




**HYPER  
GAME  
MONTH**  
OF THE

# BANJO-TOOIE

 The bird in **Cam Shea's** backpack has finally escaped...

|                                |
|--------------------------------|
| <b>AVAILABLE:</b> Now          |
| <b>CATEGORY:</b> 3D Platformer |
| <b>PLAYERS:</b> 1-4            |
| <b>PUBLISHER:</b> Nintendo     |
| <b>PRICE:</b> \$99.95          |
| <b>RATING:</b> G8+             |
| <b>SUPPORTS:</b> Rumble Pak    |

**F**OR A GAME STARRING A BEAR wearing tiny yellow hotpants so tight they'd make Kylie Minogue blush, Banjo-Kazooie was remarkably good. Created by Rare (see page 42 for more), it has been the only game thus far to challenge Mario 64's throne in the realm of 3D platforming. Showcasing Rare's typically impressive polish and inventiveness, Banjo-Kazooie worked so well because of the ingenious combination of two characters. Each had its own abilities, and when combined afforded a wealth of gameplay potential that Rare managed to exploit with some clever levels and puzzles.

## THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET...

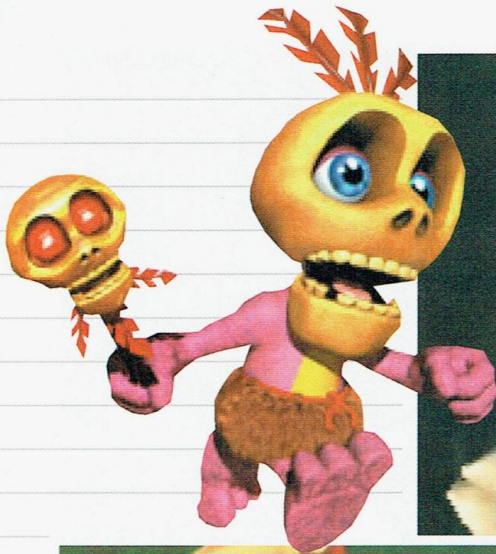
After giving the bear and the bird a thorough spanking, we've had a long

wait for Banjo-Tooie - especially after our appetite was whet by the alluring hints in the first game regarding areas that can only be unlocked by playing Banjo-Tooie (still unconfirmed). There was even a secret ending that had Mumbo giving the player a sneak peak of what to expect from the sequel.

The long wait has been more than worth it, mind you, and it's not hard to see why it took this long. Banjo-Tooie is a game that will charm the bright yellow pants off you, as Rare have most definitely addressed any complaints with the original. They've tweaked platform game mechanics to a whole new level here, as well as injecting a healthy dose of acerbic sass-mouth for good measure. In fact, it's the humour that more or less guarantees even the skeptics will have a good time with Banjo-Tooie. Rare have managed to craft perhaps the best 3D platformer ever at the same time as parodying so many of the institutions of the genre. It doesn't take itself at all seriously - King Jingaling greets you with a "Yo wassup", and there are constant references to the first game, not to mention



DON'T APE AROUND



## MINI ME GAMES

Banjo-Toolie is simply brimming with mini-games and challenges. These include: the Mayan Kickball challenge, the Dodgem Car Challenge, the Balloon Burst Challenge, the mini-sub shootout, and the Tower Of Tragedy Quiz. Many of these are playable in multiplayer games too - fourteen all up. While a fun diversion, there's nothing here to replace Mario Tennis, but hey thanks for including them Rare!



BANJO IS ALWAYS PICKING UP BIRDS



some surprisingly risqué content. When the "seaman" jokes and drag queen references start flying in the Jolly Roger Lagoon level you'll know what we mean, if you can stop laughing for long enough that is.

