

# New Nintendo 64 Games

**Arcade**  
Nintendo 64  
Game of  
the Month



■ Storming the enemy base. Blinding.



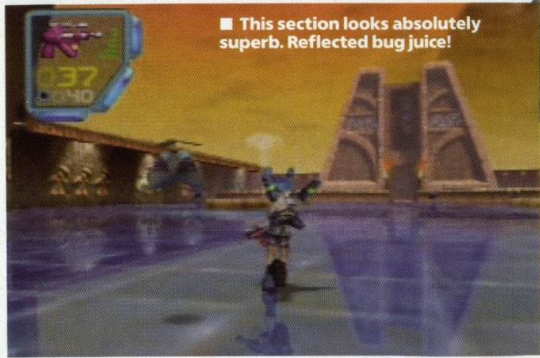
■ The new Juno: grown-up bugslayer.



■ Surveying Mizar's asteroid hideout.



■ Where now? Try reading the signs...



■ This section looks absolutely superb. Reflected bug juice!



■ Remember Galaxian? Look out for some familiar alien formations.



## MAGICAL TETRIS CHALLENGE

- Publisher: **Capcom**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **Rumble Pak**

How come Goofy gets to strut around fully clothed and eat in fancy restaurants while Pluto has to live naked in a kennel? And why does Mickey wear trousers, but no shirt? As for Donald... so much for the childlike innocence of the Disney universe.

Anyway, it seems Capcom has picked up the licence to produce a line of Disney-themed titles, along with the rights to make a number of new *Tetris* games. To this end, the company has logically combined the two, producing *Magical Tetris Challenge* featuring Mickey Mouse and the rest of the two-dimensional team.

Over the years many *Tetris* spin-offs have bastardised the original version of the classic puzzler, introducing needless elements from exploding bricks to power-ups. So it's a refreshing change to find that *Magical Tetris Challenge* hasn't toyed too much with the format. What you get are the familiar odd-shaped blocks dropping down from the sky, which you must manoeuvre into lines – which then disappear. It's deceptively addictive.

In *Magical Tetris Challenge* you are treated to an ongoing story mode in which you, in the guise of the Mickster, must face-off against other Disney characters in simulated multi-player battles. In a departure from the original format, you get a number of new block shapes to grapple with, but original *Tetris* is still there – sans ten-brick monsters.

*Magical Tetris Challenge* is achingly twee and pretty (though the music is quirky), but few concessions have been made to modernity. No 3D nonsense, no power-ups, pure *Tetris*. ★★★ **Paul Rose**

# JET FORCE GEMINI

## GIVE FREE REIN TO YOUR INSECTICIDAL TENDENCIES.

**R**emember the days when a shoot-'em-up was a real gamer's game; the kind of thing you'd pump coins into at the arcade and come away from sweating and shaking, as if the lifeless lump of plastic and silicon had just given you a good slap in the face? Well, someone at Rare evidently does. The secretive British coder has been working on *Jet Force Gemini* for more than two years, and after lengthy delays caused by redesign this futuristic blast from the past is finally here for your delectation.

And fortunately for Nintendo, the N64 and shoot-'em-up connoisseurs everywhere, it's absolutely stunning. Playing like a cross between Factor 5's Amiga classic *Turrican* and a nandrolone-enhanced version of *Body Harvest*, *Jet Force Gemini* is arguably the best game to appear on the 64-bit system since *Zelda*.

The premise is simple: playing as one of three hardened space adventurers, you have to fight your way through a series of huge 3D levels to defeat the evil Mizar and save a beleaguered race of peace-loving bears, the Tribals. Along the way, you'll get to use a selection of satisfyingly destructive weapons to tear Mizar's bug-like hordes into scraps of green goo and thousands of flying limbs.

It isn't subtle. Unleash a homing missile into a crowd of insectoid drones and you'll be treated to a fantastic shower of unidentifiable body parts or, if you prefer the more refined method, you can line up a couple of them with a shuriken and lop off their heads as neatly as you like. The poor Tribals suffer equally, since they're often positioned next to explosive barrels or in the middle of a mob of bloodthirsty assassin drones.

The aim of the game may be to rescue them, but taking out your frustration on a few of the wide-eyed furballs after you've died a couple of times trying to

save a particularly tricky one proves from time to time to be a thoroughly therapeutic activity.

Initially at least, *Jet Force* seems worryingly short. The three characters make their separate ways to Mizar's palace within the space of little more than 12 hours of hectic gameplay – hardly what you'd expect from the end product of such a protracted development period. However, the game soon reveals the sting in its tail as Mizar does a runner and Juno, Vela and Lupus get the opportunity to explore levels which could previously be played by only one of them. Huge secret areas are revealed, whole new sections become accessible, and you can get your hands on the full bug-splattering arsenal.

There's plenty of incentive to explore every nook and cranny, as you'll find such treats as a *Wipeout*-style racing game and an alien nightclub – complete with a mini arcade machine and a DJ who takes requests. The bonus games can be played as multi-player races, and there's a token deathmatch thrown in for good measure, extra levels and characters which you find in the solo adventure. It isn't in the same league as *GoldenEye*, thanks to the slightly awkward third-person camera, but it's a nice little extra.

As you'd expect from a Rare game, the graphics are spectacular. There isn't a hint of fogging – except when it's used as an atmospheric effect on one of the levels – and real-time shadows and reflections are handled without slowdown, even when the screen is filled with enemies and explosions. The landscapes seem to stretch for miles, and the bad guys are frighteningly smart too. They'll certainly give you a run for your money on the later levels.

As a straight shoot-'em-up, *Jet Force* is about as good as it gets – big, ballsy and heart-thumpingly exciting. Throw in a hefty slice of platform exploration, puzzles, a fantastic soundtrack and the best visuals on the N64, and you've got an instant classic. Buy it. ★★★★★ **Martin Kitts**

### Game info

- Publisher: **Rare**
- Developer: **Rare**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **Rumble Pak**

### ↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lock and load</li> <li>■ Outstanding graphics</li> <li>■ Plenty of secrets</li> <li>■ Gallons of gore</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Out of ammo</li> <li>■ So-so multiplayer</li> <li>■ Tricky controls</li> <li>■ No human enemies</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### Or you could try...

**Lylat Wars**  
Nintendo ★★★★★  
Until now, the best all-out blaster you could buy. Available at a knock-down price too.

**Body Harvest**  
Genesis ★★★★★  
A similarly epic concept, let down slightly by some dodgy visuals. Great fun though.