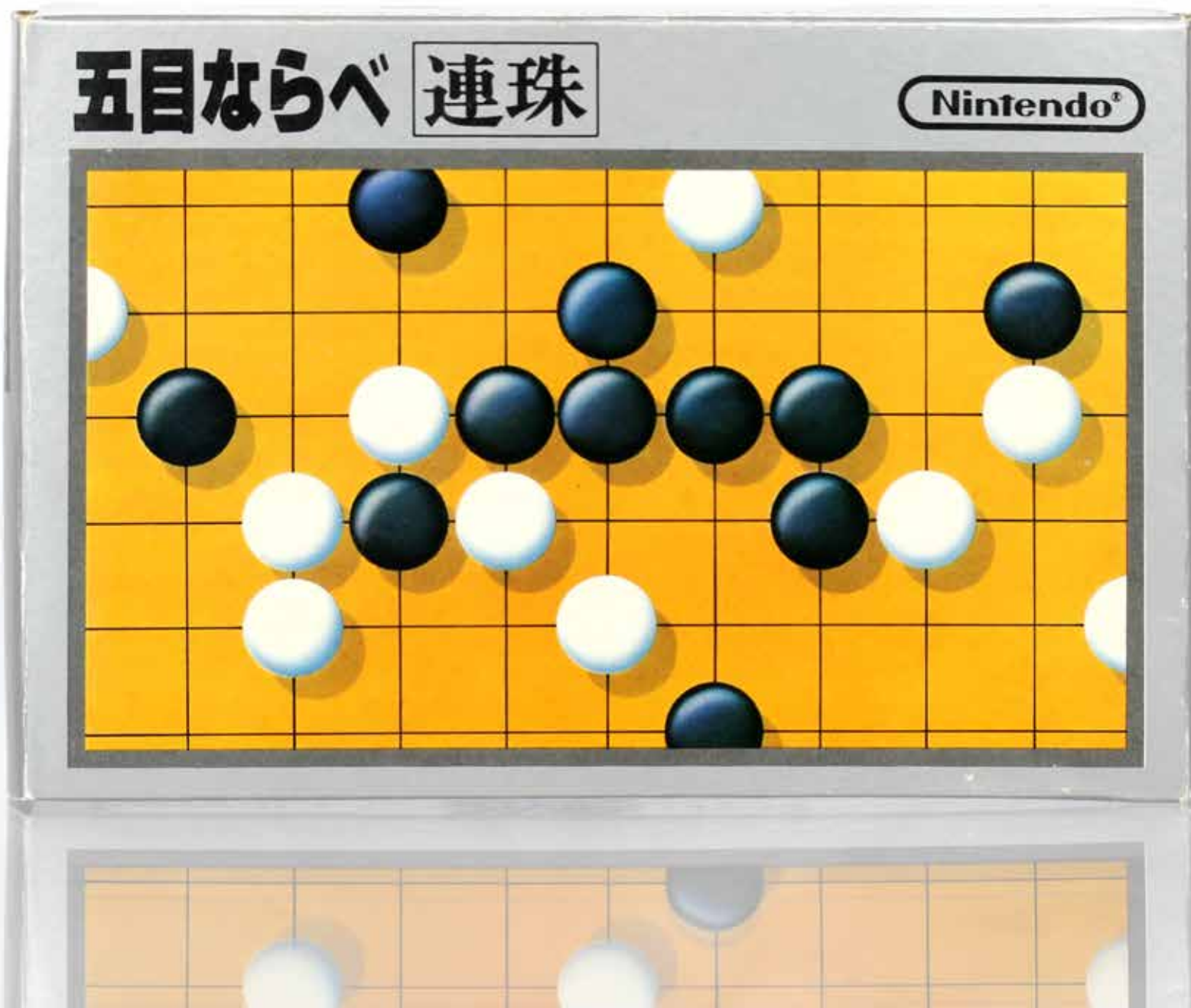
For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
Game Cartridge

SEGA®

# GOMOKU NARABE RENJU

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Board Game Catalog no.: HVC-GO

Family Computer





# MAH-JONG

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Board Game Catalog no.: HVC-MJ



## SAFARI HUNTING

Appearing as catalog no. G-1002 in the SG-1000 library, *Safari Hunting* is another arcade conversion. It's not to be mistaken for the similarly named Sega Master System pack-in *Safari Hunt*, which was a light gun game played from a first-person perspective; *Safari Hunting* is instead a top-down game that gives players a tranquilizer rifle, a Jeep toting a remarkably capacious trailer, and the task of stalking through a bush maze as they attempt to safely tranquilize and capture as many snakes, apes, lions, and elephants as possible. Even with the gun explicitly present as firing nonlethal rounds, it's difficult to imagine this game being created today. One striking feature of early SG-1000 packaging is how “western” the artwork appears. Compared to Ninten-

do's cartoonish, manga-influenced early art, which falls somewhere in style between E.C. Seger and Osamu Tezuka, Sega initially went with painterly techniques that either echoed the impressionistic realism of a '70s cigarette ad or looked like this—basically high-spec *MAD Magazine* art. Take away the katakana text and this could easily be some forgotten Atari 2600 release. The SG-1000 line would eventually gravitated toward manga-inspired packaging as the tastes and expectations of Japan's gaming audience solidified, and video gaming became seen as kids' stuff rather than the adult pastime it had been in the early days, when the price of console and computer hardware prevented them from being a casual pickup for kids.

## N-SUB

The third entry in SG-1000's opening trio, *N-Sub* unsurprisingly takes the form of another military-themed shooting game. Even more than box art styles, this really points to the fundamental differences between Sega and Nintendo's approaches to publishing. Nintendo led with cartoon games that offered minimal opportunities for violence, while the first three Sega console releases had more real-world vibes and revolved entirely around shooting. Of course, Nintendo made their share of shooting games as well (even Super Mario himself was nearly armed with a gun until his creators decided to equip him with magical flowers that can bounce fireballs along the floor. Likewise, Sega made plenty of

non-shooting games. It's just interesting to see the very different approaches the two companies took as they kicked off their respective publishing efforts. This box art makes use of the same abstract-yet-realistic '70s cigarette ad look seen on other early SG-1000 packages. As for the game itself, it's essentially a more elaborate *Space Invaders* derivative that is almost entirely identical to a Nintendo game called *Heli-Fire*; again, the two companies' catalogs had plenty in common! However, Nintendo has notably never republished *Heli-Fire*, unlike Sega with *N-Sub*, which didn't just ship on SG-1000 but also appeared as a hidden game in *Die Hard Arcade* a decade and a half later.

Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
Game Cartridge

SEGA®

## GOMOKU NARABE RENJU

Nintendo has been quite forthcoming about the exact dates all officially licensed games hit shelves, at least in Japan, so we know that Famicom's first follow-up titles arrived about six weeks after the console itself: Aug. 27, 1983. Those two August titles were far removed from the arcade favorites that had debuted with the hardware; they revolved around traditional tabletop games instead. The first, *Gomoku Narabe Renju*, feels like a sop to Nintendo's boss. The company's president at the time, Hiroshi Yamauchi, famously never played video games but was a top-level expert in the board game Go. This game, which fit into a few kilobytes of storage space and

whose competitive tactics were powered by an 1.79MHz 8-bit CPU, couldn't have offered much of a challenge. But it did help frame the Famicom as a serious device for adults. The version shown here comes from a later run of the game. Nintendo began shipping Famicom titles in larger, silver-rimmed boxes midway through 1984, which were larger and less easily damaged than early Famicom game boxes. Still, something essential was lost in the move to a standardized design. In this case, Renju originally shipped in a black cartridge contained in a solid white, which echoed the tiles used in Go—a pairing disrupted by the new silver packaging.

## MAH-JONG

As a companion release to their 8-bit take on Go, Nintendo also treated Famicom owners to an adaptation of a second traditional tabletop game in August 1983: *Mah-Jong*. From this point onward, Mahjong adaptations would become a fixture of Japanese consoles, typically appearing within the first few months following a system's launch. Another standard established here: Nintendo based *Mah-Jong* on the Japanese "riichi" variant of the game rather than the original Chinese rule set. This very early take on console mahjong definitely falls under the category of "adaptation" as opposed

to being a faithful and proper rendition. Ideally, a mahjong match should involve four competitors, each of whom sits at one of the cardinal points of the compass. However, *Mah-Jong* for Famicom only allows two people to square off—or rather, one person and the CPU, as it lacks support for a second player. At this point in Famicom's lifetime, Nintendo was still sorting through the capabilities of its own console; games that involved two people or four positions would begin to arrive the following year, when Nintendo teamed up with Hudson Soft for a proper four-person rendition.

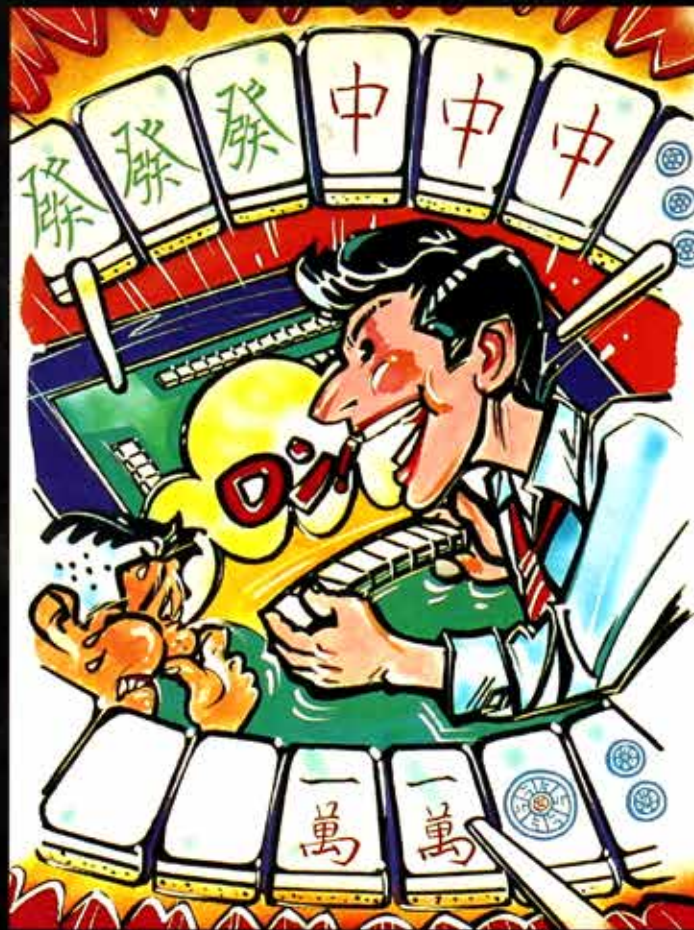


# MAHJONG

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Board Game Catalog no.: G-1004

## MAHJONG

麻雀



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

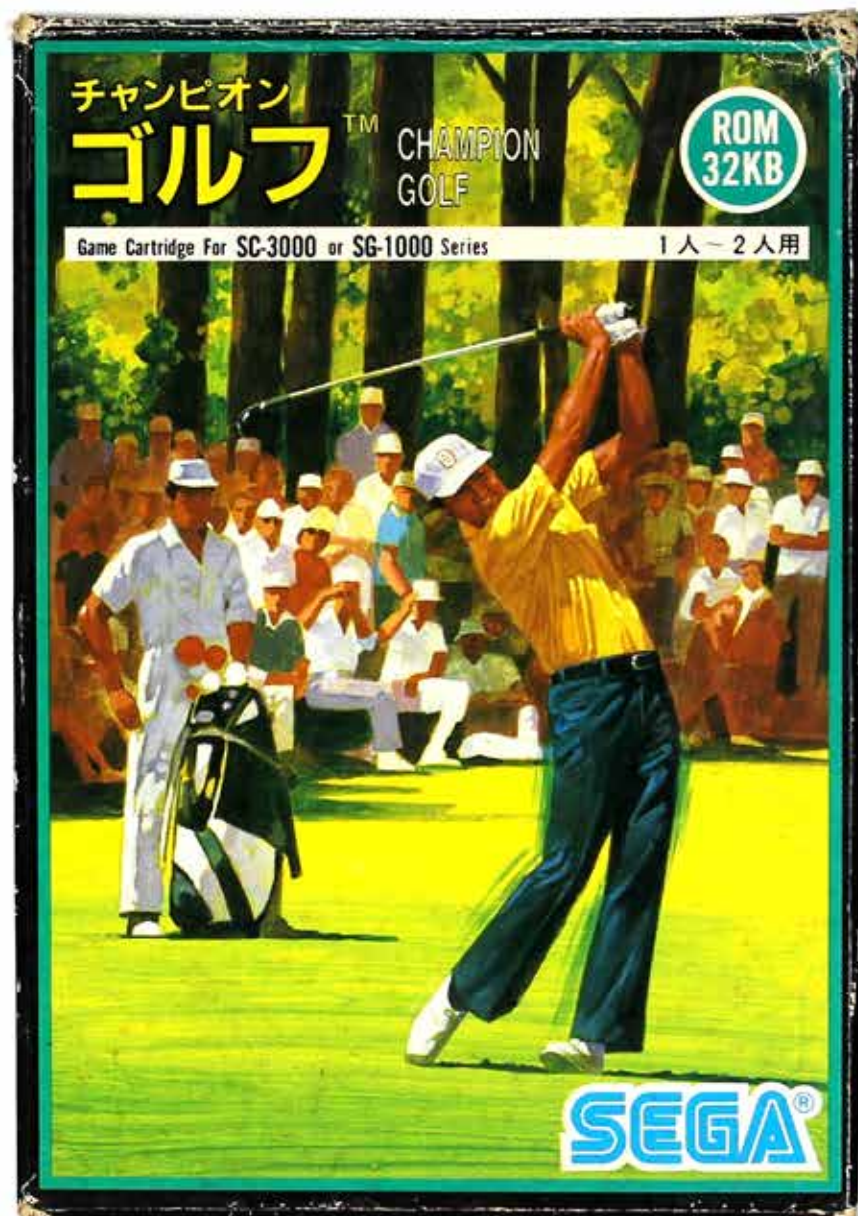
SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
game cartridge

SEGA®

# CHAMPION GOLF

Developer: Logitech Publisher: Sega Genre: Sports Catalog no.: G-1005



SG-1000



# MARIO BROS.

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Platforming Catalog no.: HVC-MB

マリオブラザーズ™

Nintendo®



# POPEYE NO EIGO ASOBI

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Educational Catalog no.: HVC-EN





## MAHJONG

Sega's first post-launch title for SG-1000 (going by catalog number) was, much like with Famicom, a Mahjong adaptation as well. Just as with Nintendo's take on the game, this cartridge works around Japanese *riichi* rules and features a two-position match as a single player faces off against the computer, with proper four-position matches and multiplayer unavailable. Sega's version doesn't look quite as nice as Nintendo's, a near-inevitability given the graphical differences between the two consoles, but they're functionally almost identical. The box art is probably where the two games appear most distinct. Nintendo's

compact package featured a clean, simple, and highly literal visual interpretation of the game, whereas Sega commissioned a colorful illustration of a salaryman calling "ron" (the winning declaration, akin to "checkmate" or "uno" in certain other games) against a dopey-looking opponent as a border of dynamic tiles surrounds them. Again, Sega's love for lively box illustrations really does peg these packages to their era, and they collectively serve as a tribute to a bygone discipline in this lineup. A rack of beautifully drawn SG-1000 boxes hanging side-by-side must have been a sight to behold back in the day.

## CHAMPION GOLF

Sega's SG-1000 sports releases shipped under the "Champion" banner, with the first of these titles arriving almost immediately upon the console's debut: *Champion Golf*. As you might expect of a sport sim this old, *Champion Golf* offers a dry and unsatisfying take on the sport in question. It's quite primitive, as the workings of golf video games didn't coalesce and codify until the following year with the innovative swing meter that appeared in Nintendo's *Golf*. The swing and aim mechanics here hearken back more toward the Atari 2600 and Intellivision era, offering players a fixed, bird's-eye view of the course and treating the player's caddy as a sort of cursor who scurries around the perimeter of the green

to determine the direction of a drive or putt—a clumsy arrangement. More notably, *Champion Golf* is one of the few early SG-1000 releases to include a non-Sega credit on the title screen. The majority of initial releases were either developed internally at Sega or produced anonymously by contract developers like Compile, but *Champion Golf* hails from a studio called Logitech. Upon closer examination, Logitech appears to have adapted the Sega release from their identical MSX home computer game, or perhaps they ported the SG-1000 title to MSX. In any case, Sega fulfilled its publishing duties with aplomb, shipping the game in a charmingly dated cover painting that looks straight out of a 1970s Salem cigarette ad.

## MARIO BROS.

**H**itting Famicom in September 1983, *Mario Bros.* seemingly marked the moment that Nintendo fully shifted its primary focus from arcades to home consoles. At the time this cart shipped, *Mario Bros.* had only been in arcades for a couple of months; yet here was Nintendo offering it to everyone for home play, meaning you didn't have to seek out the coin-op version to enjoy it. Typically, arcade-to-home video game conversions adhered to the same timing as the theatre-to-home pipeline employed by the motion picture industry, thus allowing the pay-per-play public release to earn income for a while before releasing it for private, at-home

consumption. For Nintendo to launch a console adaptation of a major arcade release so quickly spoke to their greater ambitions. *Mario Bros.* on Famicom lacked the graphical finesse of the coin-op title, naturally, but it played with few compromises, including simultaneous two-player action. It was a big plus in the system's favor. Naturally, Nintendo shipped it in a suitably wonderful box. The cartoon style of the illustration has plenty of charm (the roundness of Mario and Luigi! The Sidestepper bubbling with frothy rage!), and the cart itself came in gorgeous creamsicle-orange plastic, hinted at here in the art border.

## POPEYE NO EIGO ASOBI

**A**t the beginning of Nintendo's run in console production, the company had very little collective game-making experience. All but one or two of their arcade machines and standalone television game systems had been programmed and designed by outside contractors, with Nintendo primarily providing creative guidance, artwork, and direction. As a result, the Famicom library was decidedly thin on the ground at the outset, forcing Nintendo to pad out the console's 1983 release schedule by repurposing *Popeye's* graphics into a teaching game called *Popeye No Eigo Asobi* (*Popeye's*

*English Lesson*). Not the guy I'd have picked for my English tutor, but as *Popeye* himself might say: *beggers can'tsk be chooskers, yug gug gug*. The game action takes place in slightly modified versions of the original *Popeye's* backgrounds, but rather than catch fluttering hearts thrown into the wind by Olive Oyl, our hero instead has to select letters that spell out the English-language equivalent to a Japanese term uttered by his erstwhile par-amour before Brutus kidnaps (or punches; it's unclear) poor baby Swee'Pea. Unsurprisingly, this edutainment oddity never reached the U.S.

# SERIZAWA HACHIDAN TSUMESHOGI

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Board Game Catalog no.: G-1006

## TSUMESHOGI

芹沢八段の詰将棋



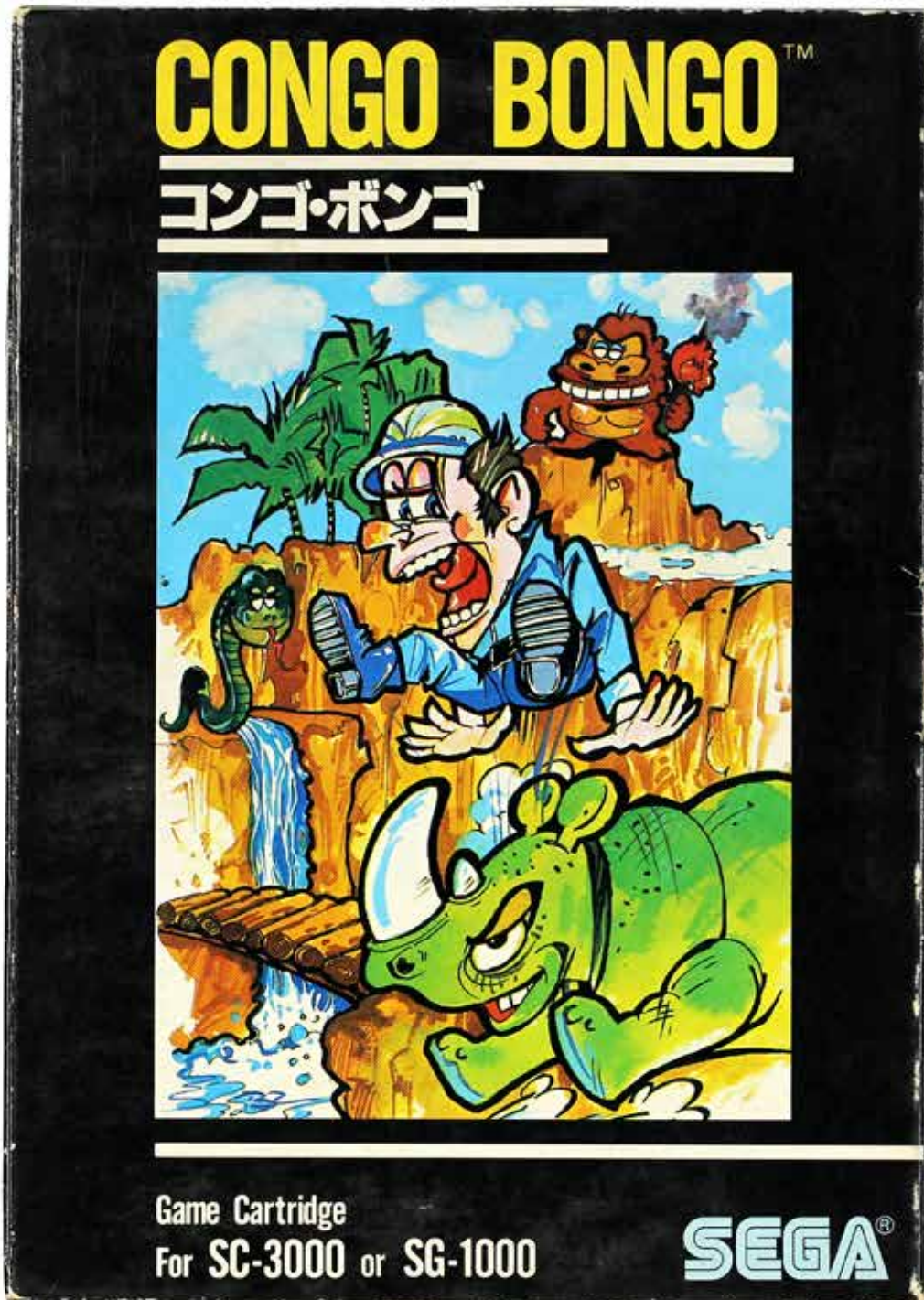
Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®



# CONGO BONGO

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Platforming Catalog no.: G-1007



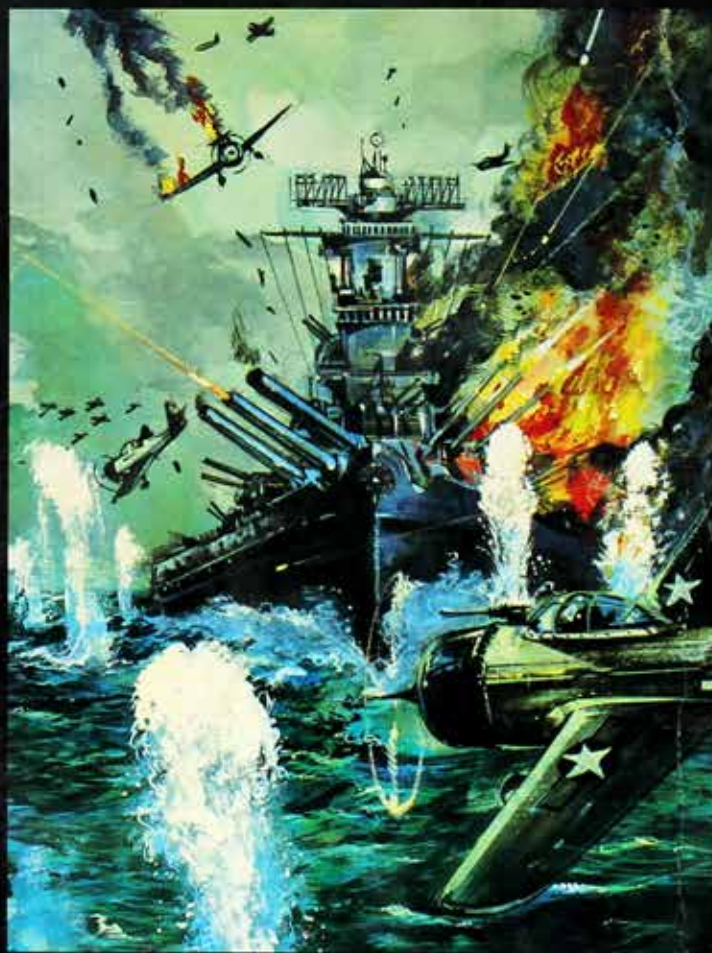
SG-1000

# YAMATO

Developer: ELS / Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1008

# YAMATO™

## ヤマト



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
Game Cartridge

SEGA®



# CHAMPION TENNIS

Developer: TOSE / Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Sports Catalog no.: G-1009

## CHAMPION TENNIS™

チャンピオン・テニス



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
game cartridge

SEGA®

SG-1000

## SERIZAWA HACHIDAN TSUMESHOGI

Sega's sixth numbered SG-1000 adapted another classic Japanese tabletop game into electronic form: Shōgi. You invariably see Go, Mahjong, or Shōgi adaptations early in the lifespan of classic consoles from Japan. Sega and Nintendo collectively covered the bases right away with their first consoles. *Tsumeshogi* (or rather, "*Serizawa Hachidan no Tsume Shōgi*") does not attempt to reproduce the full Shōgi experience but rather gives players a series of self-contained play scenarios that need to be resolved, like a puzzle. Given the complexity of the game and the meager processing power available on the system, this was probably the wiser approach. To give the lessons a ring of authority, Sega licensed an endorsement

by eighth-level (that is, *hachi-dan*) Shōgi professional Hirobumi Serizawa. *Tsumeshogi* originally debuted in arcades, making this perhaps the SG-1000's most unlikely coin-op port. As for the packaging, well, Shōgi resembles Chess at a first glance, with a grid-based board and pieces that make use of similar rules to Chess elements. Unlike with Chess, though, all pieces share an identical shape and can only be distinguished by the kanji character written on them. Even Sega's artists couldn't figure out how to spice up the cover illustration for a game about, basically, chess puzzles played with wooden tiles; they settled for a very literal image of a piece launching like a missile into the board.

## CONGO BONGO

In stark contrast to the timely brilliance Nintendo brought to Famicom with *Mario Bros.* on Famicom, Sega created a true horror in the form of *Congo Bongo* for SG-1000. In arcades, *Congo Bongo* was literally Sega's answer to *Donkey Kong*: A game where you climbed and leapt your way up a dangerous structure in pursuit of a gorilla across four different scenes. The arcade hardware had even been built and programmed by the same company responsible for turning the concept for *Donkey Kong* into actual silicon! But this port bizarrely fails to recapture the appeal of the original, especially its varied challenges and detailed, isometric graphical style. *Congo Bongo* in arcades looked incredible, rendering the scramble-to-

the-top concept of *Donkey Kong* into an elaborate 3D tableau; *Congo Bongo* on SG-1000 does not. This version flattens out the perspective even as it attempts to maintain some semblance of visual depth in terms of the control scheme. The result turns out to be a clumsy, ugly mess, a real letdown given that this was Sega's own game on Sega's own hardware yet looked and played far worse than every competing version on other platforms. Fittingly, the box art looks as bizarrely unpleasant as the game itself. SG-1000 box illustrations tended to be reminiscent of Atari 2600 box art; this looks like one of those sketchy 2600 releases from a fly-by-night publisher that helped precipitate the "Atari crash."



## YAMATO

Another combat game on SG-1000? Yes, indeed. These things were unavoidable in the SG-1000's earliest days, reflecting the nature of Sega's arcade business at the time as well as the slow divergence of international video game design thinking from the U.S.-centric efforts that dominated arcades throughout the 1970s, when most arcade games were being created in America. *Yamato* does at least stand apart from most other military-themed releases of the era by reflecting a distinctly Japanese point of view—quite literally. Players oversee a foray into historic naval combat from the conn tower of a legendary World War II battleship, one that looms large in Japan's

collective memory despite it not really accomplishing all that much beyond being scuttled and sent to a watery grave in a courageous (and unavoidably doomed) final stand. You can think of the *Yamato* as a seafaring counterpart to America's Alamo. In terms of gameplay, *Yamato* feels redundant when *N-Sub* already exists. While the two games don't play identically, both involve moving laterally across the water, firing at targets in the distance while avoiding incoming projectiles. Likewise, the box art feels like nothing that hasn't already appeared on SG-1000. Thankfully, the platform would move beyond WWII shooters from here as its library began to branch out into new concepts.

## CHAMPION TENNIS

The box art to SG-1000's *Champion Tennis* has a real "early 1980s computer magazine cover" feel to it, but it offers a more accurate representation of the game inside than you might expect from the slightly awkward illustration that appears front-and-center here. No, you don't control a cartoon lady who struggles to keep her eye on the ball when you play, but those monochromatic figures in the background are perfect representations of the actual in-game sprites in all their monochromatic, day-glo glory. *Champion Tennis* will feel instantly familiar to anyone who has played *Tennis* for NES, which would hit Famicom about half a year after this title made its

retail debut. Sega (or possibly contract studio TOSE, who are believed to have worked on the entirely identical MSX home computer version of the game) pioneered a similar setup for their game, albeit in a more primitive form than Nintendo's subsequent release, with garish solid-color visuals and less responsive controls. (And no Mario moonlighting as a line judge, obviously.) A decent attempt for the era, but as with many SG-1000 sports titles, it arrived a little too early (and on hardware a little too underpowered) to be able to provide the more sophisticated and satisfying takes on these sporting concepts seen in Nintendo's more robust competing attempts on their Famicom.

Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
Game Cartridge

SEGA®

# DONKEY KONG JR. NO SANSUU ASOBI

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Education Catalog no.: HVC-CA





# BASEBALL

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Sports Catalog no.: HVC-BA



# STAR JACKER

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1010

## STAR JACKER™

スター・ジャッカー



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

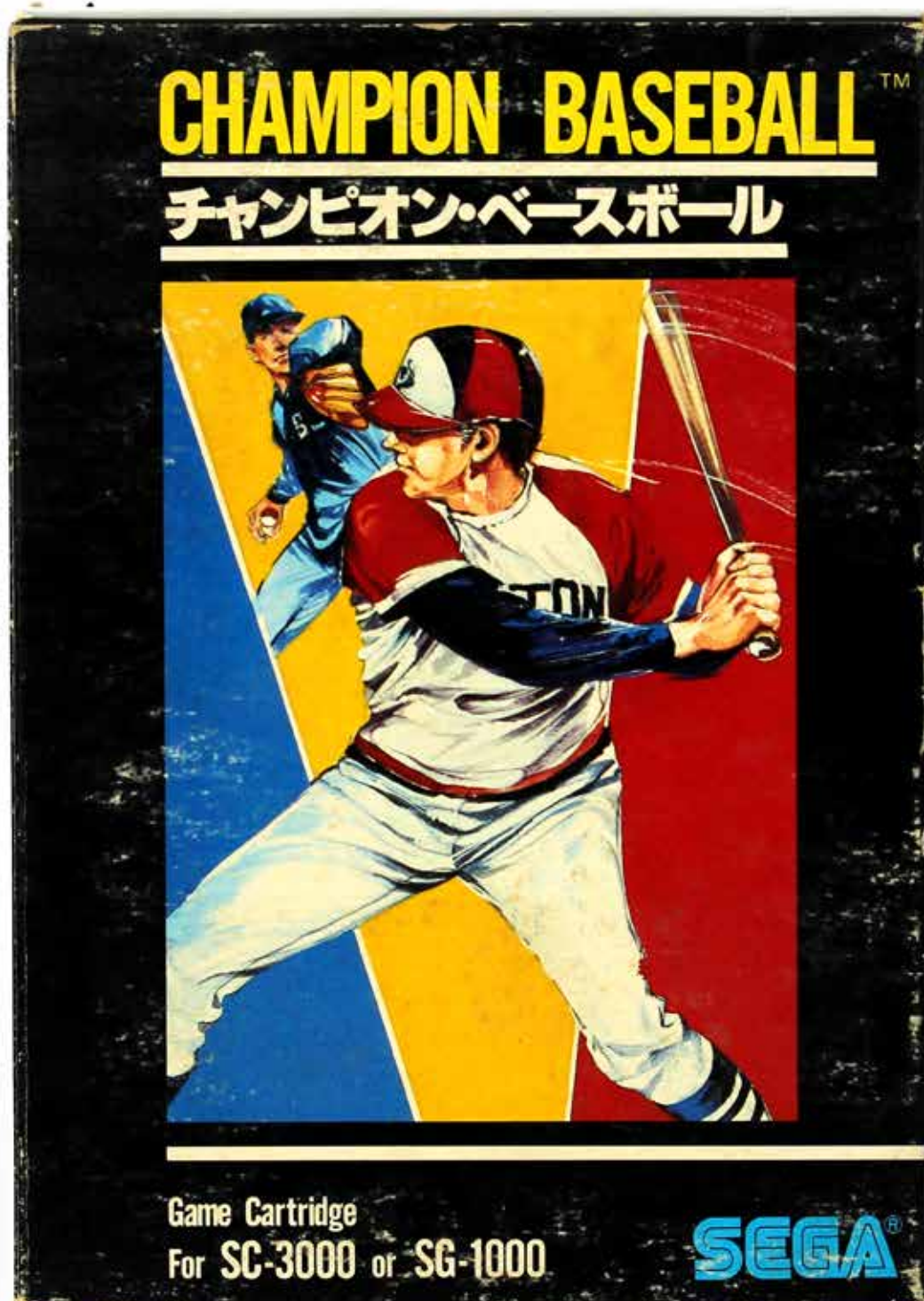
SEGA®

SG-1000



# CHAMPION BASEBALL

Developer: Alpha Denshi Publisher: Sega Genre: Sports Catalog no.: G-1011



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
Game Cartridge

SEGA

SG-1000

## DONKEY KONG JR. NO SANSUU ASOBI

The second of Nintendo's quick reworkings of a Famicom launch title into an educational app, *Donkey Kong Jr. No Sansuu Asobi* was the only one to make its way beyond Japan (as *Donkey Kong Jr. Math*, no doubt to the chagrin of children hoping to unwrap an *actual* video game for their birthday or holiday only to discover this instead). The failings of this cart have less to do with its educational nature than the fact that it feels largely incomplete. Players control Junior as he creates sums, but the main game lacks any sort of scoring or timing to urge players to hurry along, and the competitive mode requires a second player to function, as it lacks any sort of CPU control.

In Japan, Nintendo initially advertised a third of these educational titles, which would have been based on the assets of the one launch game unaccounted for by the final releases: *Donkey Kong No Ongaku Asobi*, a music tutor that would have used *Donkey Kong's* graphical assets (and, presumably, the mic built into the Famicom's Controller II). That one never came to pass, possibly because the devs couldn't make a convincing music tutor within the limitations of a first-gen Famicom cartridge. Or it could be that by the time it would have reached stores, the system had grown enough that Nintendo didn't need more of these awkward half-measures to flesh out the Famicom library.

## BASEBALL

**B**aseball may be America's favorite pastime, but Japan collectively gives our enthusiasm for the sport a real run for its money. Naturally, Nintendo (like Epoch) chose to grace its first console with an adaptation of the sport as quickly as they could manage. *Baseball* stands out among 1983 Famicom releases for being a wholly original creation for the console rather than an arcade port, an educational ROM hack of an arcade port, or a straightforward conversion of a traditional tabletop or parlor pastime. While this wasn't the most sophisticated baseball sim the world had ever seen by this point (that honor goes to *MLB World Series Baseball*

for Intellivision), but it would prove to be perhaps the single most influential baseball simulation of all time. The simplicity of its design combined with all the fun details Nintendo programmed into it (for example, the way the players twitch anxiously in anticipation of the pitch) give it far more personality than you might expect from such a primitive sports title. Its cartoonish graphical style and screen layout would spawn countless imitators. *Baseball* would naturally come to the U.S. for the NES launch, but the energetic Famicom illustration captures the look of the game more convincingly than the fake pixel art Nintendo of America used for its boxes.



## STAR JACKER

**S**tar Jacker. Perhaps the name is meant to be a play on "hijacker" or "car jacker"? This shoot-em-up does not involve any sort of theft, however. On the contrary, it's a game in which your resources are steadily depleted in a battle against attrition. In a fairly unique twist, *Star Jacker* gives the player several extra lives but requires you to control all of them at once. Your starfighter leads a trail of backup ships around in a strange take on the phrase "wagon train to the stars," as your extra lives become a grim burden that makes you more vulnerable to attack. All of your ships fire projectiles at enemies, not just the fighter in the lead position, and each of them is vulnerable to enemy attack

in return. *Star Jacker* gives you the somewhat sickening experience of watching your bonus chances tick down as they fall afoul of enemy fire, your firepower diminishing accordingly. This creates a curious play dynamic in which your ship grows *less* powerful as your life train is whittled down and you lose a source of firepower; at the same time, your shrinking convoy makes it easier to evade foes. Even if the gameplay revolves around an unconventional twist, the cover illustration for this game is classic with a 1970s-era John Berkey style about it. Admittedly, it feels a little off-brand, with the fighter draped in deco reminiscent of a tablecloth swiped from some Italian bistro.

## CHAMPION BASEBALL

**B**ecause America's favorite pastime is also Japan's favorite pastime, the SG-1000 got a baseball game right out of the gate the same as Famicom did. Alpha Denshi's *Champion Baseball* went over well enough with audiences that it ended up being released in arcades on hardware similar to the SG-1000 to considerable success in Japan. Unfortunately, what flew in 1983 does not always hold up four decades later. *Champion Baseball* offers a limited and primitive take on the sport at best, reminiscent in many ways of an Atari 2600 game. To its credit, the heavily automated fielding does a good job of keeping the score down to

reasonable, realistic levels, which sets it apart from the majority of 8-bit sports games. More often than not, early baseball games handed fielding control to players without providing them with a system that could make full use of the feature, making any interaction outside of batting a nightmare and leading to lopsided scores in which the computer dominated the player. Likewise, the cover art does a lot to boost the game; its old-school illustration of a batter standing astride a split field of primary colors is a really strong image! Unfortunately, the pitcher juts out at an awkward tangent, a tiny man growing out of the batter's face.



Sega had big ambitions for the SG-1000 platform, despite their relatively modest expectations for its performance on the market. One of those grand ideas involved licensing out the console's hardware to other manufacturers to create SG-1000-compatible computers and consoles. Unfortunately, around the same time the SG-1000 launched, ASCII and Microsoft debuted the MSX platform, a similar semi-open spec available for licensing and technically quite

similar (but definitely superior) to the SG-1000, more or less nipping that ambition in the bud. The only SG-1000 derivative to make it to market came in the form of Tsukuda Original's Othello Multivision, an expanded version of the company's LED-based handheld Othello board game capable of plugging into a television and playing Multivision and SG-1000 carts. Including the built-in *Othello* ROM, the short-lived Multivision's library only made it to nine games total.



# OTHELLO MULTIVISION

Manufacturer: *Tsukuda Original* Catalog no.: G-1003

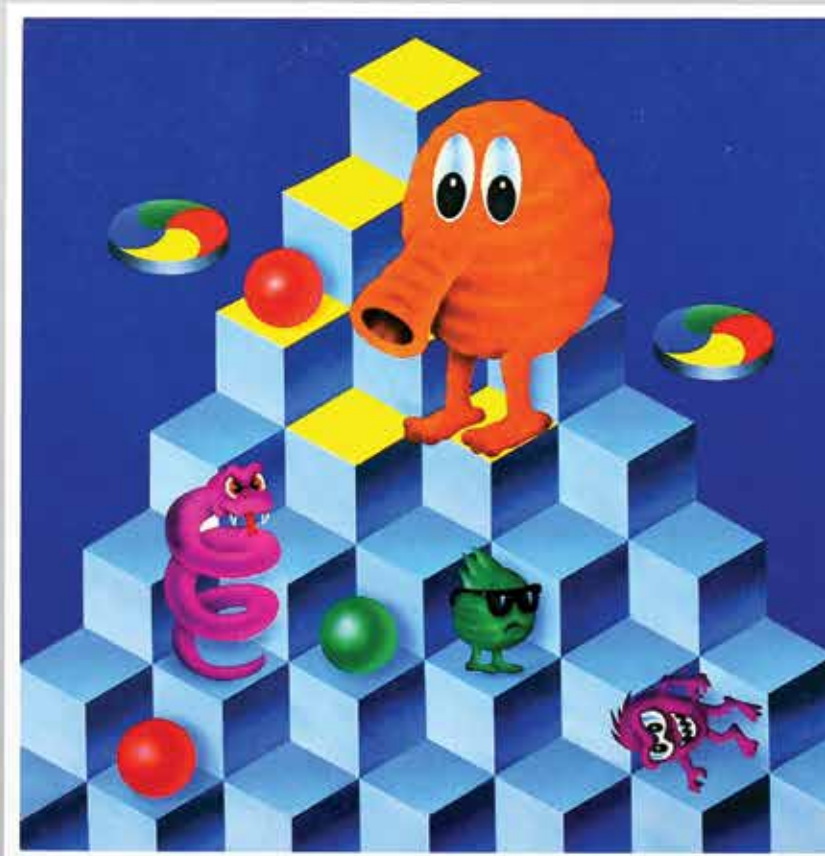
# Q\*BERT

Developer: Konami Publisher: Tsukuda Original Genre: Platforming Catalog no.: OM-G001

オセロマルチビジョン用カートリッジ

キューバート™

# Q\*bert



**Tsukuda Original**

ツクダオリジナル

Multivision



# GUZZLER

Developer: Tehkan/Tsukuda Original Publisher: Tsukuda Original Genre: Maze Action Catalog no.: OM-G002

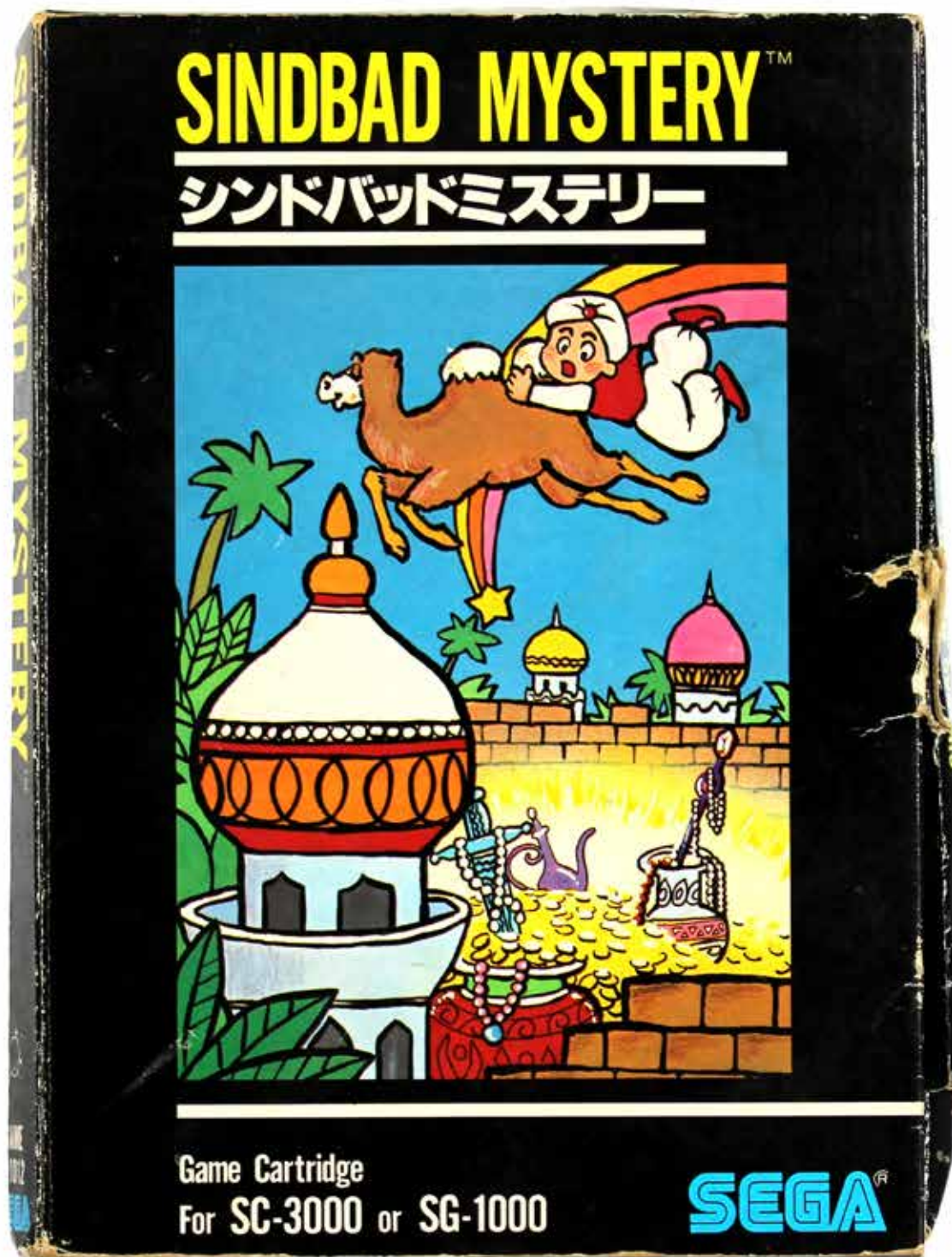


# SPACE MOUNTAIN

Developer: Tsukuda Original Publisher: Tsukuda Original Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: OM-G003

# SINDBAD MYSTERY

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Maze Action Catalog no.: G-1012



SG-1000

## Q\*BERT

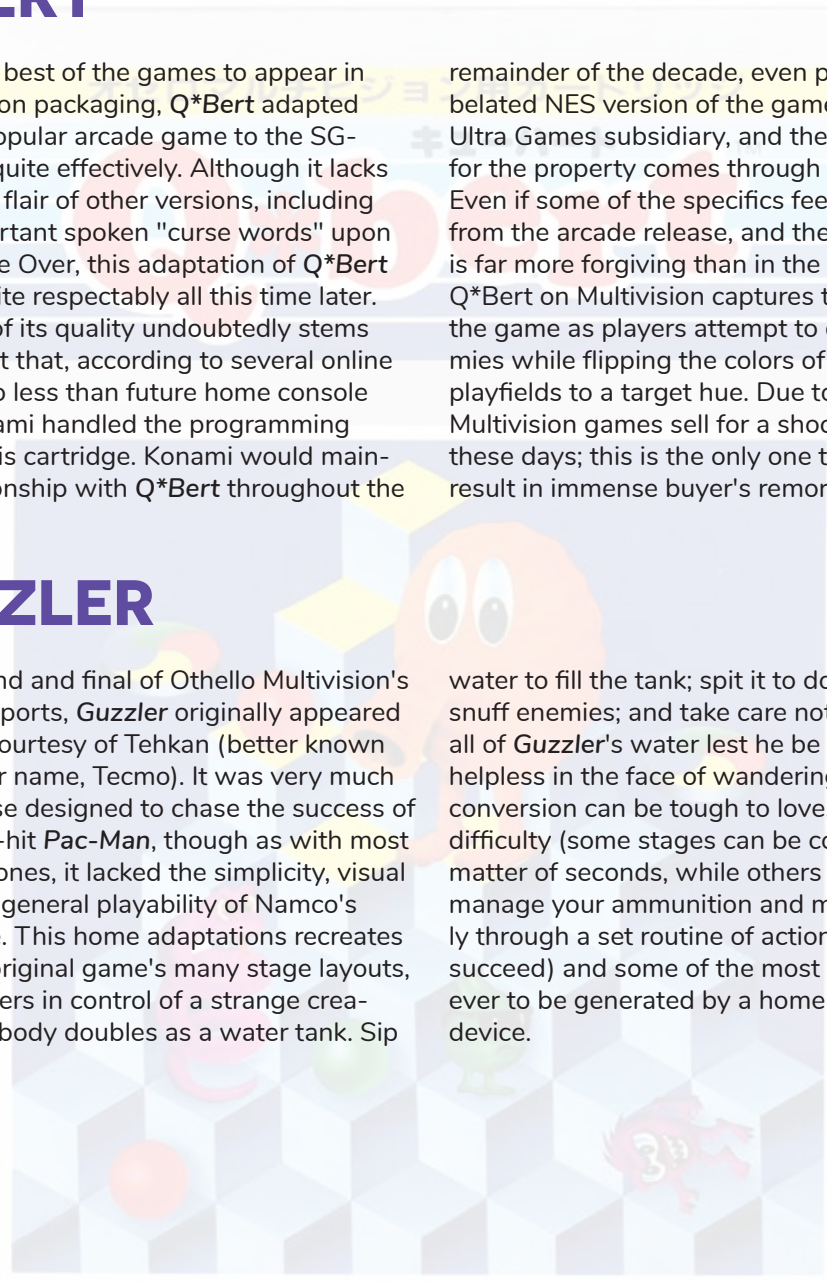
**B**y far the best of the games to appear in Multivision packaging, *Q\*Bert* adapted Gottlieb's popular arcade game to the SG-1000 spec quite effectively. Although it lacks some of the flair of other versions, including the all-important spoken "curse words" upon hitting Game Over, this adaptation of *Q\*Bert* holds up quite respectably all this time later. The secret of its quality undoubtedly stems from the fact that, according to several online accounts, no less than future home console goliath Konami handled the programming duties on this cartridge. Konami would maintain a relationship with *Q\*Bert* throughout the

remainder of the decade, even publishing a belated NES version of the game under their Ultra Games subsidiary, and their affection for the property comes through clearly here. Even if some of the specifics feel a little off from the arcade release, and the difficulty level is far more forgiving than in the coin-op title, *Q\*Bert* on Multivision captures the essence of the game as players attempt to dodge enemies while flipping the colors of its pyramidal playfields to a target hue. Due to their scarcity, Multivision games sell for a shocking amount these days; this is the only one that won't result in immense buyer's remorse.

## GUZZLER

**T**he second and final of Othello Multivision's coin-op ports, *Guzzler* originally appeared in arcades courtesy of Tehkan (better known by their later name, Tecmo). It was very much a maze chase designed to chase the success of maze mega-hit *Pac-Man*, though as with most such *Pac*-clones, it lacked the simplicity, visual appeal, and general playability of Namco's masterpiece. This home adaptations recreates four of the original game's many stage layouts, putting players in control of a strange creature whose body doubles as a water tank. Sip

water to fill the tank; spit it to douse fires and snuff enemies; and take care not to expend all of *Guzzler*'s water lest he be rendered helpless in the face of wandering flames. This conversion can be tough to love, with lopsided difficulty (some stages can be completed in a matter of seconds, while others force you to manage your ammunition and move precisely through a set routine of actions in order to succeed) and some of the most grating audio ever to be generated by a home entertainment device.



Tsukuda Original

120x100x100mm



## SPACE MOUNTAIN

The first of Multivision's original creations, and arguably the worst, *Space Mountain* plays less like a proper commercial game release and more like a teenager's homebrew attempt at creating their own version of Atari's arcade classic *Star Wars*. It's not so much that *Space Mountain* was influenced by *Star Wars* as it is that *Space Mountain* badly recreates the entire arcade game, from the space battle against legally-distinct T.I.E. Fighter knock-offs to an awkward trench run sequence with opaque controls that require players to pilot both their ship and their missile targeting reticle simultaneously. The lack of immersive con-

trol yoke and dazzling vector graphics of the actual *Star Wars* upright hurt any legitimate console adaptation of the game, but even the worst home rendition of *Star Wars* managed to be more convincing than this sputtering, clumsy, poorly programmed effort. Perhaps it might not seem quite so offensive if the cover illustration didn't present such a stylish and exciting representation of what is clearly a *Star Wars* X-Wing fighter facing off against a *Star Destroyer's* fleet of T.I.E. Advances.

## SINDBAD MYSTERY

Back on the SG-1000 proper side of things, we have *Sindbad Mystery*, a game largely forgotten by history—perhaps unfairly. The multi-maze action attempts to capture a slice of *Pac-Man's* success, much as with *Guzzler*, but Sega managed to come much closer to achieving that dream than Tehkan did. It certainly helps that *Sindbad Mystery* does more than simply drop players into a maze chase, instead taking cues from some of the better single-screen action games of the era. Besides the obvious influence, it also channels *Heian-kyo Alien* with its dig-and-trap mechanic, while the isometric perspective and multi-level stages (complete with bridges and tunnels) calls to mind Atari's *Crystal Castles*. Both the

hero and the monsters he evades call to mind Ray Harryhausen's *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*, though you wouldn't know it to look at the packaging; its whimsical cartoon hero looks nothing like beefy actor Kerwin Matthews. In fact, the cover art style in general represents a massive departure from other box illustrations on SG-1000 to this point. It's cartoonish and bold, with a simple look to the manga-esque main character and a lively environment that resembles a painted background animation cel. The overall look has more in common with Famicom's general cartoon vibe than with the painterly commercial illustration of other early SG-1000 boxes—surely a better fit for the Japanese market.

Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

Compared to its contemporary rival, the Nintendo Famicom, Sega's SG-1000 resembled the previous generation of consoles in a lot of ways, and not just because it shared an almost completely identical internal architecture with the ColecoVision. Sega's hardware simply reflected a more established way of approaching video games than Nintendo's more future-focused design. Consider the SG-1000 controller: A single-grip joystick designed to be held in one hand and manipulated with the other. With buttons flanking the grip, it had an ambidextrous nature, making it more flexible

in that respect than Nintendo's game pad. Unfortunately, the joystick itself suffered from the build issues common to early home console joysticks, with a loose and often unresponsive stick, spongy buttons that lacked convincing action, and a tendency to wear out quickly with regular use. Worse yet, the joystick came hardwired into the console, so if the controller failed, the whole console was effectively rendered unusable. Things would get better once the revised Mark II hardware shipped. But in the early days, Sega fans had to rely on the less-than-reliable SJ-200 stick.



## SJ-200

Manufacturer: [Sega](#) Catalog no.: SJ-200

The SG-1000 boxes featured in this volume appear in two different formats. Sega initially released its games in oversized cardboard boxes, but somewhere along the way they reworked the packaging to be just large enough to contain a cartridge and manual. Many games appeared in large boxes before being reissued in the compact format. Though economical and tidy, the small boxes lacked the craftsmanship of SG-1000's big boxes,

where the front cover opens like a book to reveal a pocket for the game manual opposite a nook that held the cartridge securely in place while allowing it to be removed easily. The box front remains secure when shut thanks to a small, self-contained, tab-and-slot design. These thoughtfully engineered packages make it clear that their owners are meant to keep the box along with the cart rather than simply discarding it.





# MONACO GP

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Racing Catalog no.: G-1016

## MONACO GP™

モナコ GP



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®



# SEGA FLIPPER

SG-1000

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Pinball Catalog no.: G-1017



SG-1000



# POP FLAMER

Developer: Jaleco/Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Maze Action Catalog no.: G-1019

## POP FLAMER™

### ポップ フレーマー



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®



# PACAR

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Racing/Maze Action Catalog no.: G-1020

# PACAR™

## パッカー



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
game cartridge

SEGA®

SG-1000

## MONACO GP

Given how badly Sega whiffed its conversion of arcade hit *Congo Bongo* to SG-1000, *Monaco GP* becomes the biggest title in the system's early lineup. Arguably, the original coin-op release put Sega on the map as an arcade powerhouse in the first place. Certainly it set the tone for many of Sega's greatest successes. *Monaco GP* was a high-speed, top-down arcade racer that has yet to see a truly perfect home conversion due to its place in the Sega legacy as the company's final machine to make use of TTL-based hardware rather than a modern microchip-based setup. This gave the original hardware some unique features,

such as a roadway that constantly expanded and contracted to create the impression of a narrowing highway, as well as an external LED-based score panel. While the SG-1000 hardware obviously couldn't recreate those elements, the essence of *Monaco GP* comes through effectively here: The race through the tropical roads, the transitions onto slippery roads, the high-speed emergency vehicles that threaten to plow into your racer from behind, even the broken bridges that need to be leapt. *Monaco GP* turned out to be such a strong conversion that it would remain in circulation throughout the SG-1000's lifetime, making its

## SEGA FLIPPER

*Sega Flipper*'s box art makes a stunning first impression. Vivid and bold, it spices up the staid video pinball genre with a visual representation that captures the energy and flash of a real pinball table through crisp, flat, comic book-style art, which is then enhanced by a few key applications of airbrushing to simulate the reflective silver of a steel pinball. A fantastic illustration. As for the game itself? Good, but it doesn't live up to the cover representation of the software contained inside. Bear in mind that this was one of the earliest proper interpretations of pinball in console form; before this, pinball titles leavend their real-world simulation with elements of shooters or the

*Breakout* genre, as with Namco's *Gee Bee*. *Sega Flipper* compacts an entire pinball table into a single screen, with a complex design containing two sets of flippers and a decent simulation of ball physics. The action is fast-paced and unforgiving, just like the real thing, but the graphical limitations of the system make for a less precise simulation than you might hope. Still, *Sega Flipper* manages to be every bit as convincing a recreation of pinball as many titles that would ship years later. This is a nice example of Sega leaning into its arcade roots on console, for all that "arcade gaming" entails.



## POP FLAMER

**P**op Flamer couldn't possibly have lived up to its packaging no matter how good the game actually turned out to be. From the vaguely naughty-sounding title to the delirious pop-art illustration, *Pop Flamer* gives off an aura of whimsical confidence. It has a mouse, with a flamethrower, who blasts frogs as he evades what appears to be Godzilla. By all appearances, an absolute digital masterpiece. In action, however, *Pop Flamer* falls flat by playing miserably. Aimless design, confusing mechanics, and a tendency for your character to get stuck on corners of the scenery in the midst of heated monster pursuit: All of these

factors combine to make for a profoundly unconvincing take on the maze-chase genre. The box art isn't misleading, precisely, because all the elements it depicts appear in-game; they simply appear in game with less style and exuberance. *Pop Flamer* really does feature a mouse with a flamethrower who has to pop balloons and evade Godzilla. But there's no real creative spark behind this seeming whimsy; *Pop Flamer* contains a random jumble of ideas flailing in a desperate bid to find a compelling gimmick—a failed bid. Such a pity.

## PACAR

**S**achieved minor arcade success with its early racing game *Head On*, enough so that it went on to have a moderately interesting legacy for a decade afterwards. Sega licensed the game to Nintendo, who shipped it as *Head On N*, and a revamped version of the game lived on for years as a built-in test ROM in some of Sega's later coin-op boards, an inclusion made entirely to satisfy the technicalities of a particular Japanese arcade law. Somehow, though, no Sega home console ever received a port of *Head On*. Nintendo's Game Boy got one as late as 1990 with Tecmo's *Power Racer*, but Sega failed to bring this foundational arcade racer home to its own systems. Instead, they published *Pacar*, which was effectively a *Head On* sequel and arguably a better game,

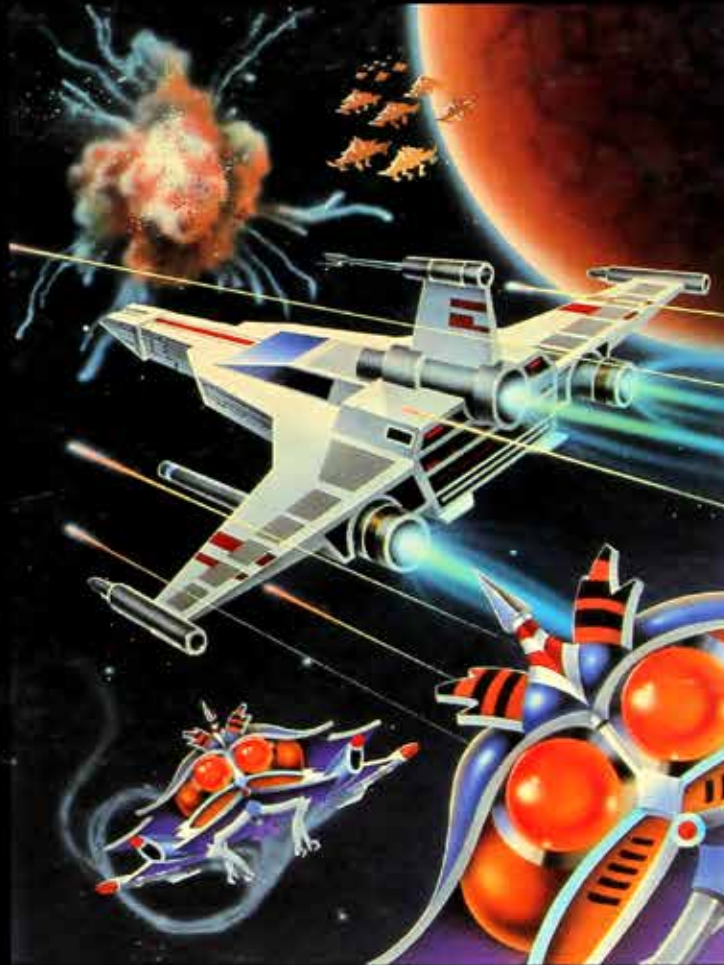
with more complex stages and more challenging design. And the name—"Pac-Car," as in *Pac-Man* plus car—speaks to the enthusiasm with which Sega embraced the maze action genre that followed in *Head On*'s wake. This successor offers players more dots to drive over, more complex level layouts, and even energizer pellets to allow you to turn the tables on the enemy racers. The cover art does a grave disservice to the contents inside; *Pacar* as a game is as superior to its box illustration as *Pop Flamer* is a disappointment compared to its respective packaging. Look past the questionable drawing and you have another excellent example of the maze chase genre to sit proudly alongside *Sindbad Mystery*.

# SEGA-GALAGA

Developer: Namco Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1021

## SEGA-GALAGA™

セガ・ギャラガ



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

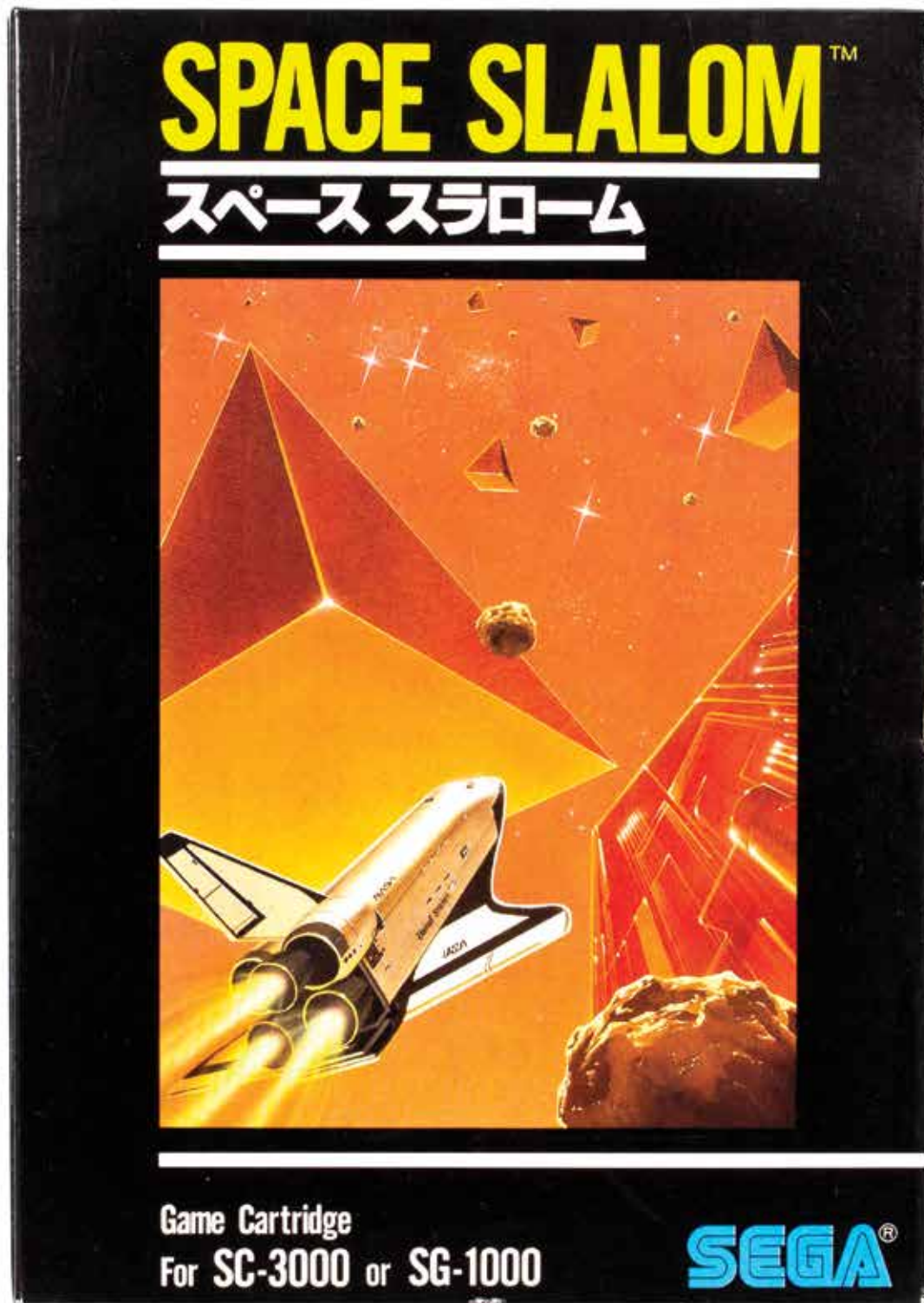
SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
Game Cartridge

SEGA®

# SPACE SLALOM

Developer: Orca Publisher: Sega Genre: Racing Catalog no.: G-1023



SG-1000



# PACHINKO

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Gambling Catalog no.: G-1027

# PACHINKO™

## パチンコ



Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

SG-1000



# EXERION

Developer: Jaleco/Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1028



SG-1000

## SEGA-GALAGA

The first-ever home console conversion of Namco's arcade masterpiece *Galaga* appeared on SG-1000 at the end of 1983 by way of a rendition that publisher Sega took so much pride in they put their name on it. *Sega-Galaga* is a respectable adaptation—perhaps unsurprisingly, as Namco handled the conversion themselves rather than farming it out or leaving it in Sega's hands. Even so, the SG-1000's technical limitations do rear their head in a few notable ways. This adaptation lacks the “challenging stages” that serve as a breather and bonus opportunity every few levels. The movement of ships looks quite

choppy. Enemies really only have one pattern, which simply gets faster and faster with each new stage. Given that this was the only home version available in Japan for a year or so, players at the time were more than happy to make do. Sega's box illustration is a fairly plain “airbrushed space ships flying around” affair, but it does show off the insectile *Galaga* lead ships to clear effect, so it does the trick (even if the formation of ships in the background looks more like a flock of escapees from *Space Invaders*).

## SPACE SLALOM

*Space Slalom* for SG-1000 is not really much of a game. It's a racing game, sort of, but you don't have to best any sort of competitors. You simply race against the clock, attempting to pass through sets of winking stars (the gates that explain the “slalom” part of the title) with a space shuttle (the “space” part of the title). Not unlike *Space Mountain*, the cartridge Sega published into the world feels less like a polished commercial release and more like the a program you'd have typed in from a listing in the back of a computer maga-

zine in the early 1980s. In that sense, this is a relic of a bygone era: An era when seemingly amateur game projects could make their way to retail pretty easily, overlapping with the era of shuttlemania. NASA's space shuttle used to be the peak of cool, a sci-fi concept made real. Perhaps due to its mediocrity, *Space Slalom* is the SG-1000's second rarest release, and in six months of combing auction and Japanese retro retailers, the kind of game that sells for \$1000 or more... when you're actually able to find it.

Game Cartridge  
For SC-3000 or SG-1000

SEGA®

For SC-3000 or SG-1000  
Game Cartridge

SEGA®



## PACHINKO

The only game less common and more avidly sought by hardcore SG-1000 collectors than *Space Slalom*, *Pachinko* regularly fetches prices in the \$2000-3000 range. That astronomical price did not come about as a side effect of the “retro bubble”; *Pachinko* has always been a coveted collectible. By some accounts, Sega recalled it immediately upon launch due to a defect in production, replacing it almost immediately with a sequel (*Pachinko II*) that was more an expanded rerelease than a proper sequel. While some pricey collectibles demand to be played by every due to their exquisite design and well-deserved legendary

status, that is not the case for *Pachinko*. Sega programmed a single virtual pachinko table for this cartridge, which means “play” consists of launching balls into a handful of targets. This involves no test of skill; you simply hold down a button and nudge your aim slightly until you run out of either pachinko balls or patience. Supposedly pachinko games are popular among fans of the location-based machines for allowing them to practice, in which case you can imagine how little value there would be in a flawed simulation of a single table.

## EXERION

There's something simultaneously wondrous yet heartbreaking about games on vintage systems that strain to punch above their weight. The SG-1000 port of Jaleco's *Exerion* definitely falls under that heading, and it elicits precisely that complex blend of emotions. In arcades, *Exerion* featured a split-screen scrolling effect that created the impression of an alien landscape zooming past below your fighter as you dodged and juke to avoid incoming fire, all while grappling with an unconventional feature that had been prominent in early American-made space games like *Computer Space* and *Asteroids* but tended not to feature in Japan's descendants of *Space Invaders*: inertial weight and movement. *Exerion*'s scrolling gimmick looked

pretty amazing in arcades of the time, even if it ultimately amounted to nothing more than a whiz-bang visual effect tarting up a mostly standard take on the shoot-em-up. The SG-1000 lays bare that illusion. Unfortunately, the hardware was poorly suited to reproduce that kind of visual trickery, with stop-start scrolling capabilities and an extremely limited color palette. The system's limitations turned *Exerion* into an eye-searing headache whose visual dissonance highlighted the merely acceptable nature of its gameplay. A noble attempt to push the console's limits, but literally painful to play. The box art fares better, at least, with its glorious copyright infringement battle for the ages as Luke Skywalker's T-16 Skyhopper faces down Mecha-King Ghidorah.



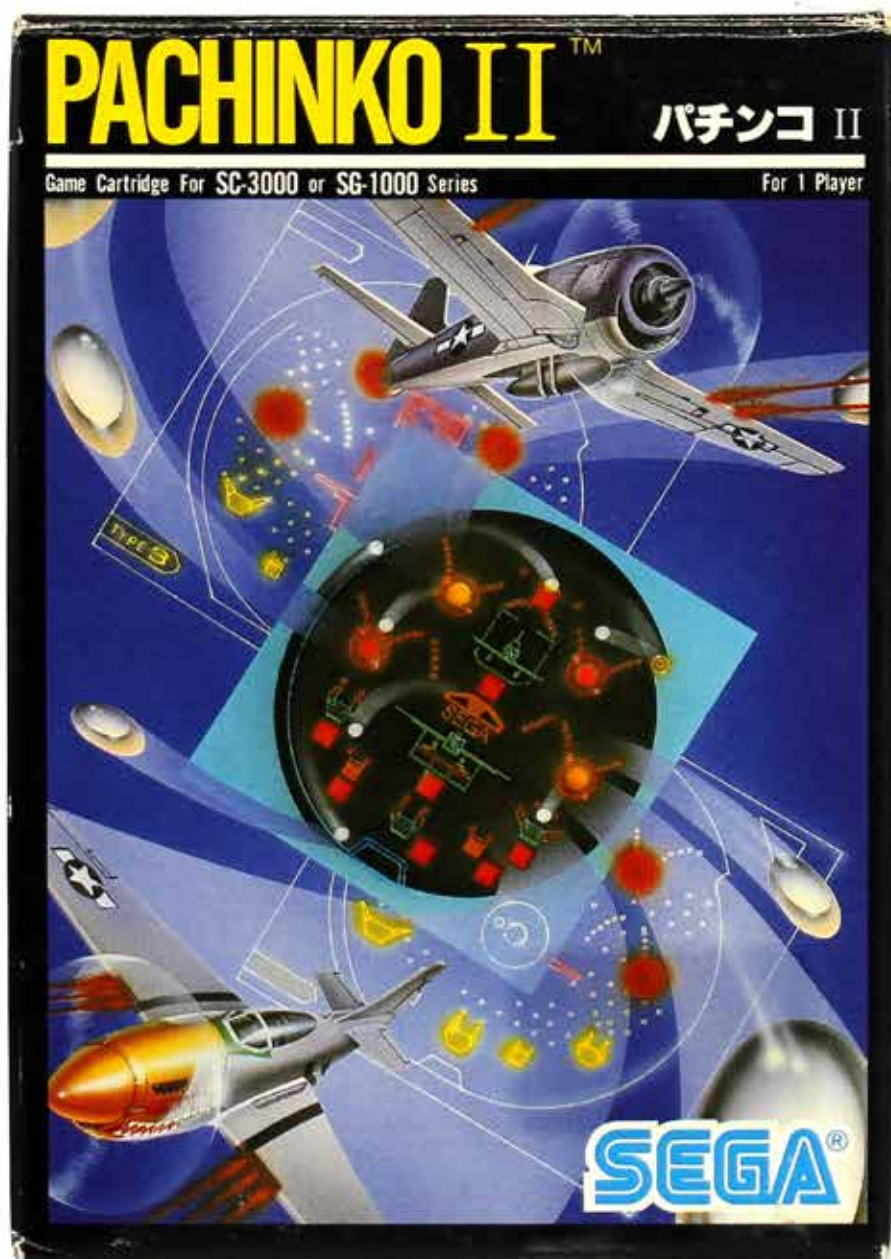
1984





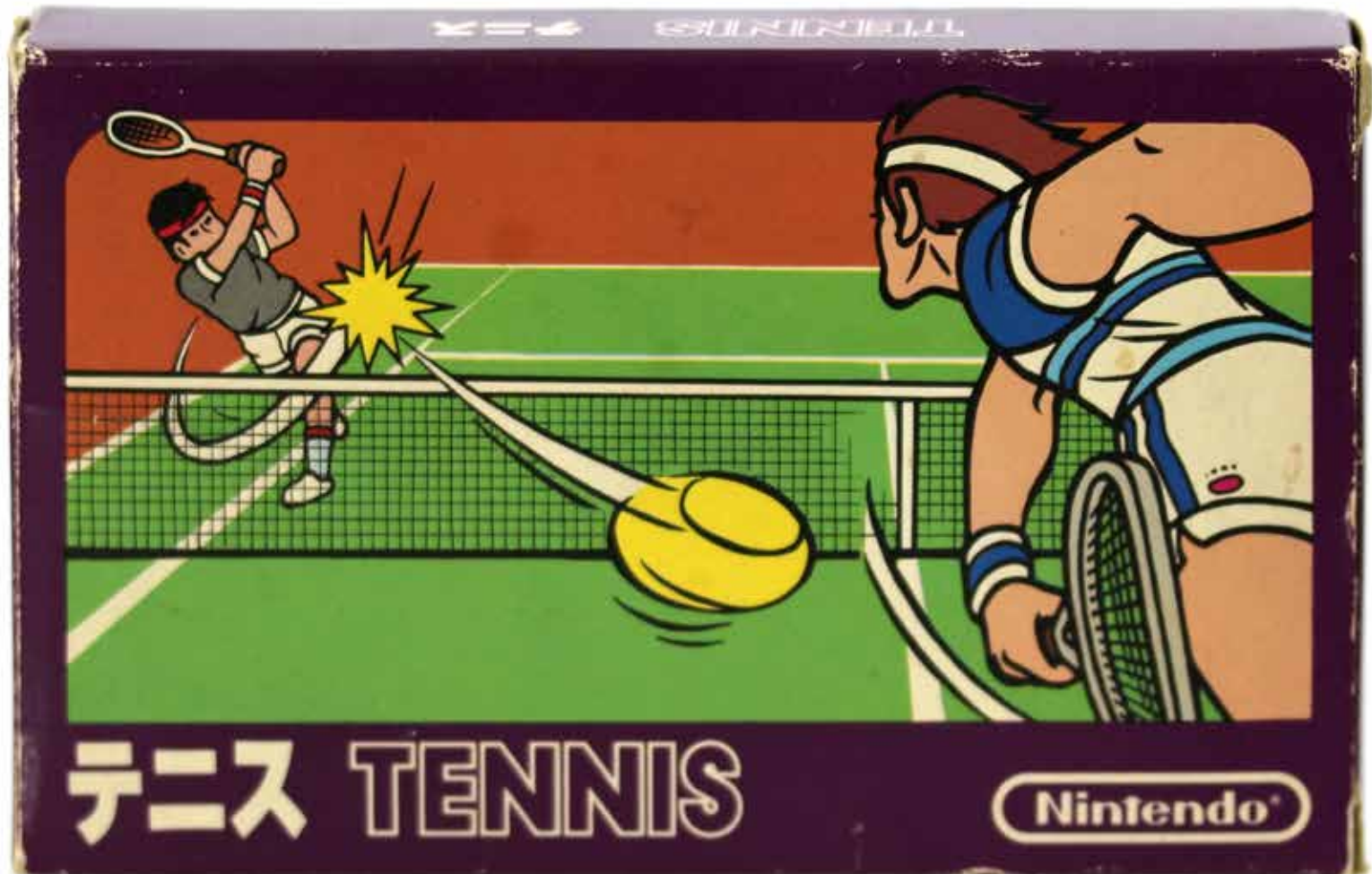
# PACHINKO II

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Gambling Catalog no.: G-1029



# TENNIS

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Sports Catalog no.: HVC-TE





# PINBALL

Developer: Nintendo/HAL Labs Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Pinball Catalog no.: HVC-PN





## PACHINKO II

While Pachinko has become the single rarest SG-1000 game, all but impossible to find and typically commanding four-figure prices, its scarcity is no great loss to the world. That's not a commentary on its value or the worthiness of pachinko games, simply a function of its legacy. Pachinko's sequel, *Pachinko II*, appears far more commonly on the market, and at drastically more reasonable prices. It can be difficult to get a firm read on exact SG-1000 release dates, but some online accounts suggest *Pachinko II* launched mere weeks after the first game. Certainly its catalog number places them in close proximity at retail, being only two spots apart in the SG-1000 library. According to the internet at large, *Pachinko*'s rarity stemmed from a crippling bug that forced a recall of the game, which could be the case. However, considering that *Pachinko II* contains both the single virtual table featured in the first game as well as two additional tables (both of which are far more elaborate than the original table), another more likely explanation is that *Pachinko* simply shipped unfinished, so Sega rushed the corrected *Pachinko II* to market. Whatever the truth, the two new machines found here incorporate more interactive elements than the basic table, and it's hilariously easy to rack up insanely huge numbers on the score table. Sure, there's not much to *Pachinko II* in terms of interactivity, but it certainly does satisfy the primal urge to make numbers get bigger.

## TENNIS

**N**intendo's first Famicom release for 1984 would also be the first NES game ever released in America, in a matter of speaking: *Tennis*. Not only would this put in an appearance as an NES launch game, but it reached the States long before the console ever launched as Nintendo's inaugural Vs. System titles in arcades. Anyone old enough to remember those distinctive red-blue grid cabinets back in the early '80s probably dropped a few quarters into *Tennis*, which may have been designed for home console hardware but still presented enough graphical and physics finesse that it didn't feel entirely out of place

among 1984's dedicated coin-ops. *Tennis* takes cues from Sega's *Champion Tennis*, but it makes use of the Famicom's visual capabilities to present a better-looking (and playing) simulation of the sport: A scaling effect and shadow for the ball; detailed player sprites; and a stronger sense of visual perspective. It's rudimentary and dated by modern standards, but it still manages to meet the bare minimum threshold for current-day playability. The box art plays up the 3D view of the court with a dramatic behind-the-player perspective as the guy in the forecourt seemingly whiffs his return. Love-15, then?

## PINBALL

**F**ollowing immediately on *Tennis*' heels came *Pinball*. Nintendo was admittedly not much for creativity in naming when it came to video games based on real-world analogs, but the effort the company didn't put into titles instead went into enriching the actual games. *Sega Flipper* for SG-1000 had instigated a dramatic leap in quality and fidelity over previous console pinball sims, and this Famicom creation in turn constituted an equally significant step forward from *Sega Flipper*. *Pinball* incorporated some obvious advances, like the multi-screen table design and the bonus game in which Mario controlled

a *Breakout*-style paddle, but more essential to this cart's success was the addition of convincing ball physics. Where *Sega Flipper*'s ball moved along predetermined ball paths, *Pinball* (co-produced by HAL, whose star programmer Satoru Iwata was a genius with the Famicom's 6502 processor) featured dynamic and reactive ball movement. This made for a more immersive, more varied take on pinball, which you might not guess that from the prosaic box art. It eschews the Famicom house style for a literal take on the in-game table featuring pixel art, something Nintendo highlighted on U.S. NES boxes but largely avoided in Japan.

# GOLGO 13

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1014



SG-1000



# ORGUSS

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1015



SG-1000







★ガン単品では、  
ご使用になれません。  
光線銃シリーズ専用です。

Nintendo



## GOLGO 13

**S**G-1000's first media-licensed game underscores the fact that the medium tended to be targeted as much toward adults as children in its early days. The cold-eyed assassin Golgo 13 is Japan's equivalent to James Bond, if James Bond were an amoral, emotionless, sex-powered murder machine. This interpretation of Golgo 13 is far simpler than *Top Secret Episode*, the 1988 NES game that most American collectors associate with the character. Rather than taking the form of a rambling global adventure, this Golgo 13 consists of a simple shooting gallery where you try to blast out the windows of a train so that passengers can escape, while trying to avoid dying to your own reflected bullets. It's a strange use of

the license, but it's fun enough. The cover art makes a better impression than the game: An ink-and-paint piece in Saito Productions style that manages to work all the gameplay elements (train, chopper, car, etc.) into the layout. Golgo 13 himself holds his trademark custom M-16 Armalite machine gun while pointing a pistol at the viewer, which seems a bit like literal overkill. According to Sega's official records, neither this game nor *Orguss* appeared in stores until 1984, despite having catalog numbers that place them ahead of *Monaco GP*—the prevailing theory being that their large ROM chips necessitated them being held back a few months longer than intended.

## ORGUSS

**R**leased adjacent to *Golgo 13*, SG-1000's second licensed title, *Orguss*, was based on an anime series that shared a connection to *Super Dimension Fortress Macross* and *Super Dimension Cavalry Southern Cross*. That is to say, it's the lost sibling to the cartoons that appeared in amalgamated form in the U.S. as *Robotech*. *Orguss* unsurprisingly involves robots that transform into fighter jets. These shows had no direct connection to the *Transformers* franchise, although perhaps it's only natural that *Orguss* plays a lot like the Famicom games based on *Macross* and *Transformers*, both of which shipped a fair bit later for that platform than SG-1000's *Orguss*. The transforming mech anime trend peaked in the

mid '80s, and games like *Orguss*, Game Arts' *Thexder*, and Jaleco's *Formation Z* all represented attempts to translate that concept into video game form—though not with complete success. All of them worked like *Orguss* in the broad strokes: Side-scrolling shooters in which players control a fighter plane that turns into a robot. Here, as in *Macross* and *Transformers* for Famicom, the game designers didn't appear to have a real sense of direction for the transformation element, so it up being much ado about very little. At least the cover art is stunning, with a dead gorgeous cel animation mech layered atop a dazzling painted background. It's beautiful enough to forgive the mech its awkward, lifeless pose.

## GUN

Nintendo's prosaically named Gun accessory shipped in the U.S. with a different name ("Zapper") and an even more radically overhauled outer shell. In Japan, the Gun simply resembled a six-shooter rather than some sort of futuristic weapon. That stems in part from the fact that domestic gun violence essentially doesn't exist in Japan, and certainly not in the epidemic state Americans have to live with; by the time the NES launched, parent and political groups alike had begun to push back against realistic toy weapons, and Nintendo of America rolled with the punch. That the Gun took **this** specific form, however, has to do with Nintendo's own history: The company had enjoyed one of its very first hits with a pre-video light gun arcade installation called *Wild Gunman*, and both the Famicom game by the same name as well as the accessory required to play it hearkened back to the 1970s creation. The Gun packaging includes an overt tie-in to the home light gun products derived from the original *Wild Gunman* tech with a label stating "光線銃シリーズ" (Kousenjuu Series), the brand Nintendo had used for toys like the original *Duck Hunt* and *Sheriff*—both of which Nintendo had also adapted into video game form. There's a lot of history packed into this little plastic gun.

★ガン単品  
ご使用  
光線銃シリ

ーコンピュータ™専用

SHOOTING SERIES  
シリーズ

Nintendo

# WILD GUNMAN

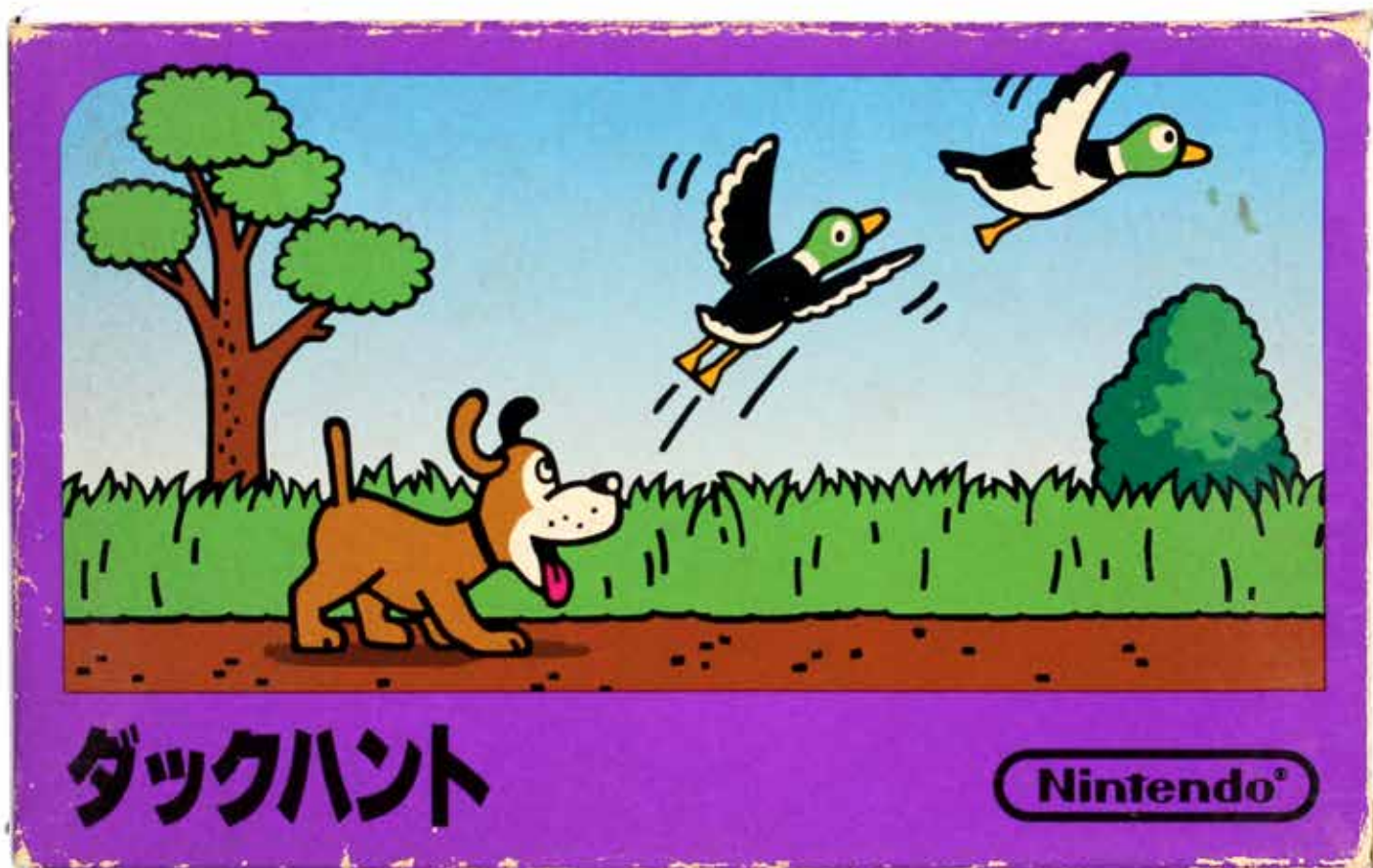
Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Shooting/Light Gun Catalog no.: HVC-WG





# DUCK HUNT

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Shooting/Light Gun Catalog no.: HVC-DH



# SH-400

Manufacturer: [Sega](#) Catalog no.: SH-400

# SR-1000

Manufacturer: [Sega](#) Catalog no.: SR-1000



## WILD GUNMAN

Where the packaging for the Gun accessory deliberately adopts a vintage style, and the rare Gun/*Wild Gunman* deluxe bundle package plays up the old-school history angle even more dramatically with a painting of a Wild West outlaw that wouldn't have looked out of place on an early SG-1000 package, the standalone Famicom cart of *Wild Gunman* strikes a more accurate tone with its cover art. The aging and colorfully dressed bandit here doesn't appear in the actual game, but he could very well have done. Unlike the coin-op

Wild Gunman from the 1970s, which demanded players out-shoot footage of live human actors (and had nothing to do with the made-up *Wild Gunman* arcade game Marty McFly plays at Cafe 80's in *Back to the Future Part II*), the Famicom and NES game eschewed realism in favor of goofy comical Old West stereotypes. The contrast between the realistic Gun accessory and the goofy cartoon Wild West outlaw on the *Wild Gunman* game box is one of the most delightful visual disconnects in the Famicom library.

## DUCK HUNT

Like *Wild Gunman*, *Duck Hunt* adapted a real-world shooting game into video form. But where *Wild Gunman* had been a huge arcade installation, *Duck Hunt* originally made its debut as a compact toy designed for homes: A light-emitting gun with a projector that could detect the light gun's beam as it reflected off the wall on which the target images were presented. Obviously, being a television-based investment, the Famicom *Duck Hunt* worked on entirely different principles than the toy from the 1970s. It also managed to pack a ton of personality into its limited premise, by way of

the cartoonish ducks players attempt to bag and the (somewhat) loyal hound who alternately celebrated the player's successes and sneered at their failures. In keeping with the Famicom Gun series' celebration of Nintendo's pre-video game heritage, *Duck Hunt* also included a skeet-shooting mode that called back to an even older Nintendo arcade light gun installation: The Laser Clay Shooting System. There's a lot of history in this cartridge! But for kids in the '80s, it was just a fun test of skill, punctuated by the infuriating shenanigans of a snickering mutt.

## SH-400

Sega has always been synonymous with arcades, and the company leaned into that legacy when they moved into the home market. The SG-1000's library heavily emphasized arcade conversions, and Sega did their best to bring the arcade experience home, with peripherals like the SH-400. ("SH" meaning "Steering Handle.") Designed to work with Monaco GP and other first-party racers, the SH-400 couldn't reasonably replicate the arcade setup, where players controlled their car's acceleration with a gas pedal. Instead, that's where the "handle" comes into play.

The gearshift lever on the left is linked to "up" and "down" on the joystick (with the wheel itself linked to "left" and "right" inputs). In *Monaco GP*, at least, this produces the sensation of up- and downshifting to control the speed of your car—a pretty cool effect. The SH-400 doesn't translate nearly as well to games that map gas and brakes to buttons. The handle controller does have buttons, but holding a dash button to maintain speed while steering with the other hand just feels off. But for games it suits, it's a great controller.

## SR-1000

T<sub>ext here</sub>

# GOLF

Developer: Nintendo/HAL Labs Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Sports Catalog no.: HVC-GL

Family Computer





# HOGAN'S ALLEY

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Shooting/Light Gun Catalog no.: JVC-HA



# ZIPPY RACE

Developer: *Jaleco/Sega* Publisher: *Sega* Genre: *Racing* Catalog no.: *G-1026*

SG-1000

# SANNIN MAHJONG

Developer: Tsukuda Original Publisher: Tskukuda Original Genre: Gambling Catalog no.: OM-G004



## GOLF

**A**nother groundbreaking sports title from Nintendo. Golf may not look like much these days, but this was an impressive take on the real-world pastime back in 1984. The Famicom was just powerful enough to recreate the nuances of golf—driving, putting, selecting clubs, the pitch of the green—to be convincing, yet not so powerful it could fully render the obligatory ugly pants. The secret of this golf game's appeal was in its swing meters. Nintendo crafted a simple yet flexible interface here, giving players remarkable control over the behavior of their ball while still demand-

ing an element of skill and timing. This would go on to be the basis of just about every golf sim that doesn't use the kinetic Golden Tee interface. I'm fond of this cover illustration. It doesn't even try to make the duffer here look macho or heroic—he's clearly a doughy middle-aged guy, which is most likely the exact audience Nintendo was aiming for.

## HOGAN'S ALLEY

**T**he third and, surprisingly, final light gun game Nintendo ever made for Famicom was the only one of the trio not based on a vintage toy or arcade installation. *Hogan's Alley* is a police shooting range simulation, loosely inspired by a real training location in the U.S. As in the real-world location, this game has you gunning down pop-up paper targets while trying not to accidentally shoot non-criminals. There's also a mode where you shoot tin cans.

The Famicom box art is highly literal, featuring a drawing of the actual standard game

mode. But since the in-game visuals focused on big, charmingly illustrated effigies of criminals and innocents, the box ends up demonstrating no lack of personality for all its lack of imagination.

## ZIPPY RACE

**I**rem racer Zippy Race showed up on SG-1000 pretty early on. I don't have just a lot to say about this one. It's a dual-mode game that switches from a top-down perspective à la Monaco GP to a forward scrolling perspective—pretty impressive for 1983, but the overall design is limited enough that it's a little hard to return to almost 40 years later. Zippy Race is a cross-country motorcycle journey from LA to NYC against 99 other cars; at each waypoint along the way (Vegas, Houston, etc.) you get to top off your fuel based on your pole position.

The game ends when you run out of gas, so you really have to memorize the entire route for maximum efficiency. The cover art is pretty good, at least! Very energetic, cramming all the elements of the game into the scene without feeling overcrowded.

## SANNIN MAHJONG

**T**ext here

# CHALLENGE DERBY

Developer: Tsukuda Original Publisher: Tskukuda Original Genre: Gambling Catalog no.: OM-G005



# OKAMOTO AYAKO NO MATCH PLAY GOLF

Developer: Tsukuda Original Publisher: Tskukuda Original Genre: Sports Catalog no.: OM-G006



# SPACE ARMOR

Developer: Tsukuda Original Publisher: Tskukuda Original Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: OM-G007

# JAMES BOND 007

Developer: Milton Bradley/Tsukuda Original Publisher: Tskukuda Original Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: OM-G008

# CHALLENGE DERBY

T  
ext here

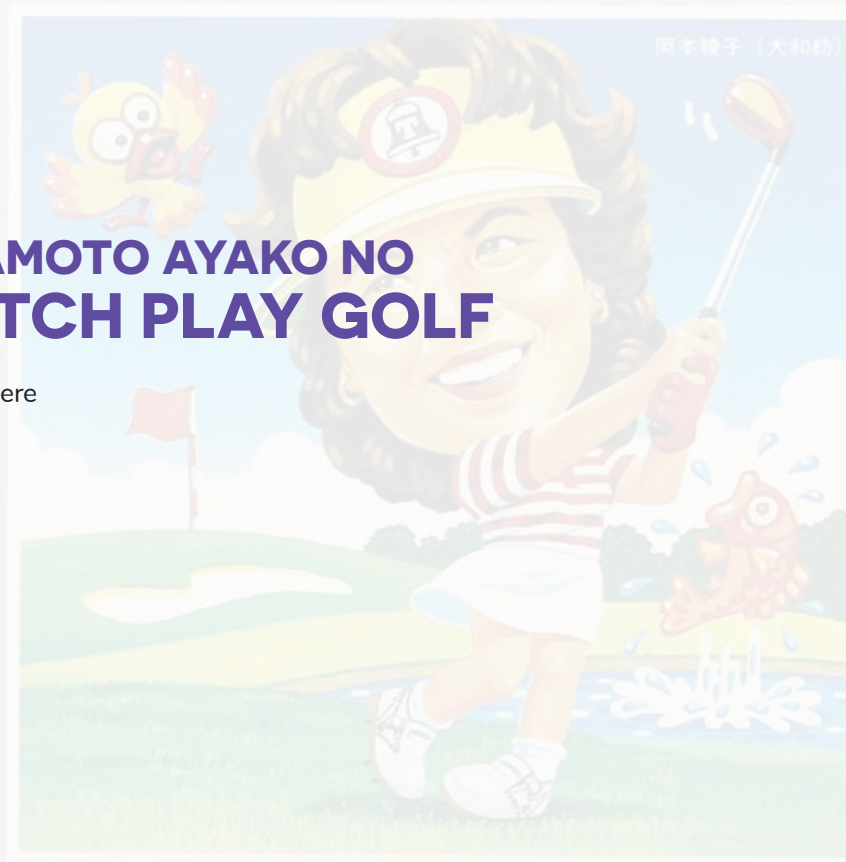
コンピューターゲームカートリッジ  
オセロマルチビジョン・SEGA SG1000・SC-3000用

## 岡本綾子の マッチプレイゴルフ

ストロークプレイもできます。

### OKAMOTO AYAKO NO MATCH PLAY GOLF

T  
ext here



Tsukuda Original

Tsukuda Original



# SPACE ARMOR

**T**ext here

# JAMES BOND 007

**T**ext here

# DONKEY KONG 3

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HVC-DT



# NUTS & MILK

Developer: *Hudson* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Platforming* Catalog no.: *HFC-NM*

# LODE RUNNER

Developer: Brøderbund/Hudson Publisher: Hudson Genre: Maze Chase Catalog no.: HFC-LR



# GALAXIAN

Developer: Namco Publisher: Namco Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: NGX-4500



## DONKEY KONG 3

**D**onkey Kong 3 is such a weird game! Note that weird does not mean bad, though. It's pretty fun, as long as you can get past the fact that (1) it's a shooter, not a platformer, and (2) Mario is not in it. In a sense, *Donkey Kong 3* harkens back to Nintendo's pre-DK lineup of *Space Invaders* arcade clones. The point is to shoot down bugs with a DDT pump, and to scare away Kong by blasting his backside with bug poison. Again: Weird. But pretty fun despite that.

While I enjoy the "Nintendo house style" used for this box illustration, it really underscores how generic and unappealing protag-

onist Stanley the Bugman was—the character whose game killed the DK series for a full decade. That's some powerful bug spray.

## NUTS & MILK

**T**he very first Famicom third-party game—that is, a cartridge published by someone besides Nintendo themselves—was this: Hudson's *Nuts & Milk*. I suspect most Americans just know this as one of those random old ROMs with a zany title, but there's a lot of importance to this game. For starters, the fact that it was published by its own developer set Nintendo's Famicom apart from Sega's SG-1000, whose games were all published by Sega. Cutting other companies in on a bigger cut of the profits made Famicom a very inviting platform for game creators. It's also notewor-

thy because *Nuts & Milk* initially debuted as a very different-looking computer game. Hudson rebuilt it in the style of Nintendo's own hits (think *Donkey Kong*), landing on a great strategy: Appealing to Famicom fans by calibrating content to their expectations. Hudson, of course, had already proven a valuable partner for Nintendo, programming the software for the Family BASIC add-on—a device *Nuts & Milk* was designed to promote, with its custom stage editor whose creations could only be saved to cassette through the Family BASIC system.

## LODE RUNNER

**R**leased either the same day as *Nuts & Milk* OR three days later (depending on which official source you believe), the Famicom version of *Lode Runner* gives you a pretty succinct statement of Nintendo vs. Sega when contrasted against the SG-1000 release. Where Sega's game was a stark, fairly faithful recreation of the Apple II original, Hudson's Famicom release is essentially a reinvention with slower action and more colorful, cartoonish graphics. Same basic game design (and even common stages), presented in very

different ways.

As an early Hudson release, *Lode Runner* hits all the same marketing beats as *Nuts & Milk*: Colorful visuals and a presentation reminiscent of Nintendo's games, for a heavy overhaul of a PC game, with an edit mode containing hooks for the Famicom Data Recorder peripheral.

The cover art is a lot of fun, but it also gives you a good sense of how this version approaches the *Lode Runner* property. Compare this loose, energetic illustration with

## GALAXIAN

**H**ot on the heels of Hudson's releases, another Famicom third-party publisher made its debut in August 1984: Arcade powerhouse Namco, with a very faithful conversion of their 1979 hit *Galaxian*.

*Galaxian*'s sequel *Galaga* had already appeared on Sega's SG-1000 the previous year. That might make this seem a laughable release for Famicom. But by the end of 1984, Namco will have published FOUR arcade conversions on Famicom, compared to the one they released (by proxy!) through Sega. Here the

Famicom's openness to third parties reveal its strength. There was simply more money to be made with Nintendo, who didn't restrict releases or require them to be sold under their label. Namco's home division, Namcot, did very well for itself on Famicom... right up until Nintendo started to impose their own limitations and demand a cut.

*Lode Runner* HUDSON SOFT



# DEVIL WORLD

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Maze Chase Catalog no.: HVC-DW





# 4NIN UCHI MAHJONG

Developer: Hudson Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Gambling Catalog no.: HVC-FJ



# HOME MAHJONG

Developer: Sega Publisher: Sega Genre: Gambling Catalog no.: G-1030





# ホーム麻雀™

ROM  
48KB

Game Cartridge For SC-3000 or SG-1000 Series

1人-2人用



SEGA®

ホーム麻

シャド  
2人用

SG-1000

## DEVIL WORLD

**T**oo spicy for America! Nintendo's Devil World was a rare Famicom release that made its way to Europe but not the U.S., for which we can thank the company's caution in navigating the religious mores of a nation ready for ANY excuse to get bent out of shape about Japanese imports. The box art makes it hard to say Nintendo was wrong. Not only does it depict Satan looming over the horizon, there's also a green guy brandishing a radiant crucifix in the foreground. The game itself has no religious substance, but PTA types could be a bit hysterical throughout the '80s.

In terms of the game itself, this is probably the closest Nintendo ever came to making a Pac-Man clone, with crucifixes in place of energizer pellets. Satan's role here is to direct a couple of minions who move a frame around the stage to box in the player.

## 4NIN UCHI MAHJONG

**E**ven as third parties began to dip a tentative toe into the Famicom market, Nintendo continued publishing first-party titles. Well, technically, *4Nin Uchi Mahjong* is sort of third-party: Developed by Hudson, published by Nintendo. The title of this one ("4-Person Strike Mahjong") is a bit deceptive. Unlike Sega's *Home Mahjong*, this is not multiplayer; it's strictly single-player. The main difference between this and plain *Mah-Jong* for Famicom is the addition of up to three CPU opponents instead of just one. So it's proper riichi mahjong, but with the twist that it's riichi mahjong played against robots.

With this release, Nintendo adopted a new

packaging style. Gone were the tiny, colorful boxes that fit a matching cartridge snugly; only the carts would come in vibrant hues from here on out. Beginning here, first-party Famicom games up through the launch of the Disk System would come in larger boxes clad in a silver (or occasionally gold). Several older games would even be reissued in these boxes, to ensure maximum monotony on the shelves.



# ホーム麻雀™

ROM  
48KB

Game Cartridge For SC-3000 or SG-1000 Series

1人-2人用

## HOME MAHJONG

Here's an interesting set: *Home Mahjong* for SG-1000. Admittedly, Mahjong may not be everyone's cup of tea, but scope that pack-in bonus accessory! Green plastic wings! See, the original *Mahjong* for the system was exclusively a solo-play kind of affair. However, *Home Mahjong* hewed a little more closely to the spirit of the real game by allowing two people to play. Not quite the proper four-seater, but at least it hints at the spirit of competition. So why the plastic? Well, obviously, you didn't want the other player seeing your tiles. The plastic is a blinder that attaches to the screen with an adhesive strip and flares outward, obscuring your row of tiles (which appear in a bottom corner of the screen) from your opponent. This was of course meant for use on the 12-inch sets common in homes in 1984, not huge modern HD TVs.



シャドウボード付  
2人用にご使用下さい

SEGA®

# LODE RUNNER

Developer: Brøderbund/Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Maze Chase Catalog no.: G-1031



SG-1000



# F1 RACE

Developer: HAL Labs Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Racing Catalog no.: HVC-FR



# PAC-MAN

Developer: Namco Publisher: Namco Genre: Maze Chase Catalog no.: NPM-4500





# XEVIOUS

Developer: Namco Publisher: Namco Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: NXV-4900



## LODE RUNNER

Since Sega doesn't make the official release dates of its SG-1000 games public, it's impossible to say which came first: The Sega conversion of Doug Smith's *Lode Runner*, or the bestselling Hudson/Nintendo release. What you can say for certain, however, is that this port has much more in common aesthetically with the Apple II original than Hudson's. It features simple blue bricks and a tiny white stick figure running around at breakneck speeds, pumping the level full of makeshift pitfalls. I've always been a fan of this cheesy cover, and I've just realized why: The hero's

pose reminds me of a Buck Rogers lunchbox I had as a kid. That stuff drills into your head like the *Lode Runner* digging a pitfall.

## F1 RACE

Nintendo's *F1 Race*, co-developed by HAL Labs, brought console gaming closer to the golden ideal of Namco's arcade hit *Pole Position* than it had ever known before. Thanks to the technical prowess of HAL's programmers (read: most likely Satoru Iwata), *F1 Race* looks great. The game featured a behind-the-car camera perspective, fast forward-scrolling scenery, and even time-of-day shifts. It's a really impressive game for 1984. While this one was never localized for the U.S., it very nearly saw release here under the name "Nintendo 500." Why did it ending

up going unpublished in America? If I had to guess, I'd say it's because Americans collectively have almost zero interest in Formula One racing. Or maybe because the joke in the name would work better as "Nindy 500." Ah, everyone's a critic.



## PAC-MAN

The prospect of an “arcade-perfect” home conversion of a coin-op hit was a big selling point for a game system throughout the ‘80s. Sure, Namco’s *Pac-Man* might have been a bit past its sell-by date four years after its original debut, but there was no denying its Famicom rendition looked and played way better than everything that had come before. Atari 2600 version? Forget about it. On Famicom, the only thing keeping *Pac-Man* from looking like the real thing were the horizontal screens of home TVs. Vertical compression and imperfect colors aside, this was legit.

The artwork for this one is equally great.

Instead of dramatizing the maze action like usual—emphasizing the heroic nature of the chase and the act of eating—the Famicom box gives players a little slice of life. *Pac-Man* skates along through town, happily listening to his Walkman as ghosts drift in the background. The silver corner cladding, previously seen on *Galaxian*, gives Namco’s boxes a distinct look, and the number 02 drives home Namco’s games as a series—collect ‘em all!

## XEVIOUS

Namco’s third Famicom release (you can tell by the number in the upper-left corner) was *Xevious*, a game that never seems to have picked up much traction in the U.S. Players loved it in Japan, though; it would be one of the single most widely imitated game concepts of the mid ‘80s over there, supplanted only by blockbusters like *Super Mario Bros.* and *Dragon Quest*.

An evolution of the *Space Invaders* model,

*Xevious* added to the mix a scrolling environment (no more drifting in space) and a dual-targeting system that allowed the player’s Solvalou fighter to hit both aerial and ground-based targets. It also featured dynamic enemy formations, ominous boss ships, and an ear worm soundtrack.

Interestingly, the box art makes use of a screen photo. You almost never saw actual pixel imagery on packaging in the early ‘80s;



# SAFARI RACE

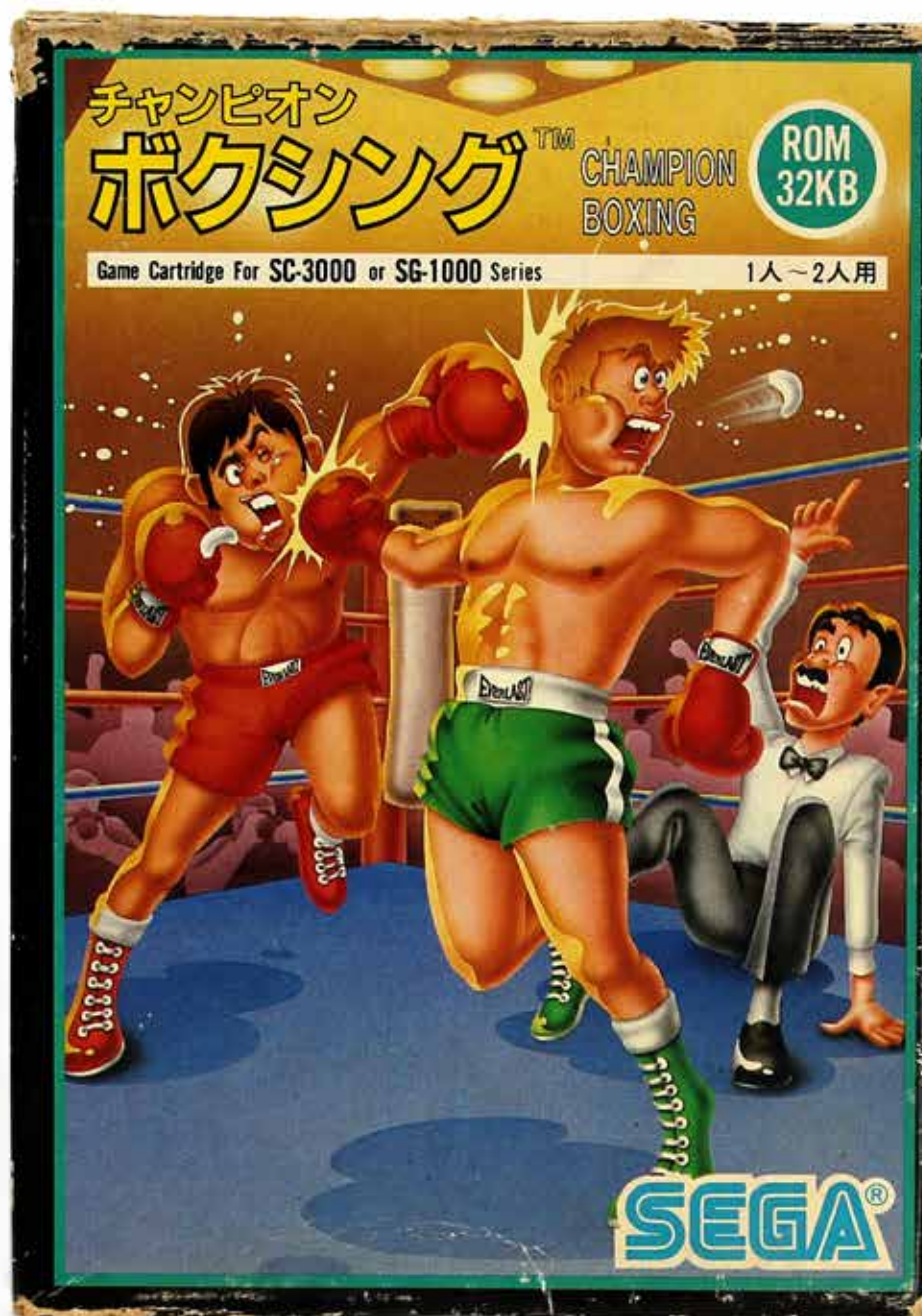
Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000

# CHAMPION BOXING

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



# CHAMPION SOCCER

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002

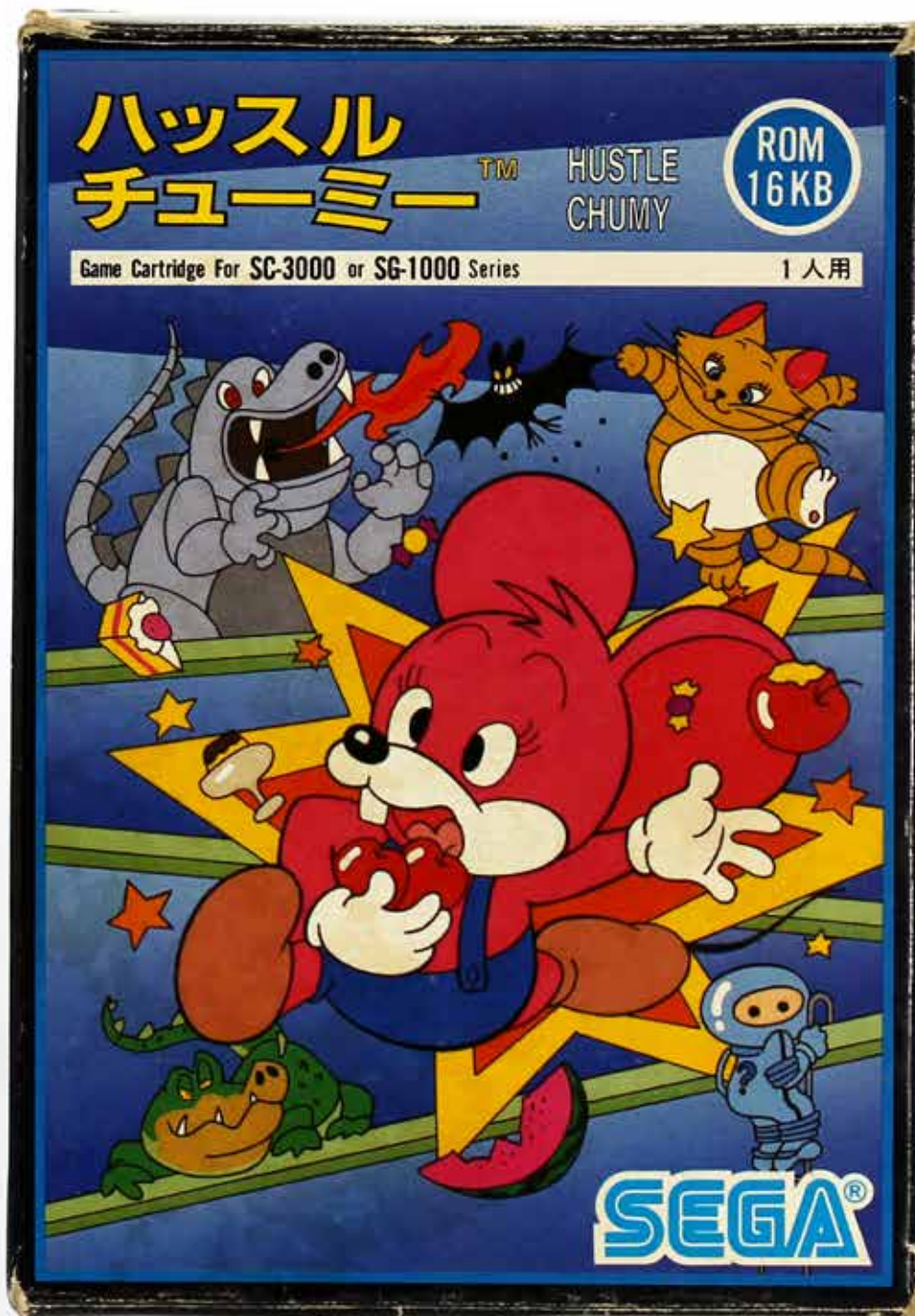


SG-1000



# HUSTLE CHUMY

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000

## SAFARI RACE

Sega's *Safari Race* feels like the missing link between the company's early racers (think *Monaco GP* and *Turbo*) and *Out Run*. You've got the scenic road race as in *Monaco GP* (in this case, an African drive that evokes the Paris-Dakar Rally); the primitive behind-the-car viewpoint (as in *Turbo*); and the prospect of a race in which skillful driving nets additional play time (the entire premise of *Out Run*).

What sets this racer apart from all those other Sega games is the "safari" referred to in the title. As you make your way across the savannah, you have to dodge all manner of wild critters in order to avoid a road disaster. You also have to stop to refuel at gas pumps randomly standing at the roadside. It's ungain-

ly, but it's certainly one-of-a-kind.

Like *Champion Boxing*, *Safari Race*'s big gimmick is the way it juices up the player sprite. While opposing racers and wandering wildlife are all depicted with classic SG-1000 single-color sprites, your car—the same car seen in *Sega Rally* more than a decade later!—is drawn in beautiful detail through multiple overlapping sprites that give it an impressive combination of size and color. It really stands apart from anything seen in the system's first year of software.

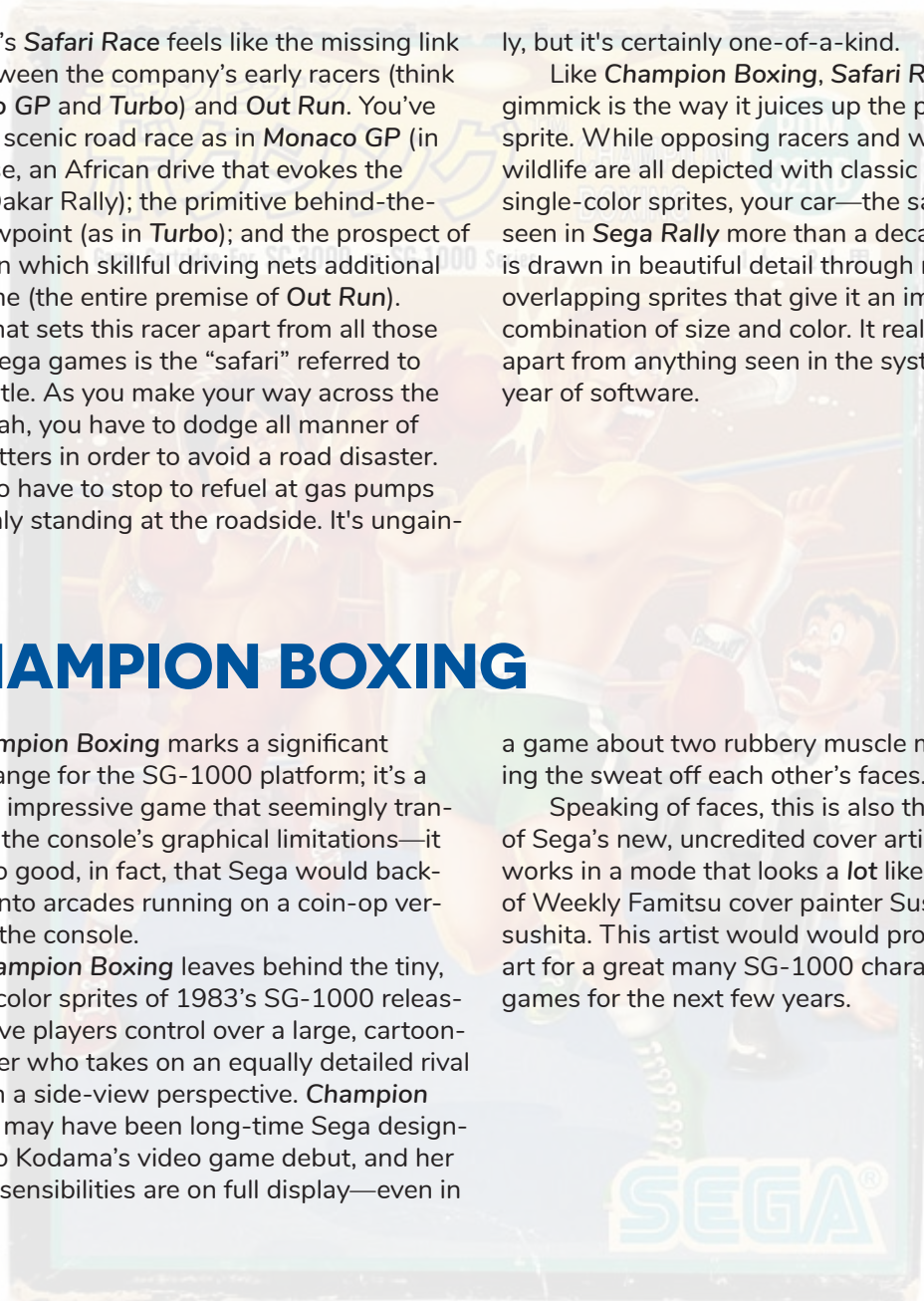
## CHAMPION BOXING

*Champion Boxing* marks a significant change for the SG-1000 platform; it's a visually impressive game that seemingly transcends the console's graphical limitations—it looks so good, in fact, that Sega would backport it into arcades running on a coin-op version of the console.

*Champion Boxing* leaves behind the tiny, single-color sprites of 1983's SG-1000 releases to give players control over a large, cartoonish boxer who takes on an equally detailed rival through a side-view perspective. *Champion Boxing* may have been long-time Sega designer Rieko Kodama's video game debut, and her artistic sensibilities are on full display—even in

a game about two rubbery muscle men punching the sweat off each other's faces.

Speaking of faces, this is also the debut of Sega's new, uncredited cover artist, who works in a mode that looks a lot like the work of Weekly Famitsu cover painter Susumu Matsushita. This artist would provide box art for a great many SG-1000 character action games for the next few years.





## CHAMPION SOCCER

As with all the other *Champion* series sports games we've seen on SG-1000 to date, *Champion Soccer* feels like a decent game that Nintendo would do better a year later. In this case, however, Nintendo wouldn't do it THAT much better. *Champion Soccer* works a lot like *Soccer* for NES, with the biggest difference really boiling down to the fact that the field scrolls vertically rather than using the horizontal format seen on NES.

But otherwise? This is impressive stuff for SG-1000. Once again, it features complex multi-piece sprites that combine multiple pieces to hide each on-field athlete a respectable amount of detail, while the ball scales in size

to simulate rising through the air closer to the camera. The one real shortcoming? Choppy animation. This is SG-1000, after all.

This release features another painting by someone whose works closely resembles that of Susumu Matsushita. In fact, it's impossible to say for certain that it *wasn't* illustrated by Matsushita. After all, he established his studio and began painting *Weekly Famitsu* covers in 1986... right around the time SG-1000 and Mark III work dried up. Coincidence? Well, maybe. But an interesting tidbit nevertheless.

## HUSTLE CHUMMY

*Hustle Chummy* feels like it's based on a lost arcade game from the early 1980s, but by all accounts it only ever appeared here, on SG-1000. The whole thing almost comes off as developer Compile flipping the middle finger to Jaleco and *Pop Flamer*. Here we have a game about a mouse in a maze, collecting round red objects while using flame attacks to defend himself from tiny Godzillas... just like *Pop Flamer*. That's about where the similarities end, though—the superficial details.

For one, *Hustle Chummy* is more of a *Lode Runner*-style platformer than a maze game. For another, the objects you collect—apples—have an actual impact on the gameplay. The more you gather, the slower you move. You

can refresh your speed level by stopping by the little hole where you, being a mouse, call home. Also, it's fun—the biggest difference between *Hustle Chummy* and *Pop Flamer*.

I'll consider the artwork the point where the two games call a draw. I like the cute cartoon style of this illustration, but there is something to be said for the wacked-out surrealism of *Pop Flamer*. I think we can all agree, however, that SG-1000 box art is generally pretty fantastic.



# SG-1000 II

The redesigned Sega SG-1000 II arrived sometime in 1984 to amend the failings of the original console model, adorable as it had been. The second model replaced the hard-wired original SJ-200 joystick with a Famicom-style game pad designed to include two face buttons and a control interface closer in nature to a D-pad. Despite the fact that controllers could be unplugged from the console, the hardware still featured snap-in joypad docks to simplify storage and minimize clutter when not in use.

Perhaps more importantly, the SG-1000 II looked really cool. Low profile, clean lines, some delightfully elaborate English text printed along the top surface—it's an exquisite example of mid-'80s Japanese industrial design, even yellowed with age as with this model. This console reminds me of an anecdote about the *Star Trek* films. As the studio was work-

ing behind the scenes, the designer of the console (presented as the successor) specified the console as the *Enterprise* as seen in the Japanese industrial design.

The SG-1000 II is a well-balanced reference: perfectly balanced, perfectly balanced. Uncluttered grace notes of style. At the same time, it packs a punch in its casing, with a connector to link the console for computer function. On both ends, the controllers tidily out of the console.

Was it as perfect as the original Famicom? A piece of hardware.

scenes on the third movie, the U.S.S. Excelsior (which was the starship Enterprise's superior) specifically crafted it to look like the seen through a lens of 1980s industrial design.

1000 is the epitome that ideal—Clean, simple, geometric lines. Sleek without being symmetrical, yet embellished with a few superfluous detail. At the same time, a lot of functionality into its slim design: a cartridge slot, a hidden cable port, a keyboard, and snap-in cradles to hold the low-profile controller the way.

As powerful a console as Nintendo's Game Boy, Not at all, but it's a gorgeous piece of hardware. The controls are all the same.



SG-1000

## SG-1000 II

Developer: [Compile](#) Publisher: [Sega](#) Genre: [Shooting](#) Catalog no.: [G-1002](#)

# SUPER CASSETTE VISION

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*





# ASTRO WARS

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

# ASTRO WARS II: BATTLE IN GALAXY

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*



# SUPER GOLF

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# SUPER MAHJONG

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

157

## ASTRO WARS

**P**laceholder

## ASTRO WARS II: BATTLE IN GALAXY

**P**laceholder



# SUPER GOLF

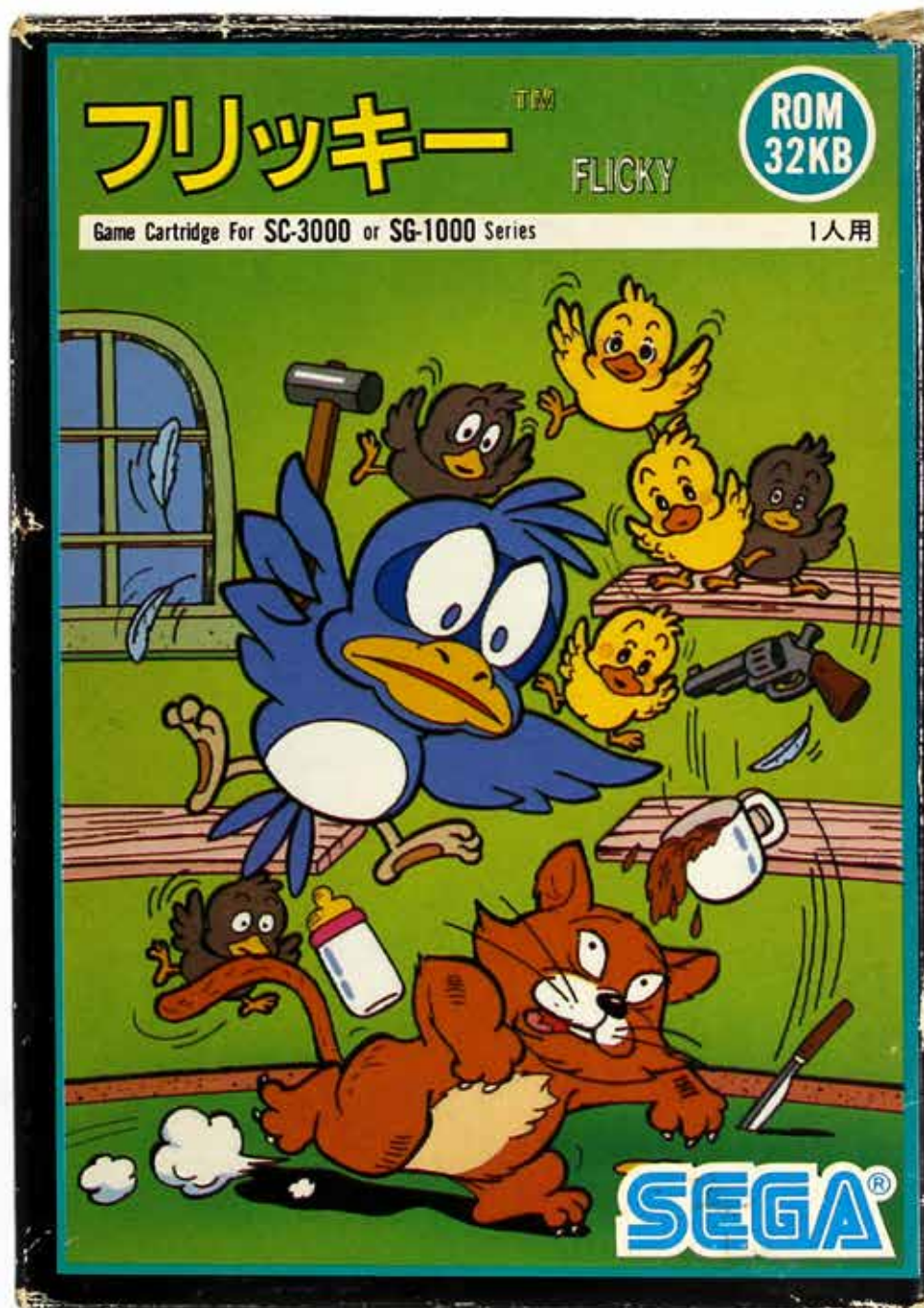
**P**laceholder

# SUPER MAHJONG

**P**laceholder

# FLICKY

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000



# GIRL'S GARDEN

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000

# SUPER BASEBALL

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*



# GIANTS HARA TATSUNORI NO SUPER BASE BALL

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

163

## FLICKY

Namco converted a single game to SG-1000—1983's *Sega-Galaga*—then promptly defected to Nintendo's camp. As a result, the Famicom saw a port of Namco's minor arcade hit *Mappy* fairly early on, while SG-1000 instead got *Flicky*, a game designed very much in the image of *Mappy*. Personally, I'd say this is the better game. It's faster, more fluid, and revolves around far less convoluted mechanics. There are no doors to fuss with, no microwave beams blasting across the screen, and you don't have to bounce on trampolines to get about.

Instead, your tiny bird protagonist leaps about under their own locomotion, gathering up a team of lost chicks to lead to safety while

avoiding a rabble of hungry cats. The more chicks you rescue at once, the more points you earn—but at the same time, a lengthy conga line of baby birds is far more vulnerable to predators. The risk/reward mechanic here is reminiscent of some other SG-1000 releases, including *Choplifter* and *Hustle Chummy*, but there's a zippy quality to the action and the controls that really helps *Flicky* stand apart.

The box art has that distinct cute-yet-ugly vibe to it that Japanese illustrators do so well. You don't have to like it, but you do at least need to respect it.

## GIRL'S GARDEN

*Girl's Garden* is probably the single best-known original creation for SG-1000, a fact that can be attributed to the fact that it was the freshman design and programming effort for Yuji Naka, who of course would go on to program *Phantasy Star* and *Sonic the Hedgehog*. The game itself is nothing remarkable, but it is a pretty solid effort that does a few interesting things with the platform's tech. The visuals look great—the sprites aren't as elaborate or colorful as in *Champion Soccer* or *Safari Race*, but somehow the graphics make the SG-1000's 16-color palette look pastel and floral rather than garish. It also manages to pull off parallax background scrolling, which was absolutely just Naka showing off.

*Girl's Garden* manages to be a decent enough game for the era. You need to wander around a garden, collecting flowers and avoiding bears. The bears can be diverted by dropping pots of precious, hard-to-acquire honey. Flowers have to be collected while in full bloom rather than as buds or wilted blossoms. These minor details lend the action enough complexity to sustain interest without bogging it down with fussy details. Not a bad start.

Too bad about the box art, which resembles the cover of a mediocre kids' comic from the '60s.

# SUPER BASEBALL

**P**laceholder

# GIANTS HARA TATSUNORI NO SUPER BASEBALL

**P**laceholder

# PUNCH BOY

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*



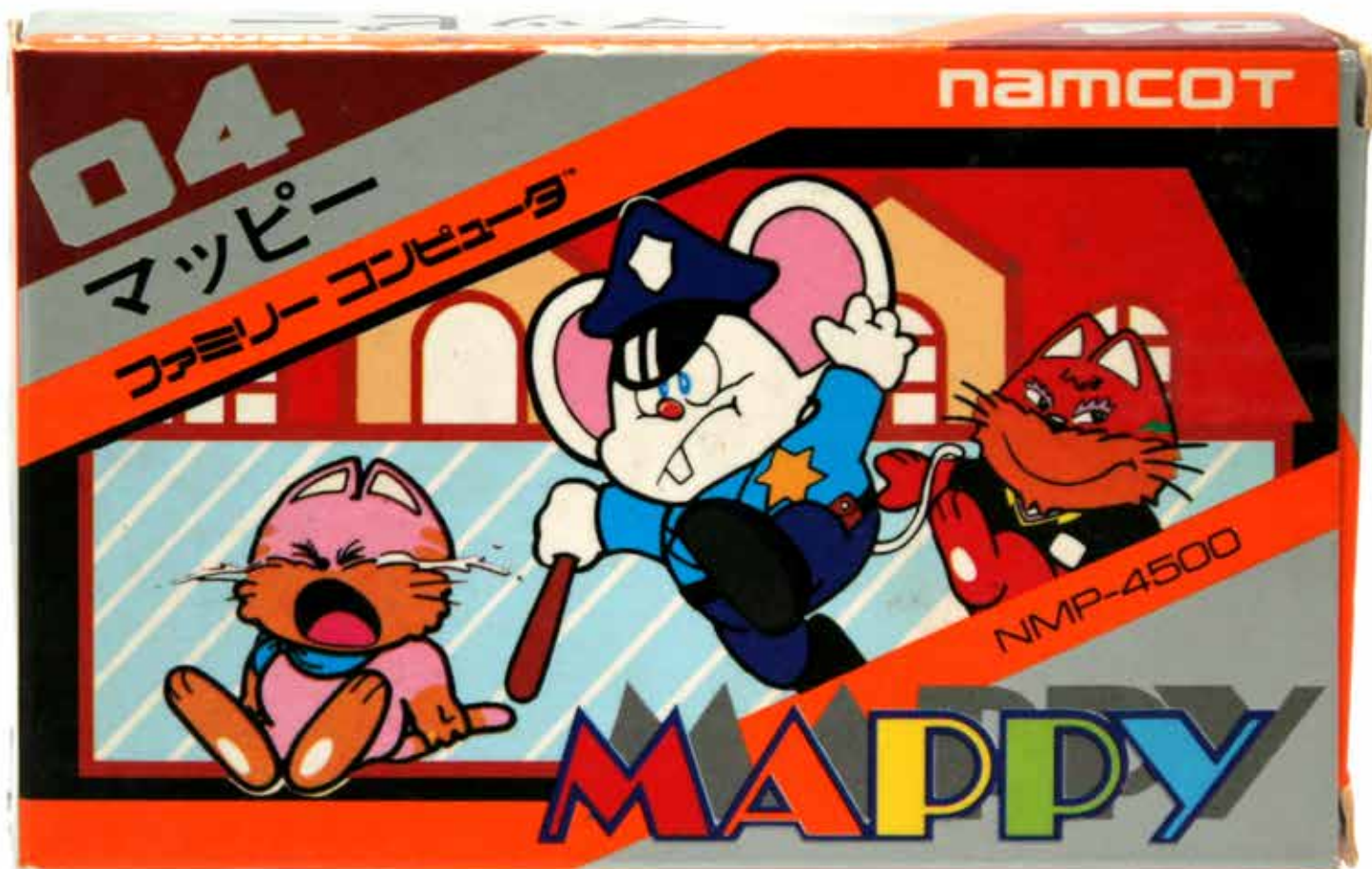
# ELEVATOR FIGHT

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

167

# MAPPY

Developer: Namco Publisher: Namco Genre: Maze Chase Catalog no.: NMP-4500



# URBAN CHAMPION

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Fighting Catalog no.: HVC-UC



## PUNCH BOY

**P**laceholder

## ELEVATOR FIGHT

**P**laceholder

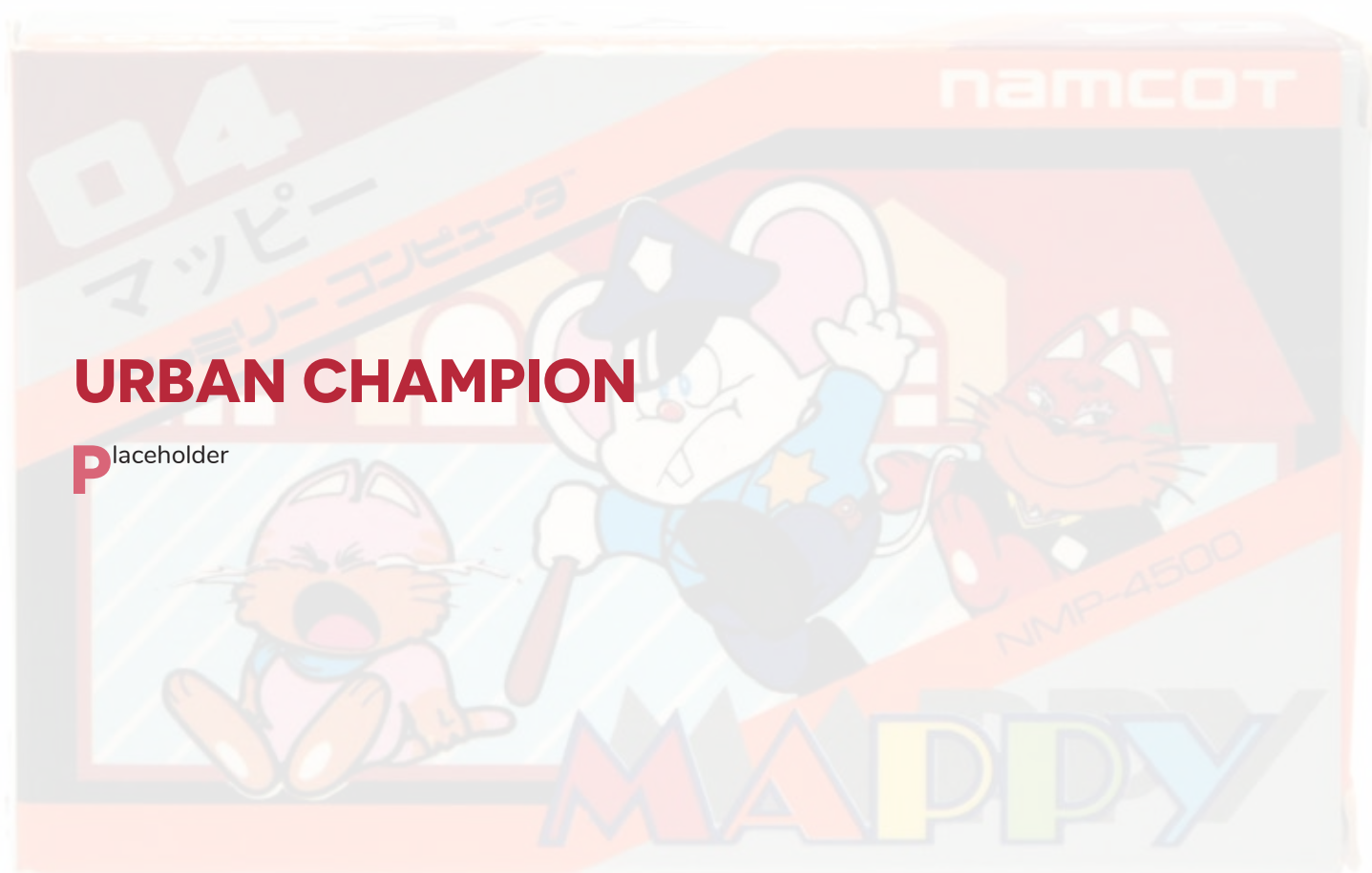


# MAPPY

P  
laceholder

# URBAN CHAMPION

P  
laceholder



# LUPIN III

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# NEBULA

173

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

# EXCITEBIKE

Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo Genre: Racing Catalog no.: HVC-EB

Family Computer







## LUPIN III

**P**laceholder

## NEBULA

**P**laceholder

## EXCITEBIKE

**N**intendo's *Excitebike* concluded the Famicom's modest but nevertheless impressive 1984 with an inventive racing game that approached the genre from a fresh angle. Literally: While other racers in the early '80s presented the sport from a top-down perspective or with a view behind the car, *Excitebike* interpreted motocross racing as a side-scrolling competition. As a racer, it uniquely parlayed the Famicom hardware's strengths, as the console's designers built it to support smooth horizontal scrolling. Weirdly, this was the first Famicom release to really make use of that feature—so you have to imagine it made quite an impression. With speedy gameplay, stunt-focused motorcycle controls, and chunky little cartoon racers with a surprising amount of personality, *Excitebike* ended the Famicom's second year with plenty of promise for what lay ahead.

エキサイトバイク™

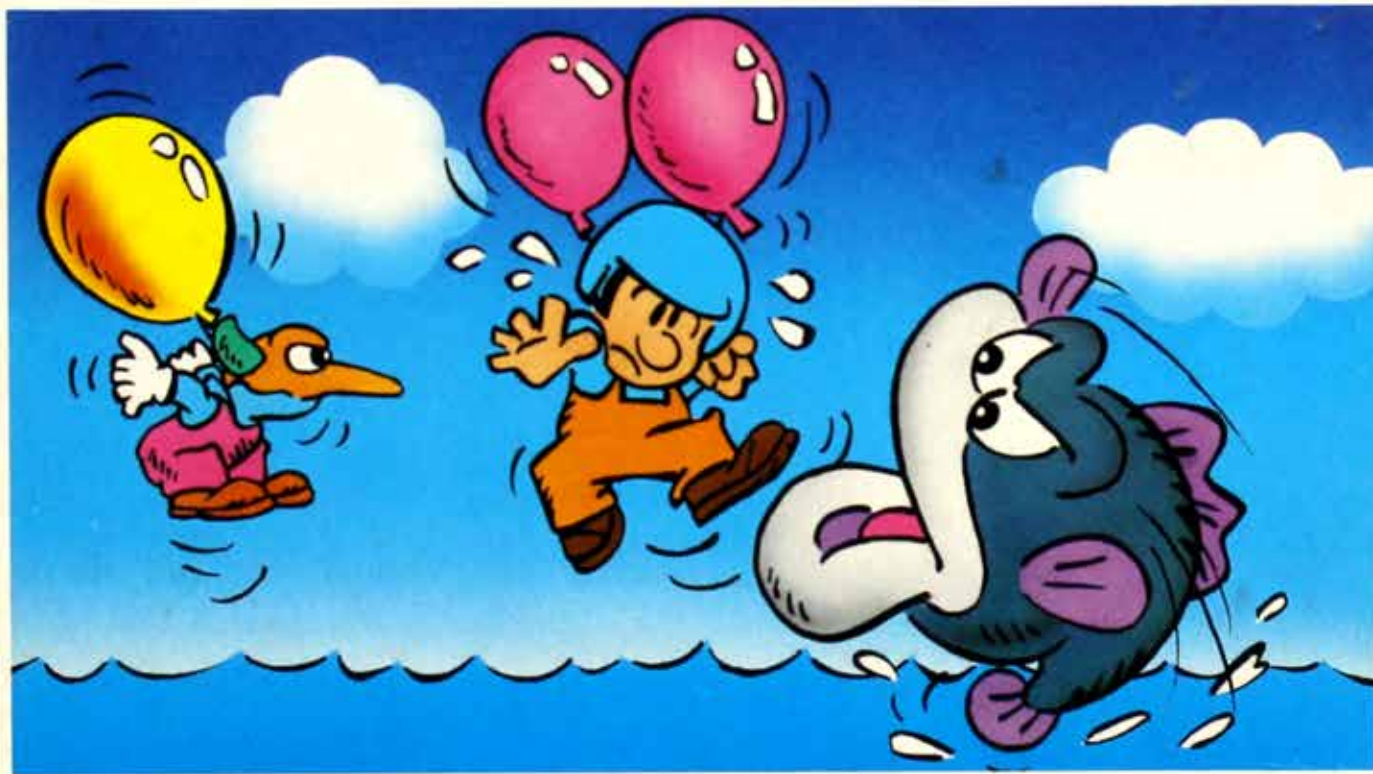
Nintendo®

# BALLOON FIGHT

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

バルーンファイト™

Nintendo®





# ICE CLIMBER

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05



# EXERION

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO





# GALAGA

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05



## BALLOON FIGHT

Placeholder

バルーンファイト™

Nintendo®

### ICE CLIMBER

**N**ot unlike *Urban Champion*, *Ice Climber* is one of those games you look back at and can see Nintendo getting a feel for console game design. It's not great, but it has a lot of interesting ideas that build on previous Nintendo creations and hint at things to come.

In the abstract, it takes the form of a two-player simultaneous game built around jumping and smashing overhead platforms. Looking at the particulars, the jumping physics here are pretty frustrating when examined by modern standards—the eponymous Climbers leap in shallow arcs, which means you have

to place yourself very precisely to hop up to higher levels of the mountain they're climbing. Despite the frustration, you can see how Nintendo would refine these ideas in future games; the co-op also helps sweeten the deal.

The box art is great: Surprisingly similar in composition to the U.S. box art, but packed with way more personality. The polar bear and seal appear to be absolutely freaking out at the sight of a kid in pink smashing through the ice from below. Understandably so.



# EXERION

Placeholder



## GALAGA

As good as Namco's Famicom port of Pac-Man was, their conversion of Galaga turned out even better. Though inherently incapable of being 100% arcade-perfect (what with the coin-op's use of a vertical monitor and all), its fidelity really spoke well of the console's capabilities. Everything that defines the arcade original can be found here: The enemy formations, the starry backdrops, the dual-ship strategies, the Challenging Stages, the vivid colors and memorable sound effects, the exquisite gameplay balance. It's probably not fair to compare this to the SG-1000 port given

the differences in hardware power, but as nicely as Sega-Galaga turned out, this adaptation absolutely eclipses it. Even the pop-art cover illustration better represents the arcade cabinet's bezel art and side decal colors than Sega's semi-realistic space combat painting did. A great conversion that proved, at least in 1985, the Famicom could still deliver relatively recent arcade experiences in fine style.

# RAID ON BUNGELING BAY

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer





# FORMATION Z

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05



# SOCCER

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



サッカー SOCCER

Nintendo®

サッカー SOCCER

Nintendo®



# SPACE INVADERS

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05



## RAID ON BUNGELING BAY

Placeholder

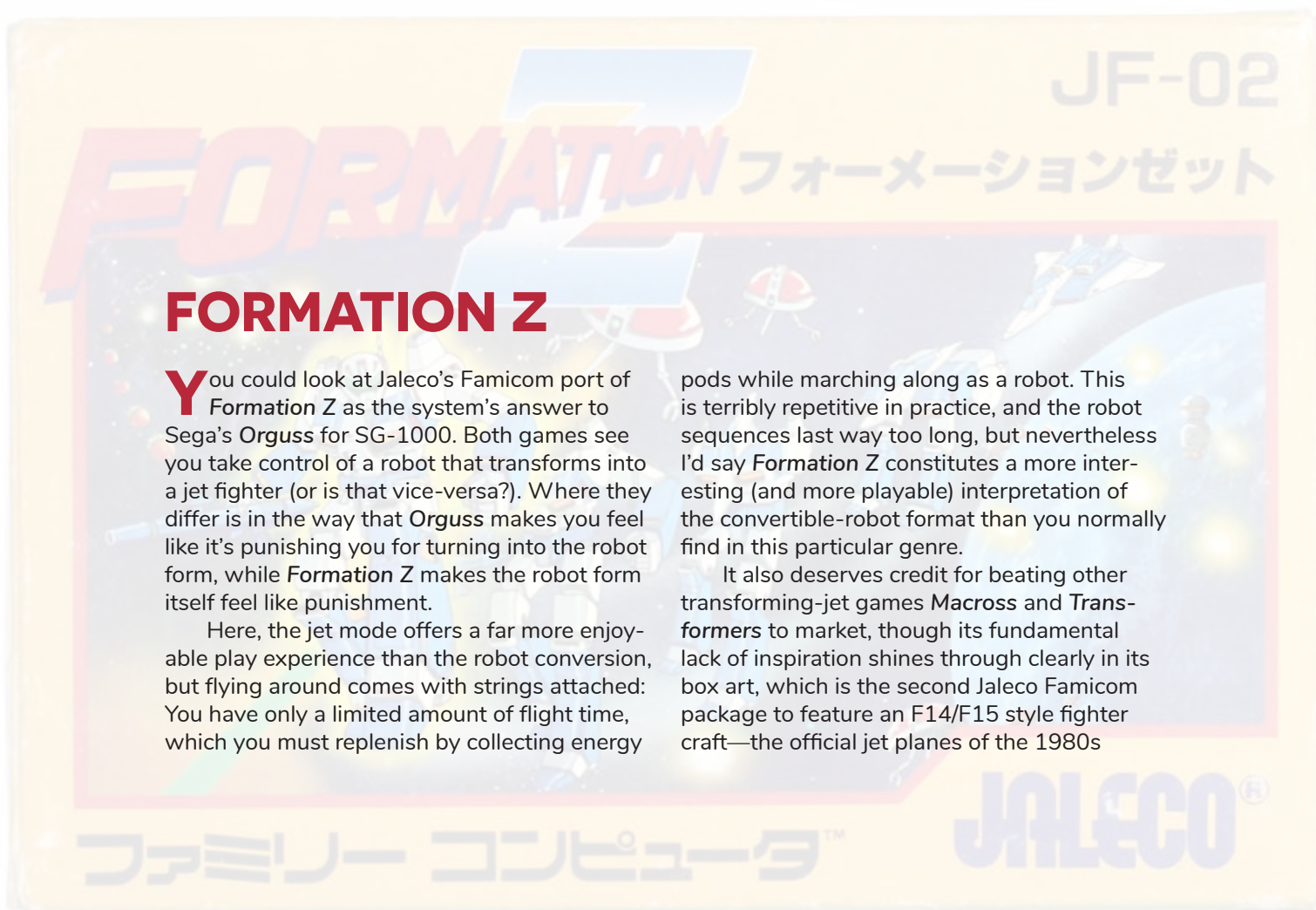
### FORMATION Z

You could look at Jaleco's Famicom port of *Formation Z* as the system's answer to Sega's *Orguss* for SG-1000. Both games see you take control of a robot that transforms into a jet fighter (or is that vice-versa?). Where they differ is in the way that *Orguss* makes you feel like it's punishing you for turning into the robot form, while *Formation Z* makes the robot form itself feel like punishment.

Here, the jet mode offers a far more enjoyable play experience than the robot conversion, but flying around comes with strings attached: You have only a limited amount of flight time, which you must replenish by collecting energy

Pods while marching along as a robot. This is terribly repetitive in practice, and the robot sequences last way too long, but nevertheless I'd say *Formation Z* constitutes a more interesting (and more playable) interpretation of the convertible-robot format than you normally find in this particular genre.

It also deserves credit for beating other transforming-jet games *Macross* and *Transformers* to market, though its fundamental lack of inspiration shines through clearly in its box art, which is the second Jaleco Famicom package to feature an F14/F15 style fighter craft—the official jet planes of the 1980s



## SOCCER

Placeholder

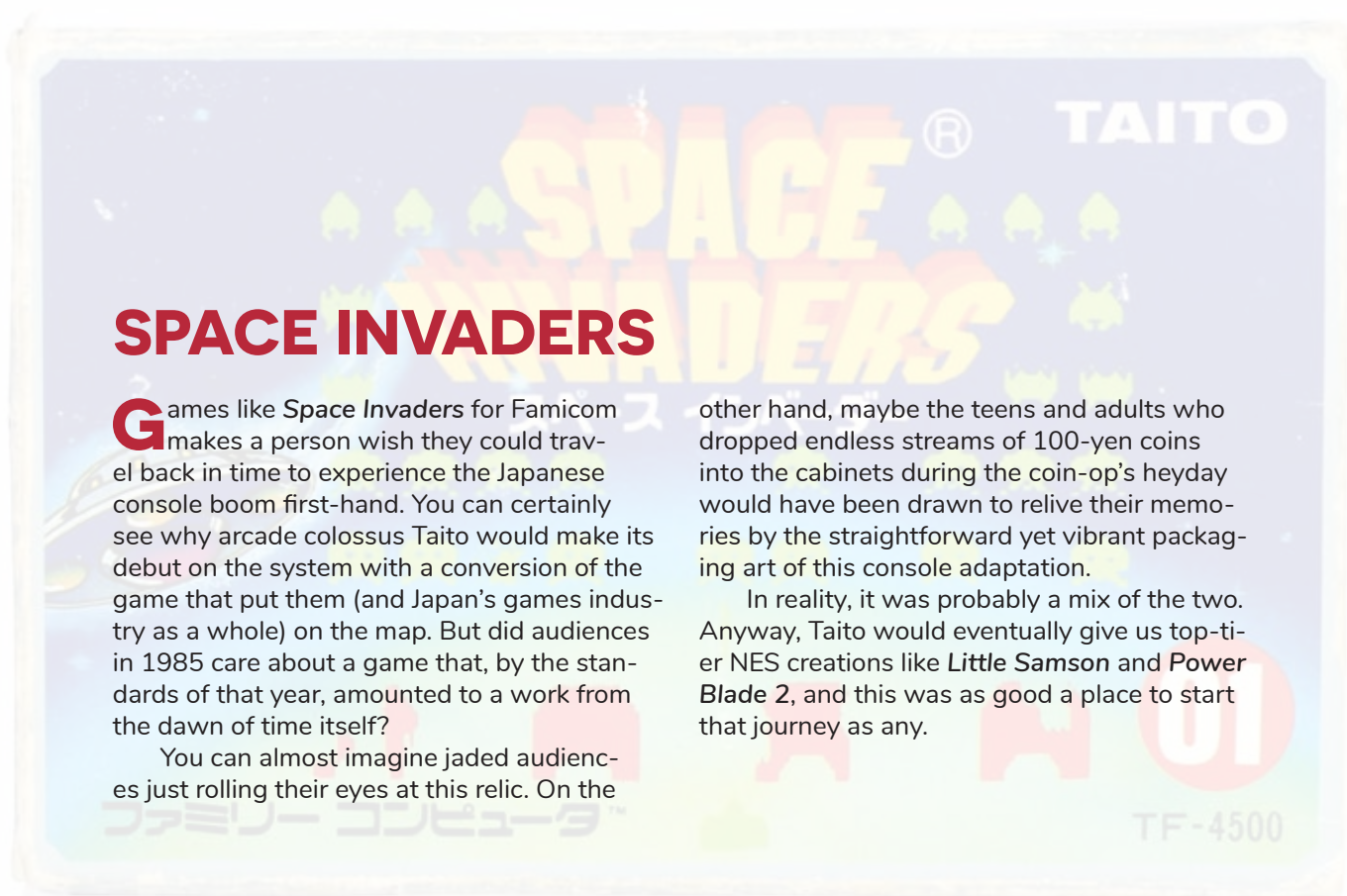
### SPACE INVADERS

Games like *Space Invaders* for Famicom makes a person wish they could travel back in time to experience the Japanese console boom first-hand. You can certainly see why arcade colossus Taito would make its debut on the system with a conversion of the game that put them (and Japan's games industry as a whole) on the map. But did audiences in 1985 care about a game that, by the standards of that year, amounted to a work from the dawn of time itself?

You can almost imagine jaded audiences just rolling their eyes at this relic. On the

other hand, maybe the teens and adults who dropped endless streams of 100-yen coins into the cabinets during the coin-op's heyday would have been drawn to relive their memories by the straightforward yet vibrant packaging art of this console adaptation.

In reality, it was probably a mix of the two. Anyway, Taito would eventually give us top-tier NES creations like *Little Samson* and *Power Blade 2*, and this was as good a place to start that journey as any.





# CHAMPIONSHIP LODERUNNER

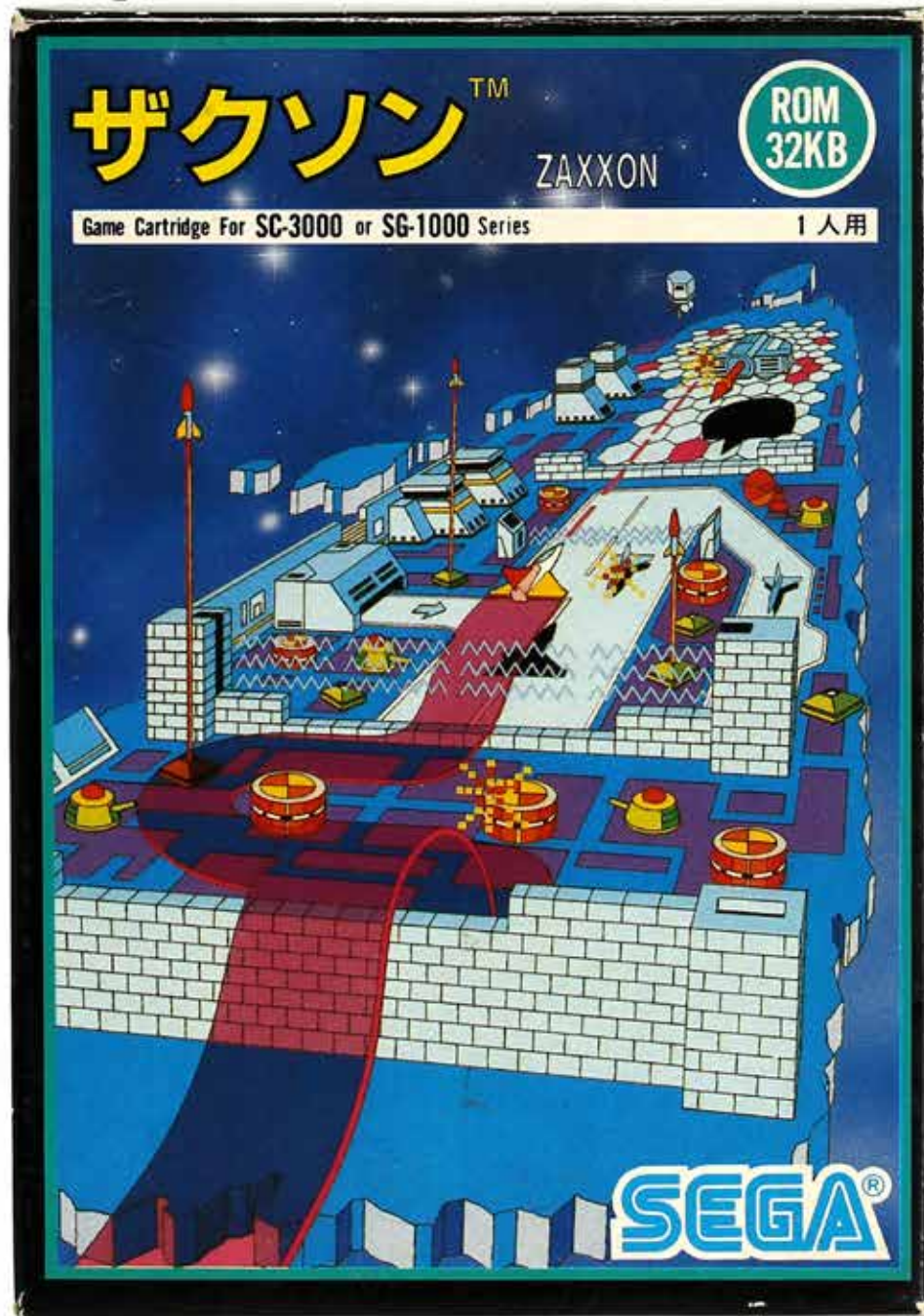
Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO





# ZAXXON

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000

# CHAMPION PRO WRESTLING

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000

SEGA®



# GP WORLD

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000

## CHAMPIONSHIP LODERUNNER

**W**ith *Lode Runner* raking in cash hand over fist for Hudson, it should come as little surprise that they hustled out a follow-up less than a year later. Certainly the original Famicom cart left room for further releases, given that it excised 100 of the Apple II version's 150 stages.

*Championship Lode Runner* was not an attempt to bring those missing levels to console, however. Rather, it directly adapted the computer game by the same title. The original *Championship Lode Runner* had been Brøderbund's own *Lode Runner* update—not quite a sequel in the proper sense—compiling the

50 cleverest and most ruthless fan-designed stages that had been crafted with the Apple II version's level builder feature. Here, Hudson brought those same soul-crushing creations to console to make sure Japanese children could experience the same sense of despair as American kids had experienced.

The stage designs here may represent an upgrade over those of the original *Lode Runner*, but the box art feels like a downgrade from the joyous cartoon packaging of the first game. The main character does look an awful lot like Bomberman, though... which would turn out not to be a coincidence.

## ZAXXON

**T**he name *Zaxxon* carries a lot of clout for people who were old (or at least tall) enough to see over the edge of an arcade control panel in 1982. Nothing in arcades looked quite like this at the time, with its isometric viewpoint and constant dual-axis threats. Sega borrowed some inspiration from Konami's *Scramble* here—players have to shoot fuel tanks in order to keep their own gas tank topped off—but the bold perspective and unconventional (for its era) inverted flight controls made for a truly one-of-a-kind shooter.

The SG-1000 port was, going its catalog number, Sega's first release for 1985. By this point, many American tykes had already

memorized the ins and outs of the ColecoVision version, which fared better than Sega's own creation in some respects; however, since Coleco and SG-1000 existed in completely separate markets, few had the opportunity to compare and contrast the pair. Sega undeniably wins on the box art front, with a clever package illustration that encompasses both the game's iconic viewpoint and serves almost a walkthrough for the action. By any measure, it's a classic given its proper due on SG-1000—certainly fares far better than the console's disastrous adaptation of Sega's other arcade collaboration with Ikegami Tsushinki, *Congo Bongo*.



## CHAMPION PRO WRESTLING

Text here

## GP WORLD

A racing game? On a Sega system? It's more likely than you think. In fact, *GP World* (by any sensible count) clocks in as the SG-1000's fourth racer to this point. It's also the system's most traditional take on the genre. Lacking fanciful objectives or road hazard gimmicks, this is—as the title indicates—a pure grand prix racing game. It takes place on tracks around the world, hence the title.

The presumed timing of its release would seem to put it head-to-head against the very similar Nintendo's *F1 Race*, which is unfortunate. *GP World* is a pretty impressive feat of programming for SG-1000, but it doesn't compare so well to HAL's racer for Nintendo,

which really put the base Famicom hardware—hands-down a beefier machine than Sega's—through its paces.



# KONAMI NO SHINYUUSHAIN TOORU-KUN

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000



# KONAMI NO HYPER SPORTS

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003

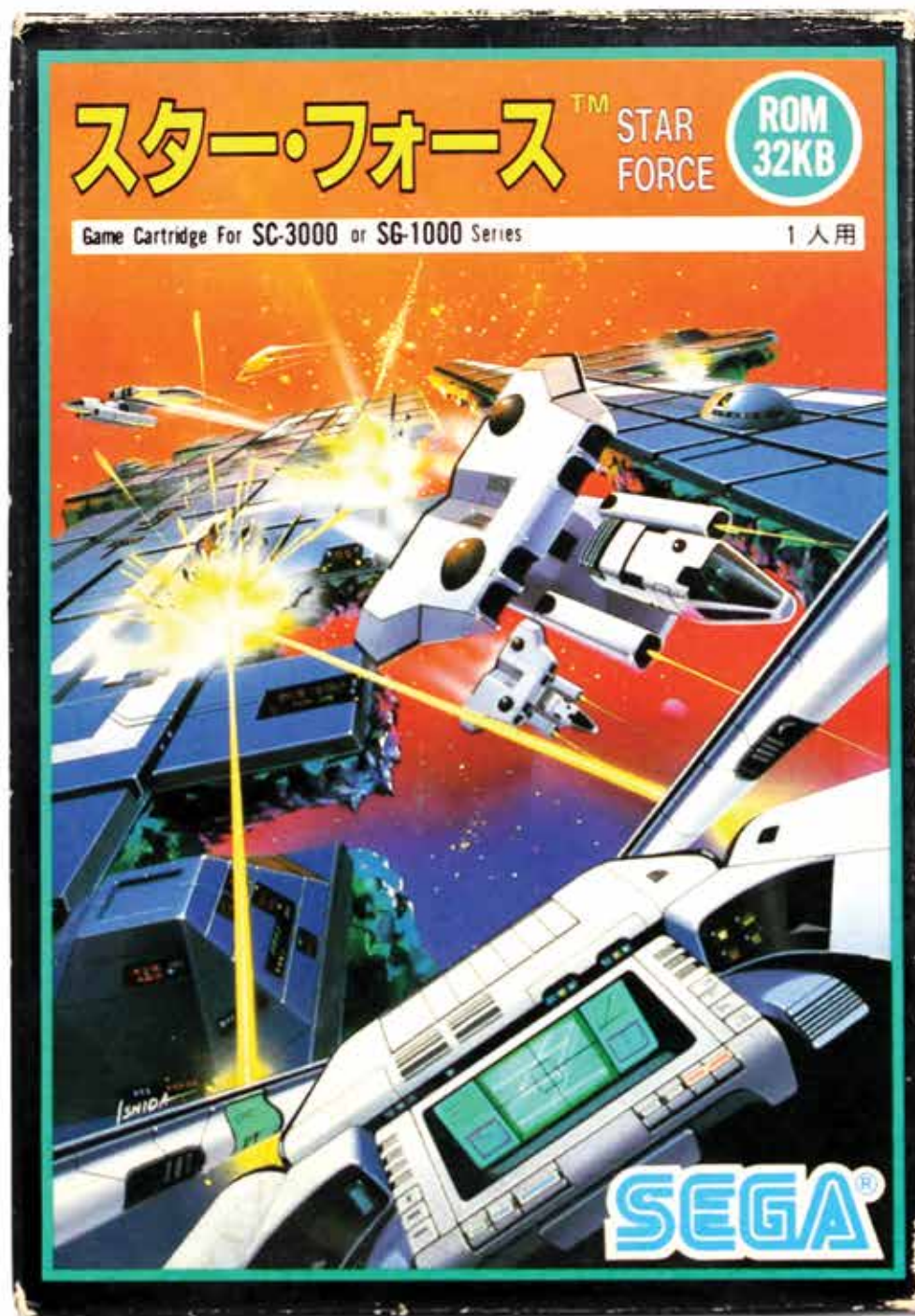


SG-1000



# STAR FORCE

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000



# OTHELLO

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



## KONAMI NO SHINNYUSHAIN TOORU-KUN

**K**onami no Shinnyuushain Tooru-Kun is quite the mouthful; the title of its English adaptation, *Mikie*, rolls off the Anglophone's tongue with considerably more grace. Of course, *Mikie* and *Tooru-Kun* bear far more significant differences than the length of the name printing on their boxes. The former, which appeared in arcades in the West, is about a school kid trying to win the affections of his sweetheart. Konami aged that premise down from the original Japanese game concept, in which the protagonist is a young adult man who has just entered the world of office work. That said, he still wants to win a lady's affections, same as his American counterpart

*Mikie*, because some 8-bit motives are universal.

*Tooru-kun* sees Konami making its debut on a Sega platform, a business arrangement they'd flirt with from time to time over the next two decades but never embrace as enthusiastically as their commitment to Nintendo, Sony, or even MSX. Even so, Sega fans can't be too upset. Some vintage Konami is better than none at all.

This release sports some of the strongest SG-1000 box art to date, with a charming early '20s century cartoon style drawn with a distinctly Japanese twist. Just look at all those octopuses.

## KONAMI NO HYPER SPORTS

**K**onami no Shinnyuushain Tooru-Kun is quite the mouthful; the title of its English adaptation, *Mikie*, rolls off the Anglophone's tongue with considerably more grace. Of course, *Mikie* and *Tooru-Kun* bear far more significant differences than the length of the name printing on their boxes. The former, which appeared in arcades in the West, is about a school kid trying to win the affections of his sweetheart. Konami aged that premise down from the original Japanese game concept, in which the protagonist is a young adult man who has just entered the world of office work. That said, he still wants to win a lady's affections, same as his American counterpart

*Mikie*, because some 8-bit motives are universal.

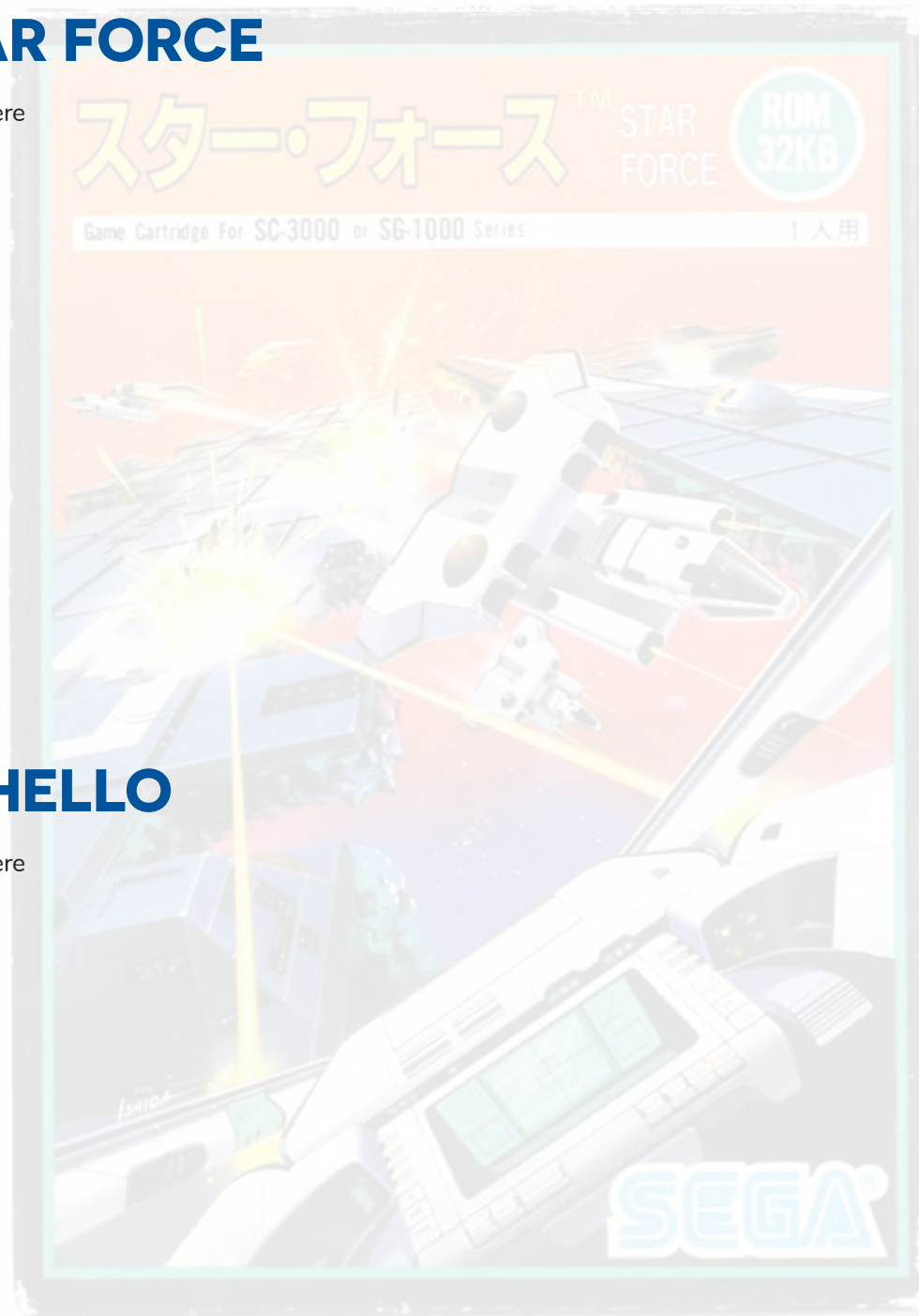
*Tooru-kun* sees Konami making its debut on a Sega platform, a business arrangement they'd flirt with from time to time over the next two decades but never embrace as enthusiastically as their commitment to Nintendo, Sony, or even MSX. Even so, Sega fans can't be too upset. Some vintage Konami is better than none at all.

This release sports some of the strongest SG-1000 box art to date, with a charming early '20s century cartoon style drawn with a distinctly Japanese twist. Just look at all those octopuses.



# STAR FORCE

T<sub>ext here</sub>



# OTHELLO

T<sub>ext here</sub>



SG-1000

# SPACE INVADERS

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000



# WHEELIE RACER

Developer: [Compile](#) Publisher: [Sega](#) Genre: [Shooting](#) Catalog no.: G-1003

203



# BOULDER DASH

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# MINER 2049ER

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

205

# SPACE INVADERS

**T**ext here

Game Cartridge For SC-3000 or SG-1000 Series

ROM  
16KB

1人~2人用

# WHEELIE RACER

**P**laceholder

SEGA®

SEGA®



# BOULDER DASH

**P**laceholder

# MINER 2049ER

**P**laceholder

# SUPER SOCCER

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# SUPER SOCCER

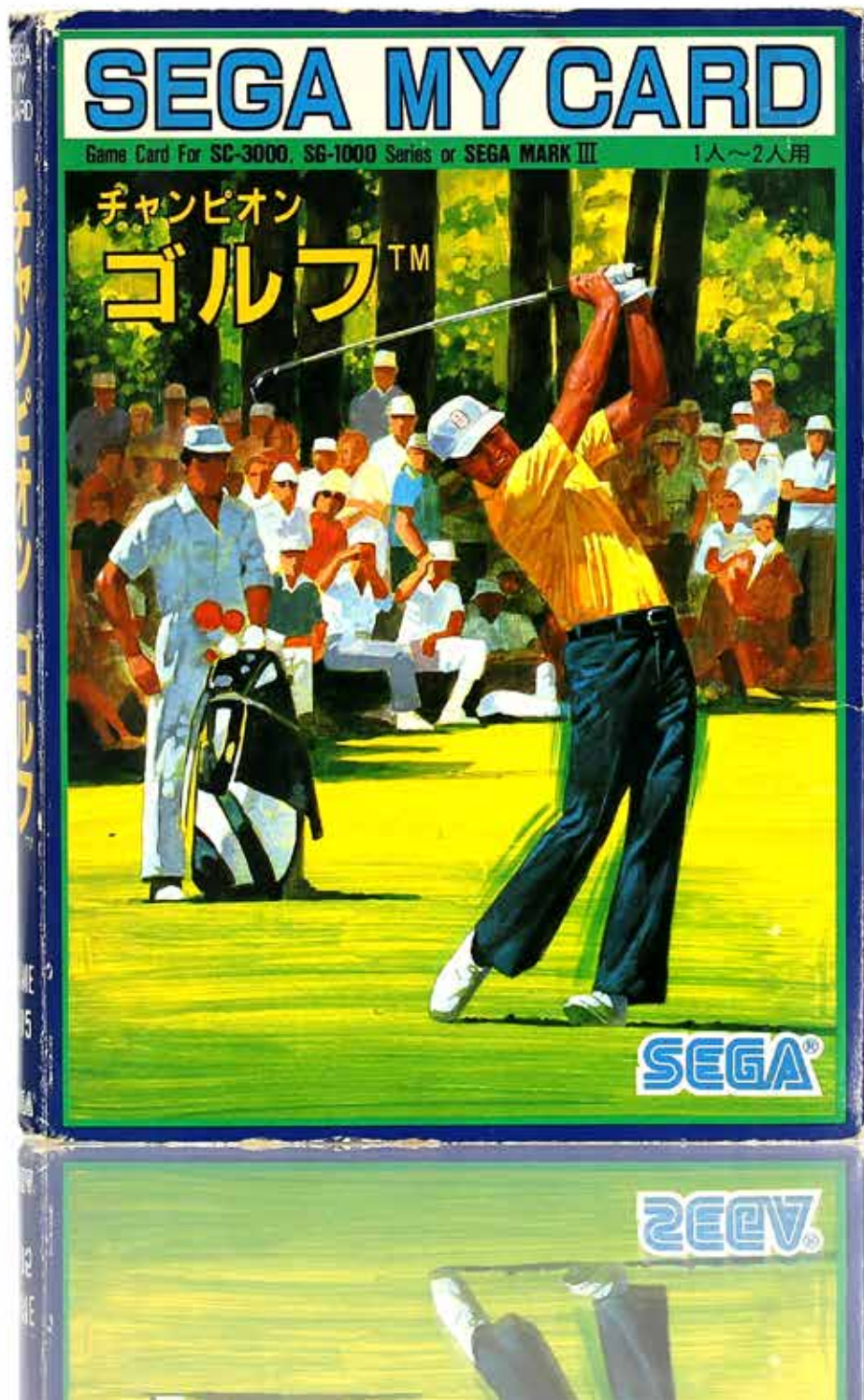
Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

209



# CHAMPION GOLF

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000

# MONACO GP

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



# SUPER SOCCER

**P**laceholder

?

**P**laceholder



## CHAMPION GOLF

**C**hampion Golf shipped twice on SG-1000. But this version is catalog number C-05, while yesterday's was G-1005. What's the difference? So far as I can tell, nothing in terms of game content; the secret is the medium.

Sega updated its console hardware after a year or so on the market, building in support for a new media format: Credit card-sized My Cards. These could hold just as much data as the original, chunky, black cartridges, but they took up much less space on the shelf. Several SG-1000 carts received reissues on My Cards once the redesigned SG-1000 Mark II console launched, presumably based on their popular-

ity. From this we can determine Sega fans like golf more than they like shooting wild animals.

This also gives me the chance to correct some misinformation. It turns out the Game Developers Research Institute sorted out the story behind Champion Golf developer Log-tec: They were a computer developer, and this cart (or card) was adapted from a game they created for the MSX home system. One of the designers of this game would later establish Kid, the studio responsible for NES classics like *Burai Fighter*, *G.I. Joe*, and *Kick Master*.

## MONACO GP

**Y**ou can tell *Monaco GP* was a big deal for Sega, because its SG-1000 conversion was one of the few releases for the system that received a reissue in the compact MyCard format. Same game, much smaller physical form factor.

The MyCard version shipped with brand new cover art. You could be forgiven for not spotting the difference at a glance, because the lead car is colored and positioned almost exactly as on the older box. But this is a more literal image with less abstraction in both the composition and the rendering. Sega moved away from their preferred traditional Western cover art look pretty quickly.

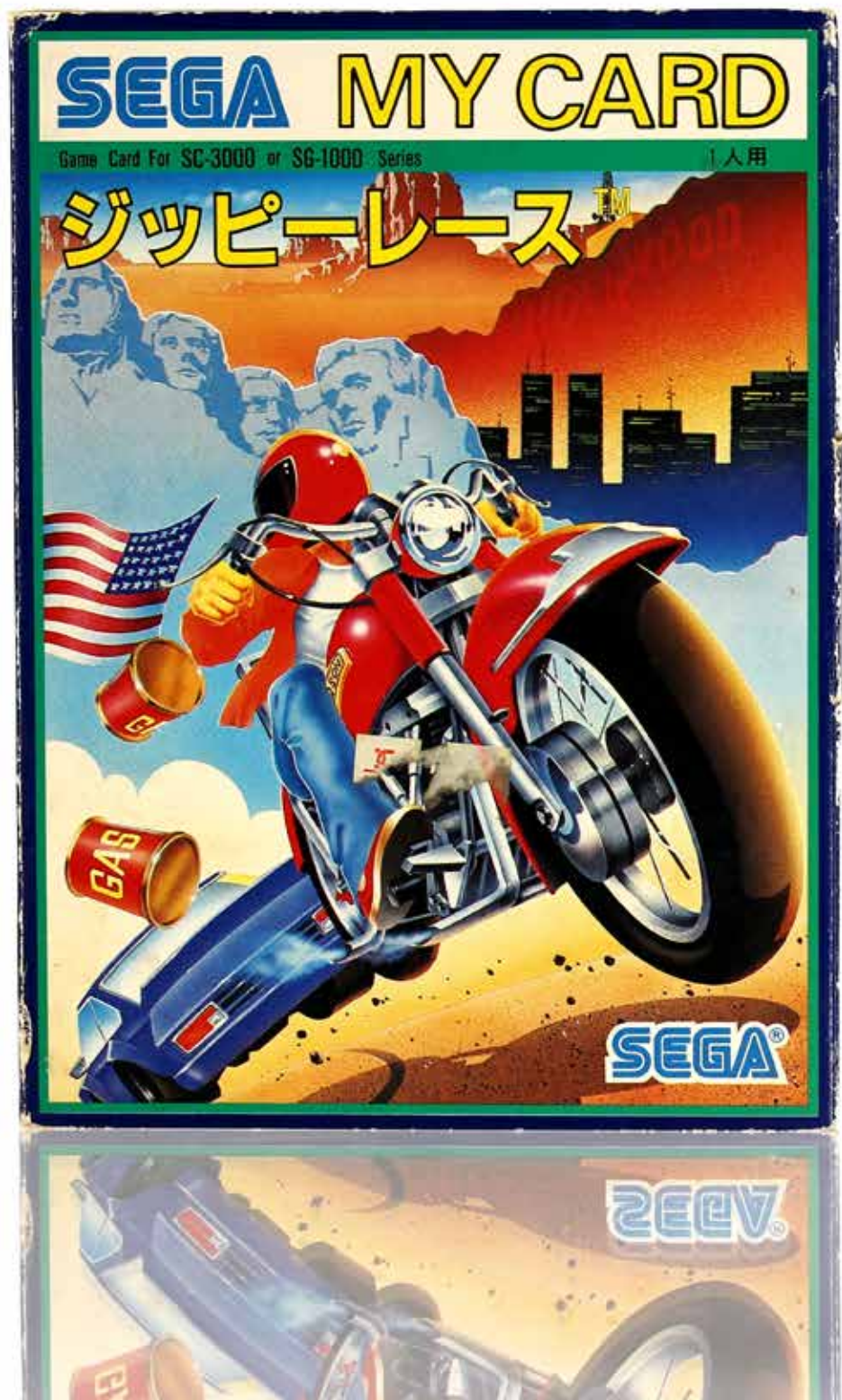
Also, I misremembered the arcade game

in my description yesterday—like this port, it was strictly top-down. I was thinking of *Monaco GP*'s successor, *Turbo*, which had a revolutionary behind-the-car viewpoint (and paved the way for Sega's *really* big racer, *Out Run*).



# ZIPPY RACE

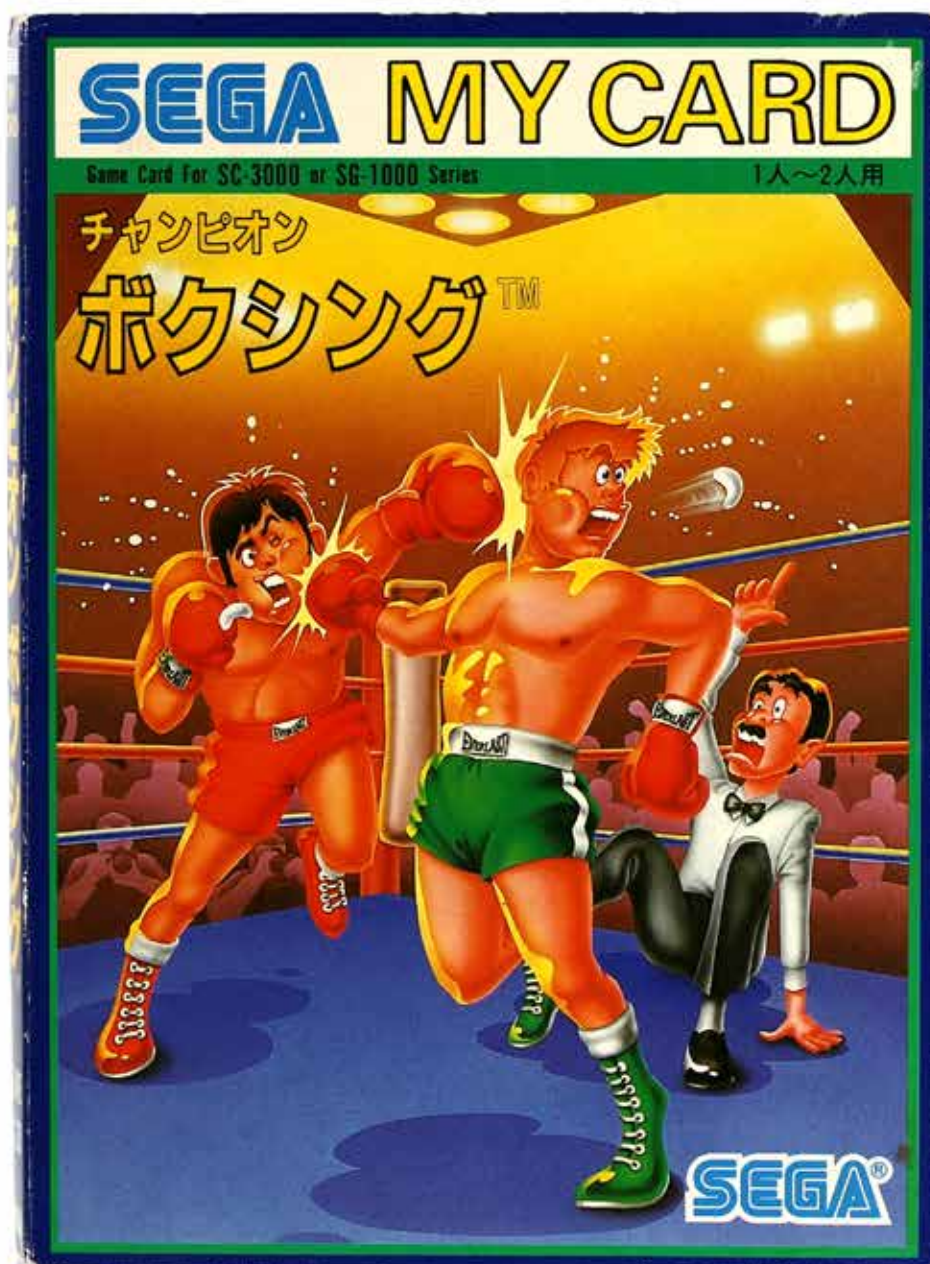
Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000

# CHAMPION BOXING

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000

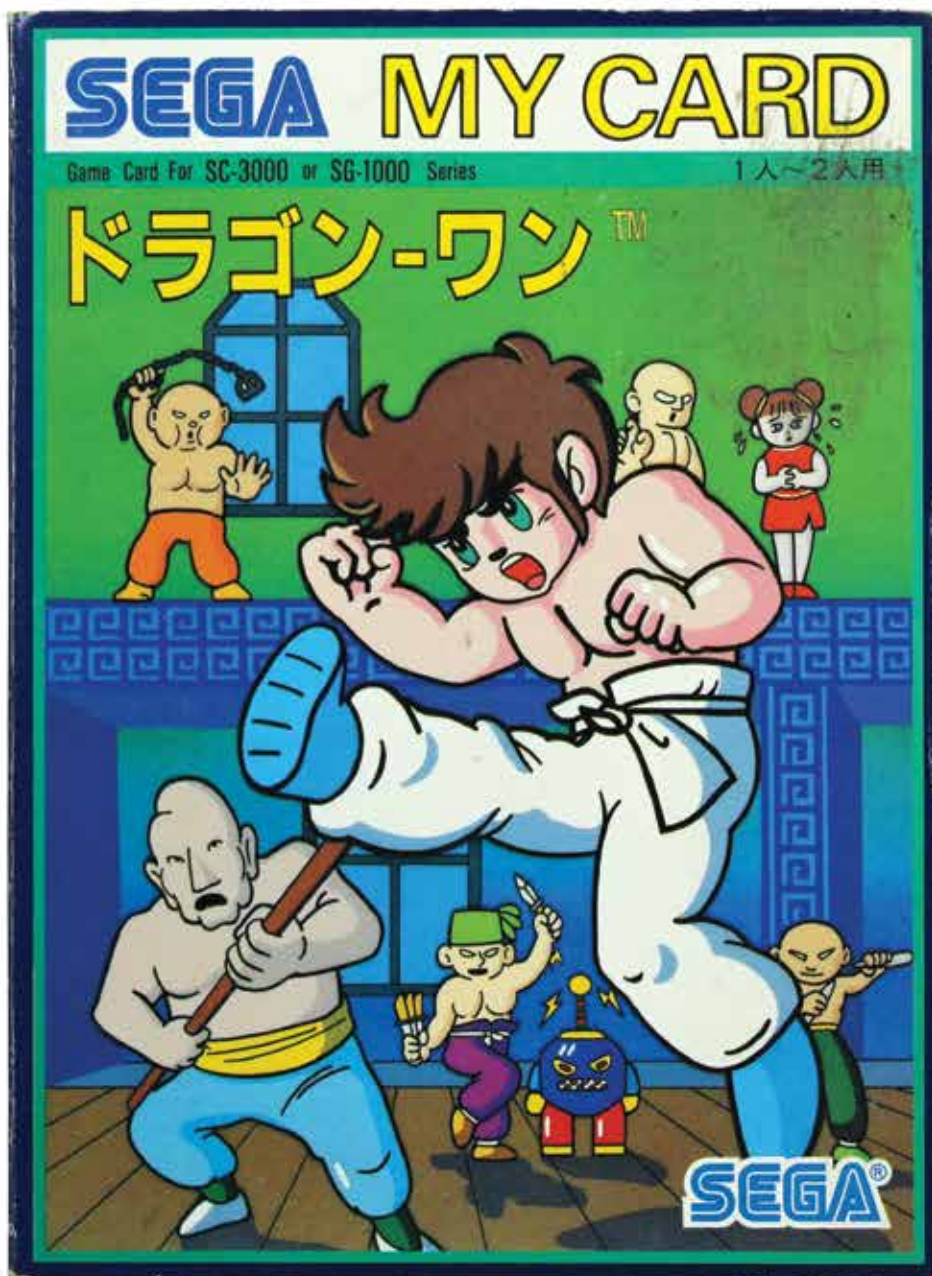
# STAR FORCE

Developer: *Compile* Publisher: *Sega* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *G-1002*



# DRAGON WANG

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000





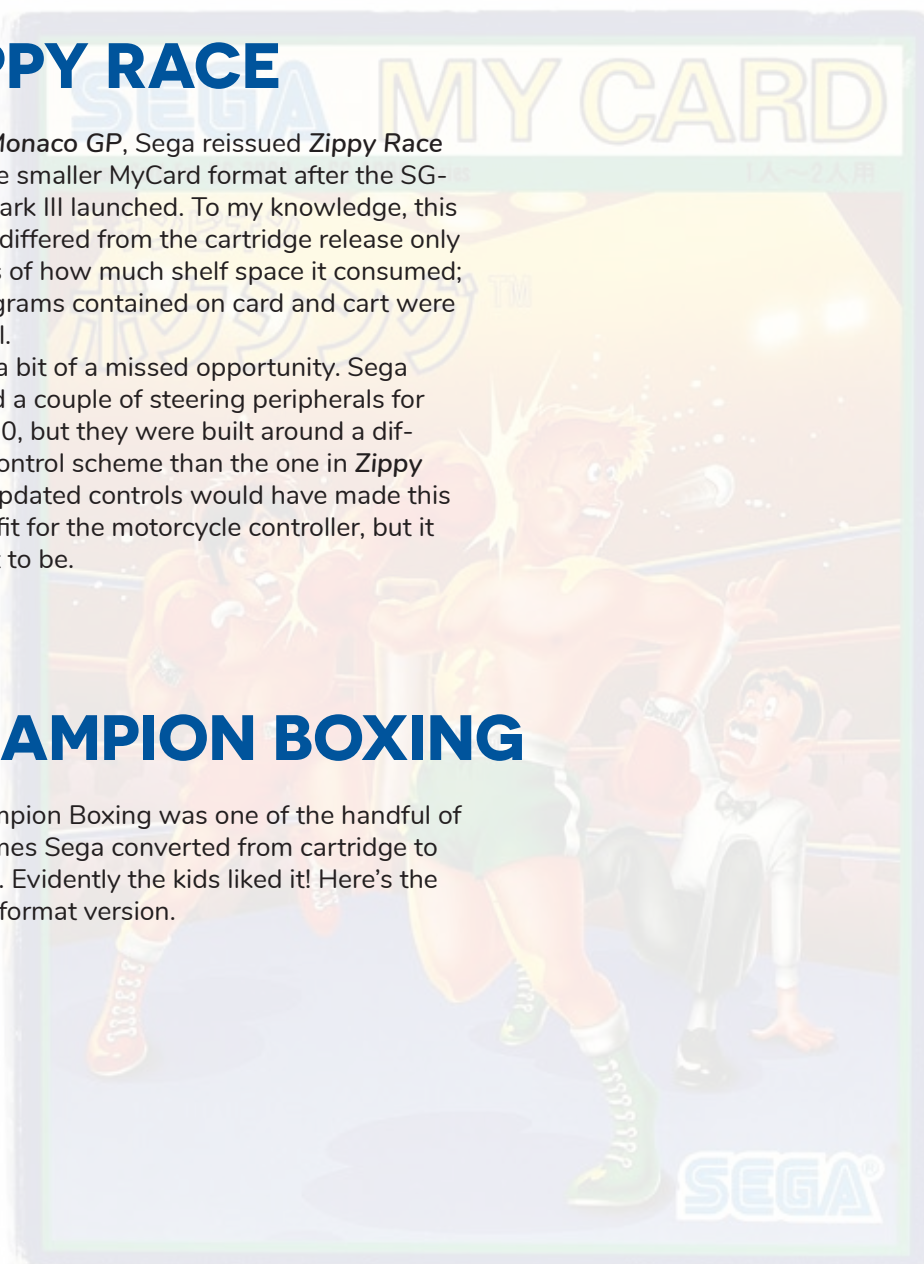
## ZIPPY RACE

Like *Monaco GP*, Sega reissued *Zippy Race* in the smaller MyCard format after the SG-1000 Mark III launched. To my knowledge, this version differed from the cartridge release only in terms of how much shelf space it consumed; the programs contained on card and cart were identical.

It's a bit of a missed opportunity. Sega released a couple of steering peripherals for SG-1000, but they were built around a different control scheme than the one in *Zippy Race*. Updated controls would have made this a great fit for the motorcycle controller, but it was not to be.

## CHAMPION BOXING

*Champion Boxing* was one of the handful of games Sega converted from cartridge to MyCard. Evidently the kids liked it! Here's the smaller format version.



## STAR FORCE

T  
ext here



## DRAGON WANG

T  
ext here



# KEKKYOKU NANKYOKU DAIBOUKEN

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer





# YIE AR KUNG-FU

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





# NINJA-KUN

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05

## 忍者くん 魔城の冒険

JF-03



ファミリーコンピュータ™

JALECO®

בִּינְיָן קוֹמְפּוּטֵר

JALECO®





# CHACK'N POP

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO



# KEKKYOKU NANKYOKU DAIBOUKEN

Placeholder

けっきょく南極大冒険™

Konami.

MARIO BROS.

Placeholder





# NINJA-KUN

Placeholder

## 忍者くん

### 魔城の冒険

### JF-03



## CHACK'N POP

Placeholder

ファミリーコンピュータ™

# JALECO®

ファミリーコンピュータ™

# JALECO®



# DIG DUG

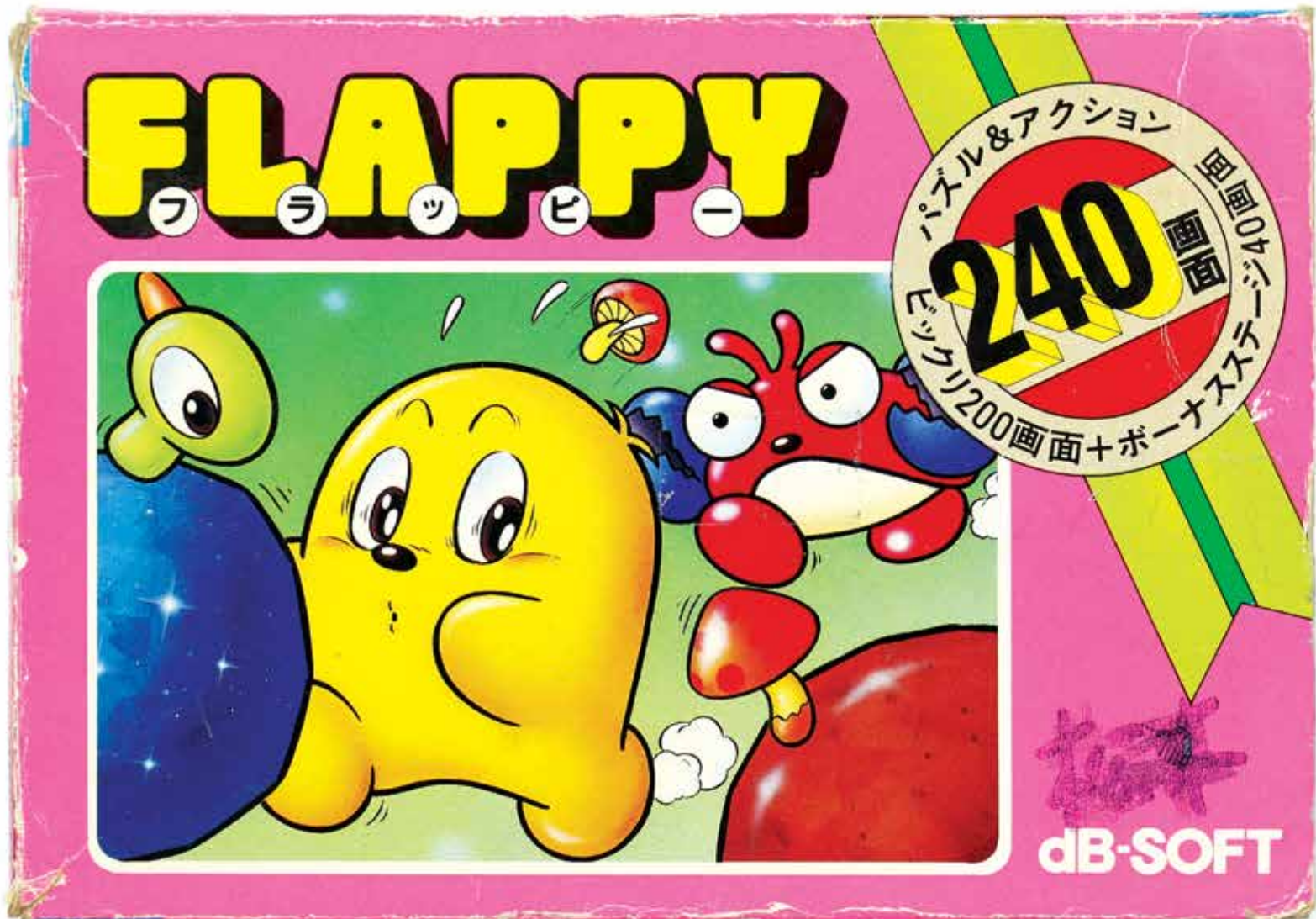
Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





# FLAPPY

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO





# WRECKING CREW

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05



レッキングクルー™

Nintendo®

レッキングクルー™

Nintendo®

# SPARTAN X

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





## DIG DUG

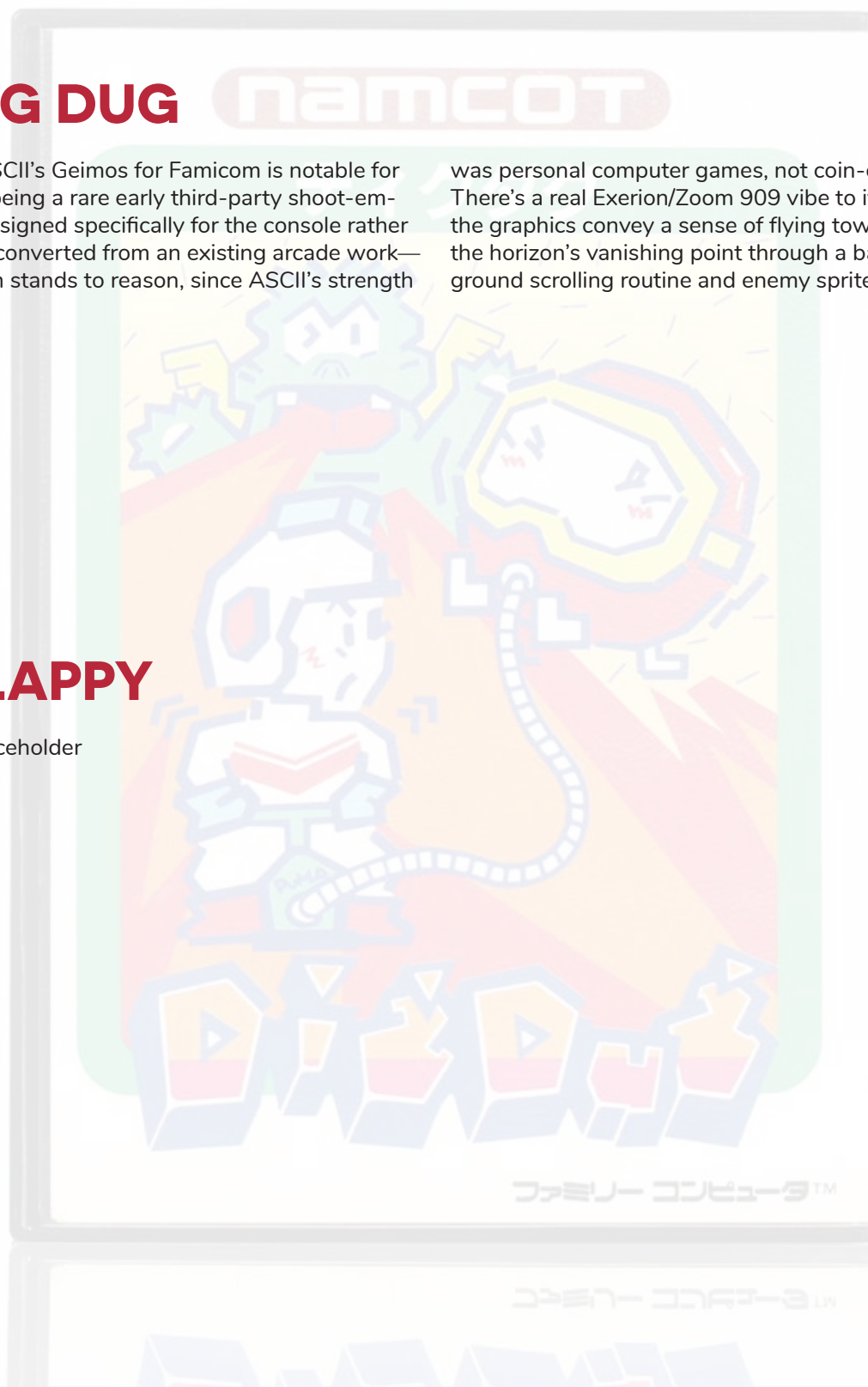
namcot

**A**SCII's Geimos for Famicom is notable for being a rare early third-party shoot-em-up designed specifically for the console rather than converted from an existing arcade work—which stands to reason, since ASCII's strength

was personal computer games, not coin-ops. There's a real Exerion/Zoom 909 vibe to it, as the graphics convey a sense of flying toward the horizon's vanishing point through a background scrolling routine and enemy sprites that

## FLAPPY

**P**laceholder





# WRECKING CREW

**P**laceholder



**SPARTAN X**

**P**laceholder

スバルタンX™

Nintendo®

商標「スバルタンX」は、株式会社ニッキーの許諾により使用しています

©1995 Nintendo. All rights reserved.

Nintendo®

# HYPER OLYMPIC

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO





Konami

HYPER OLYMPIC™



FAMILY COMPUTER™

ファミリ-コンピュータ™

「ファミリーコンピュータ」は任天堂の商標です。

ファミリ-コンピュータ™

FAMILY COMPUTER™

「ファミリーコンピュータ」は任天堂の商標です。



# STAR FORCE

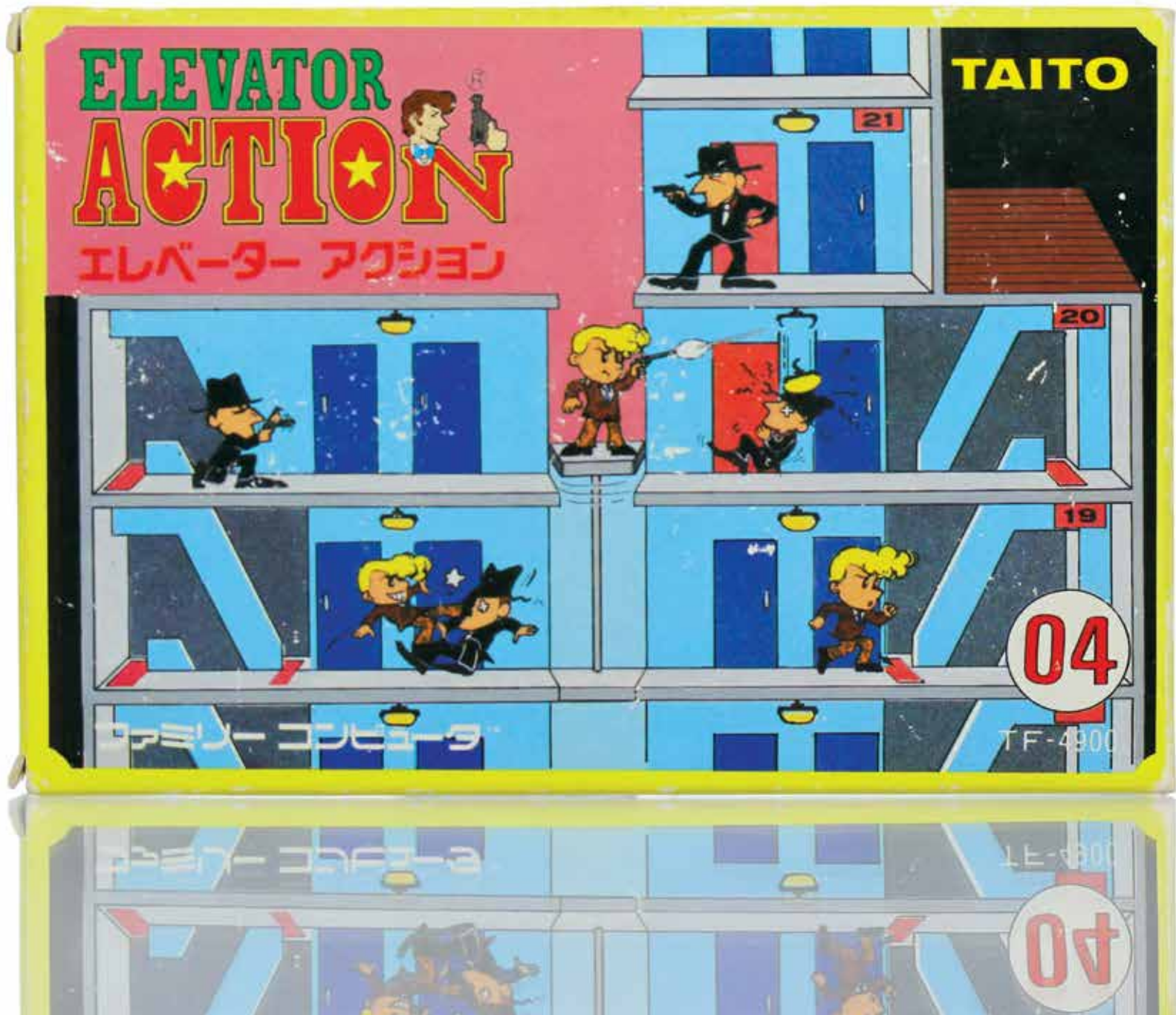
Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer



# ELEVATOR ACTION

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





Konami

HYPER OLYMPIC™

# HYPER OLYMPIC



Placeholder

# FAMILY COMPUTER™

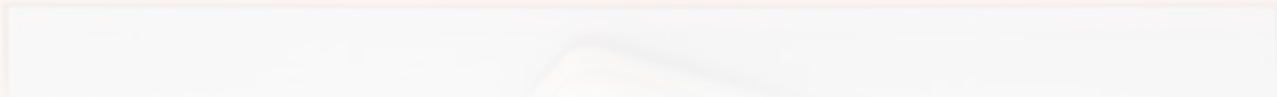
ファミリ-コンピュータ™

「ファミリーコンピュータ」は任天堂の商標です。

ファミリ-コンピュータ™

# FAMILY COMPUTER™

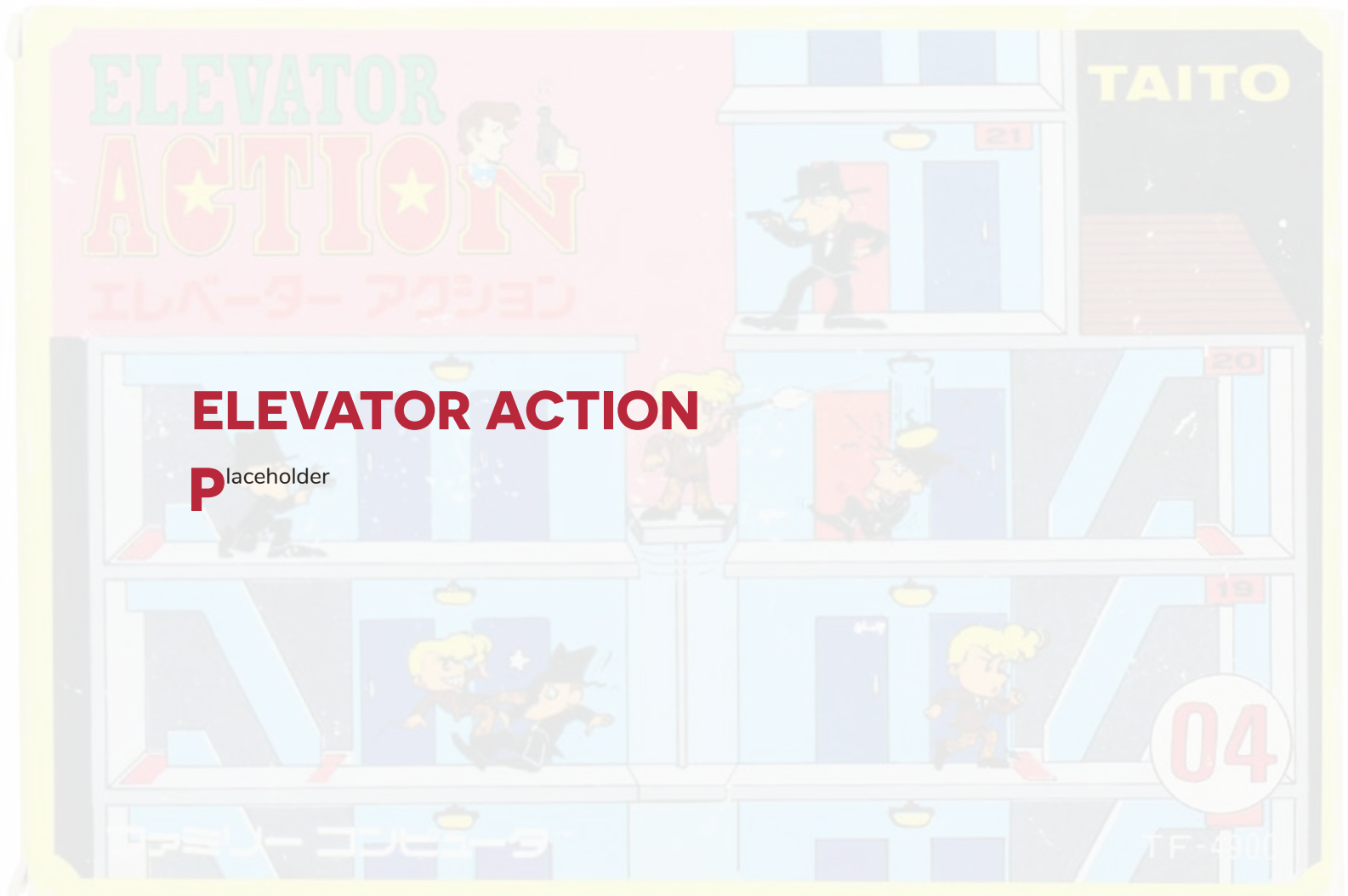
「ファミリーコンピュータ」は任天堂の商標です。





# STAR FORCE

**P**laceholder



# ZOOM 909

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002





# CHOPLIFTER

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



# PITFALL II

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000



# DOKI DOKI PENGUIN LAND

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000

## ZOOM 909

T ext here



## CHOPLIFTER

T ext here



## PITFALL II

T<sub>ext here</sub>



## DOKI DOKI PENGUIN LAND

T<sub>ext here</sub>

# DROL

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000



# CHACK'N POP

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



# MILKY PRINCESS

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# POP'N CHIPS

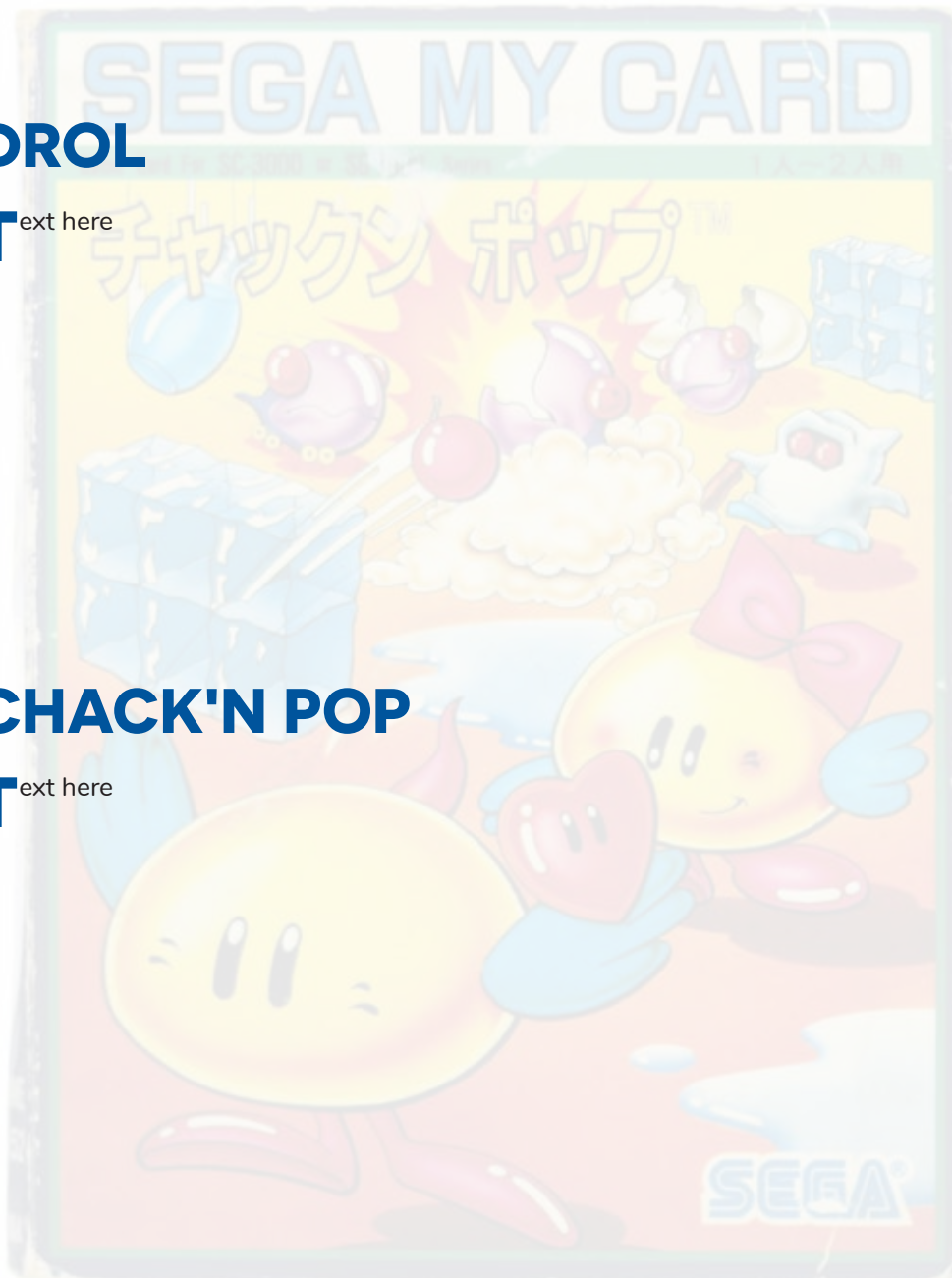
Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

**DROL**

Text here

**CHACK'N POP**

Text here





# MILKY PRINCESS

**P**laceholder

# POP'N CHIPS

**P**laceholder

# NEKKETSU KUNG-FU ROAD

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# STAR SPEEDER

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

251



# FIELD COMBAT

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer



# ROAD FIGHTER

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05



## NEKKETSU KUNG-FU ROAD

**P**laceholder

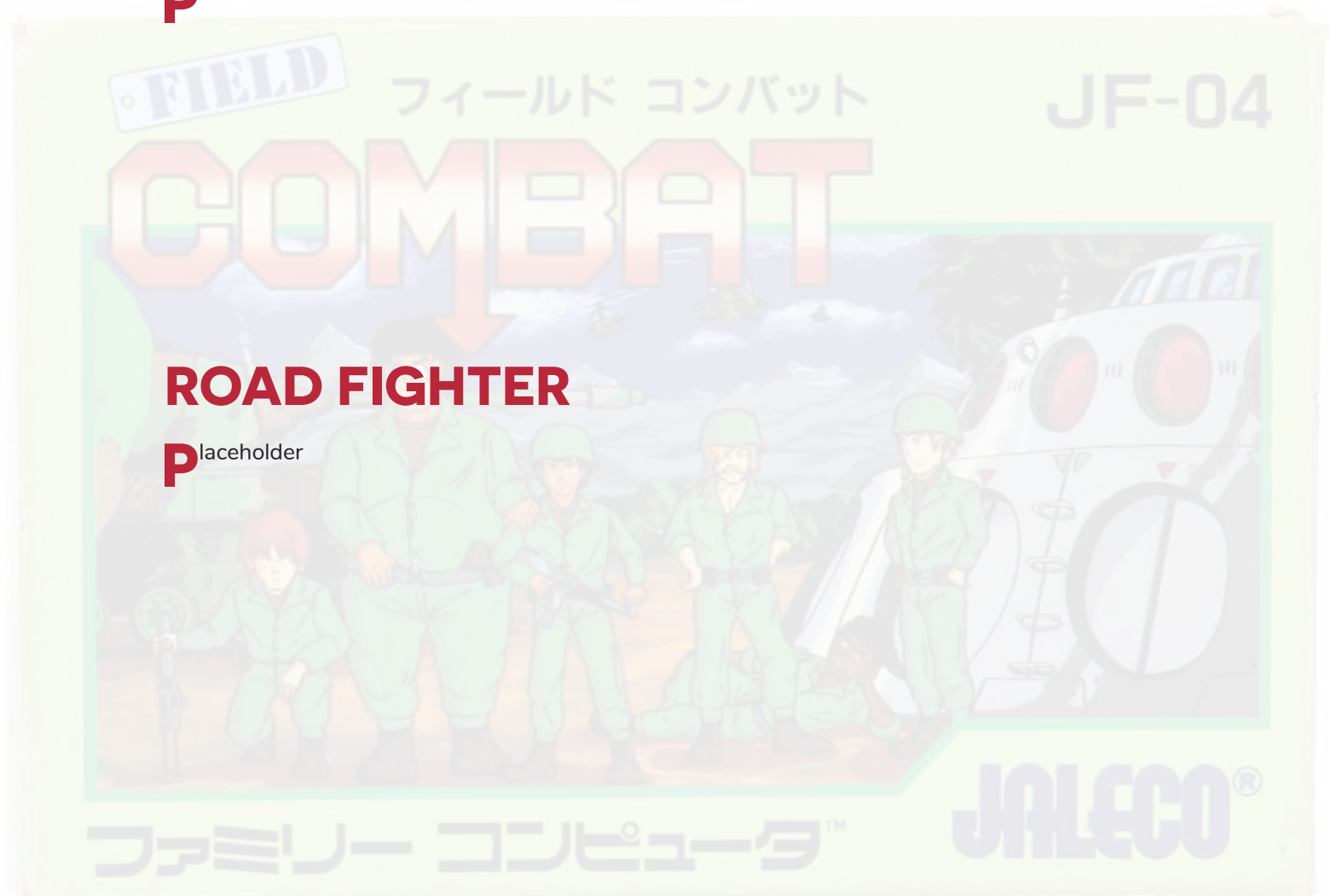
## STAR SPEEDER

**P**laceholder



# FIELD COMBAT

Placeholder



# ROAD FIGHTER

Placeholder



# WARPMAN

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer



# DOOR DOOR

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





# SUPER ARABIAN

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer



# ROBOT BLOCK SET

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05

ファミリーコンピュータ™ ロボット

## ブロックセット

HVC-BLS

### セット内容

- ブロック.....5コ
- ブロックトレイ.....5コ
- ブロックハンド.....2コ
- カセット.....1コ



Nintendo®



(ロボット別売)

Nintendo®

(ロボット別売)

# WARPMAN

Placeholder



# DOOR DOOR

Placeholder



# SUPER ARABIAN

Placeholder

ファミリーコンピュータ™ ロボット

## ブロックセット

HVC-BLS

### セット内容

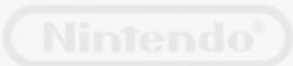
- ブロック.....5コ
- ブロックトレイ.....5コ
- ブロックハンド.....2コ
- カセット.....1コ

# ROBOT BLOCK SET

Placeholder



(ロボット別売)



(ロボット別売)

# FRONT LINE

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer





# THE TOWER OF DRAUGA

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





# ASTRO ROBO SASA

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer



# HONSHOUGI: NAITOU KUDAN SHOUGI HIDEN

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05

Family Computer



01

AXES

内藤九段将棋秘伝入門編

01

AXES

内藤九段将棋秘伝入門編



## FRONT LINE

Placeholder





## ASTRO ROBO SASA

**A**stro Robo Sasa probably does not sit at the top of anyone's list of greatest Famicom games of all time. For those outside Japan (the only territory in which it was released for the console), Sasa is most likely known

best for being one of the many games that gets skimmed in a casual stroll through ROM lists—like A.S.O. and Attack Animal Gakuen, it shows up at the start of alphabetical lists, so it undoubtedly has been seen by untold numbers

## HONSHOGI: NAITOU KUDAN SHOUGI HIDEN

**H**onshogi: Naitou Kudan Shougi Hiden has a very elaborate title, and a very perfunctory box. I guess that's how you know it's an

authentic shougi sim. It wears its bonafides in its title—it boasts the name of Naitou Kudan, one of the all-time most acclaimed masters of



# ROBOT GYRO SET

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# GEIMOS

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





# 10-YARD FIGHT

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer







## ROBOT GYRO SET

**P**laceholder

Nintendo

ファミリーコンピュータ

# GEIMOS

ゲイモス

## GEIMOS

**A**SCII's Geimos for Famicom is notable for being a rare early third-party shoot-em-up designed specifically for the console rather than converted from an existing arcade work—which stands to reason, since ASCII's strength

was personal computer games, not coin-ops. There's a real Exerion/Zoom 909 vibe to it, as the graphics convey a sense of flying toward the horizon's vanishing point through a background scrolling routine and enemy sprites that



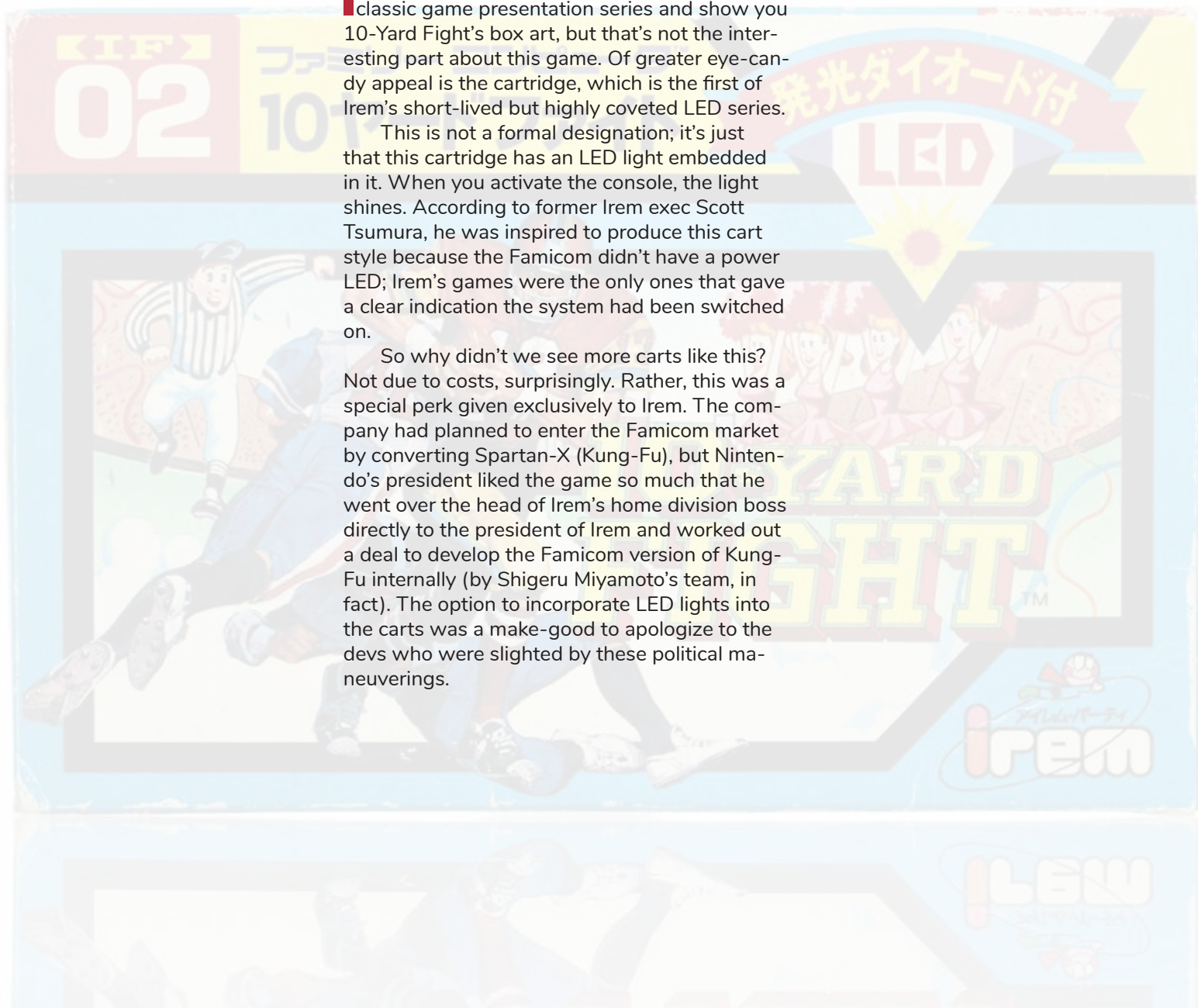


## 10-YARD FIGHT

could maintain a consistent approach to this classic game presentation series and show you 10-Yard Fight's box art, but that's not the interesting part about this game. Of greater eye-candy appeal is the cartridge, which is the first of Irem's short-lived but highly coveted LED series.

This is not a formal designation; it's just that this cartridge has an LED light embedded in it. When you activate the console, the light shines. According to former Irem exec Scott Tsumura, he was inspired to produce this cart style because the Famicom didn't have a power LED; Irem's games were the only ones that gave a clear indication the system had been switched on.

So why didn't we see more carts like this? Not due to costs, surprisingly. Rather, this was a special perk given exclusively to Irem. The company had planned to enter the Famicom market by converting Spartan-X (Kung-Fu), but Nintendo's president liked the game so much that he went over the head of Irem's home division boss directly to the president of Irem and worked out a deal to develop the Famicom version of Kung-Fu internally (by Shigeru Miyamoto's team, in fact). The option to incorporate LED lights into the carts was a make-good to apologize to the devs who were slighted by these political maneuverings.



# BATTLE CITY

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer





# SUPER MARIO BROS.

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05



スーパーマリオブラザーズ™

Nintendo®

スーパーマリオブラザーズ™

Nintendo®



# TONTON BALL

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# SUPER SANSU-PUTER

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

277

# BATTLE CITY

Placeholder

# SUPER MARIO BROS.

Placeholder



スーパーマリオブラザーズ™

Nintendo®

スーパーマリオブラザーズ™

Nintendo®



**TONTON BALL**

**P**laceholder

**SUPER SANSU-PUTER**

**P**laceholder

# SHOGI NYUUMON

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# DORAEMON

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*



# BASIC NYUUMON

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

# DRAGON SLAYER

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05

**SHOGI NYUUMON**

**P**laceholder

**DORAEMON**

**P**laceholder



## BASIC NYUUMON

**P**laceholder

## DRAGON SLAYER

**P**laceholder

# ROCK'N BOLT

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



# ELEVATOR ACTION

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



# SOUKOBAN

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002



SG-1000

# CHAMPIONSHIP LODERUNNER

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



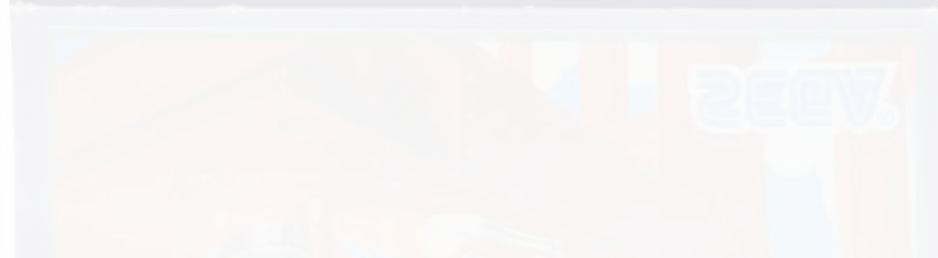
# ROCK'N BOLT

Text here



# ELEVATOR ACTION

Text here





## SOUKOBAN

T<sub>ext here</sub>



## CHAMPIONSHIP LODERUNNER

T<sub>ext here</sub>

# H.E.R.O.

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002

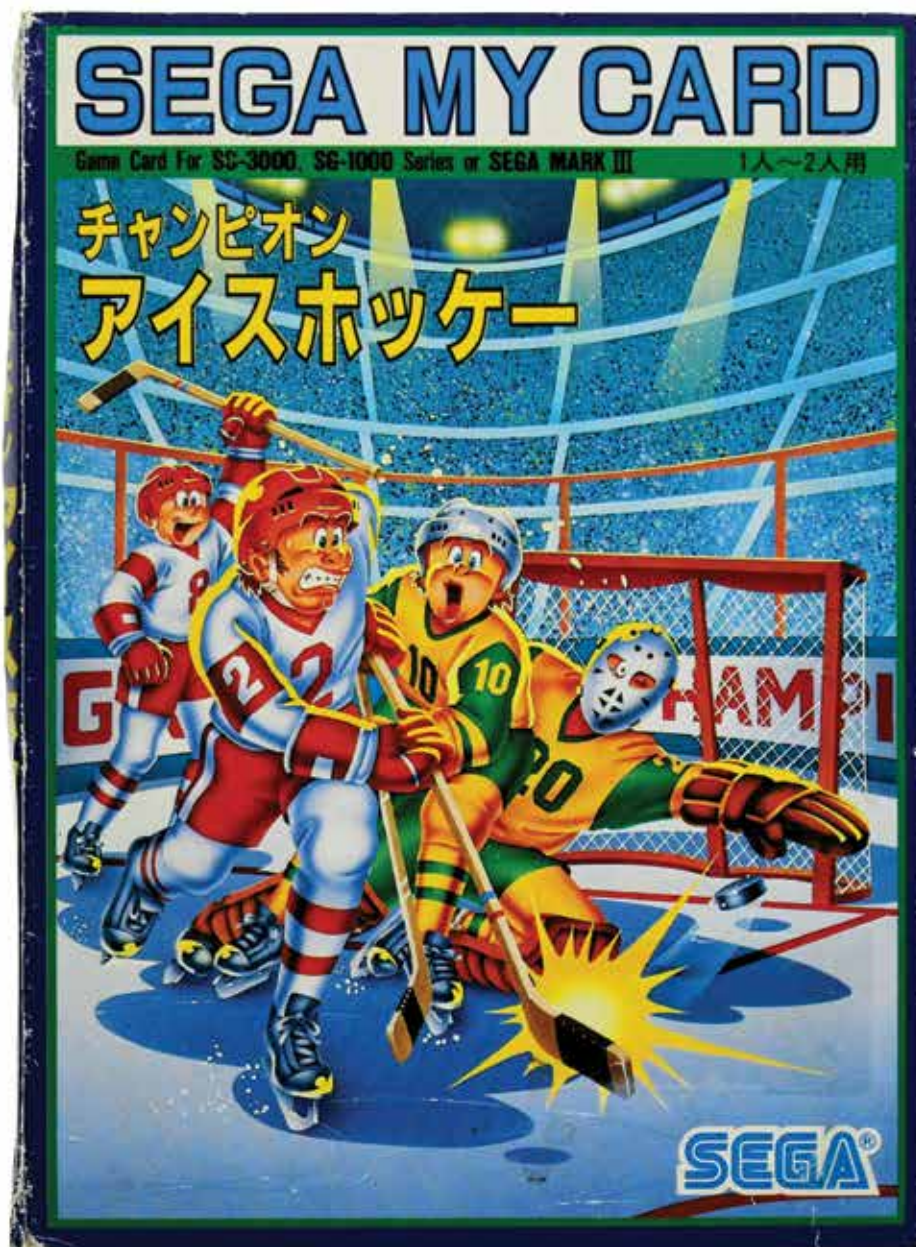


SG-1000



# CHAMPION ICE HOCKEY

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003



SG-1000



# HANG ON II

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1002

SG-1000

# BOMB JACK

Developer: Compile Publisher: Sega Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: G-1003

**H.E.R.O.**

**T**ext here



**CHAMPION ICE HOCKEY**

**T**ext here





## HANG ON II

**T**ext here

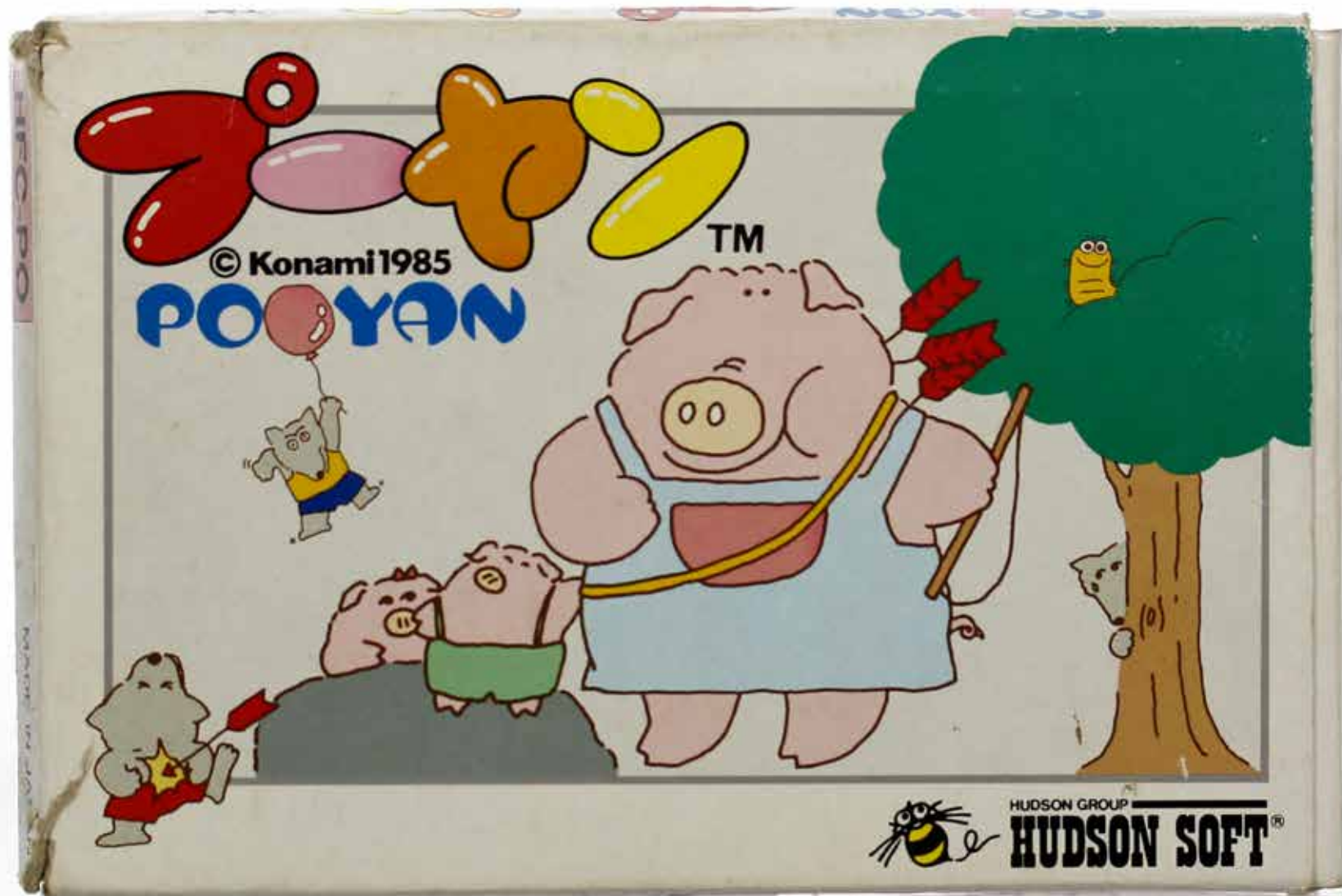
## BOMB JACK

**T**ext here

# POOYAN

Developer: Konami Publisher: Hudson Genre: Shooting Catalog no.: HFC-PO

Family Computer



HUDSON GROUP  
**HUDSON SOFT**®

HUDSON GROUP  
**HUDSON SOFT**®

# CITY CONNECTION

Developer: Axes Arts Amuse Publisher: Jaleco Genre: Platforming / Racing Catalog no.: JF-05





# HYPER SPORTS

Developer: *Konami* Publisher: *Hudson* Genre: *Shooting* Catalog no.: *HFC-PO*

Family Computer

# ROUTE 16 TURBO

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

## POOYAN

A funny quirk of history: Hudson publishing a Konami game. Some 25 years later, Konami would buy Hudson. In 1985, though, Hudson was the big dog in console gaming as Nintendo's most successful third party. Konami? An upstart with a few minor arcade hits to their name and vague aspirations of home publishing greatness. This being one of Konami's older coin-op works, Hudson likely locked down home computer and console rights before Konami decided to self-publish.

Hudson absolutely justifies their role in this game with a lovely box illustration straight out of a storybook. Konami would have stuffed it into their standard orange-rimmed trade dress,

while here the art can breathe, running all the way to the edges. It's hard to imagine an NES game ever shipping in the U.S. with such simple box art, but this is a case where simplicity plays a big part in the overall appeal.

The game itself is a whimsical little nothing where you play as a mother pig riding a makeshift elevator up and down to fire a crossbow and defend your babies against wolves on balloons. It's mostly notable for being one of several games designer Tokuro Fujiwara headed up for Konami before moving along to Capcom and basically building that company's big '80s hits: *Ghosts 'N Goblins*, *Commando*, *Mega Man*, etc.

## CITY CONNECTION

An arcade classic. Inspired by games like *Flicky* and *Mappy*. Highly reminiscent of the fantastic Fiat chase sequence in Hayao Miyazaki's *Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro*; the game's heroine is even named Clarice, like the princess in the film. Evidently based around an actual kei car from which the game takes its title, the Honda City. *City Connection* is something of a mystery: Did Honda actually license the likeness of their creation to Jaleco? No information has been forthcoming online.

Given how casually, even brazenly, '80s Japanese pop media included imagery to which the creators had no paid rights, it's entirely likely that Jaleco based this game's identity around another company's creation without the benefit of a license. That freewheeling spirit is terribly missed; today, the watchword is caution.

Beyond its mysterious moniker, *City Connection* has plenty to recommend it. You drive a tiny little car across a series of highways, painting each one a different color while fending off the police (and attempting not to hit a cat that possesses zero sense of self-preservation). Simple, but fast-paced and quirky enough to stick with you.

It seems to have made an impression: The company that currently holds many of Jaleco's legacy properties adopted *City Connection* as its name, even though that's the one big Jaleco game they've yet to revive.

The Famicom release features some of the best artwork yet seen on any game for the system. This wonderful drawing also showed up on the NES box, but it has more impact here thanks to the horizontal format of the package; the illustration is lost on NES due to the vertical



# **HYPER SPORTS**

**P**laceholder

# **ROUTE 16 TURBO**

**P**laceholder

# CHALLENGER

Developer: *Axes Arts Amuse* Publisher: *Jaleco* Genre: *Platforming / Racing* Catalog no.: *JF-05*

**CHALLENGER**

**P**laceholder



# NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

Manufacturer: Nintendo Catalog no.: NES-001