Backing up this award winning toilet humour, is some of the finest gameplay this side of Goldeneye. In addition to the tight set of abilities that made the original so solid, Banjo and Kazooie can now split up, opening up a whole host of individual moves for the player to learn. There are 40 new moves in all, including some very cool surprises such as the "Breegull Blaster", where the game switches to a first person shooter and Banjo totes Kazooie like a gat. Among many others, you can learn to grab onto ledges and shimmy along, Kazooie gets fired like a torpedo, Banjo learns to wield his backpack as a deadly weapon, and Kazooie learns to fire eggs while flying as well as swimming. Another cool new feature in Banjo-Toolie is the range of eggs you can now pick up and maim things with. Forget the old garden variety egg, there are now grenade

eggs, fire eggs, ice eggs, and clock-work Kazooie eggs.

## GETTING' WIGGY IN THE WIGWAM

In the quest to keep the puzzles ever more interesting and challenging, Banjo-Toolie comes with more sub-quests, mini games and extra playable characters than anybody expected. You can visit Humba Wumba's wigwam (chortle) and Mumbo Jumbo's skull to transform into bizarre new creatures - each with their own abilities. From Mumbo himself (nobody seems to like him either, if you try talking to other characters chances are they'll tell you where to go), to a Detonator (a strange dynamite detonation box that hops around - you can use it to blow up giant boulders to reveal a new path), a panel van, a submarine, a baby T-Rex, a daddy T-Rex, a washing machine, a snowball, and a bee. Phew!

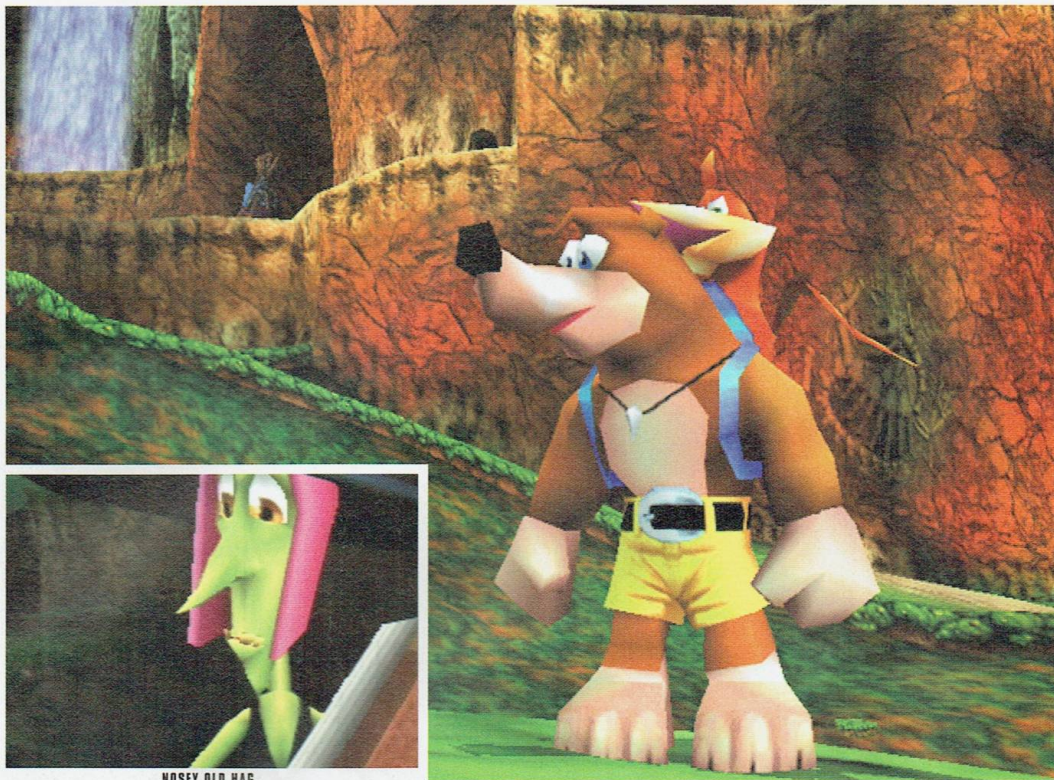
Technically, not a whole lot has changed. We won't patronise you by pretending that the graphics are "pretty" - many of the environments are over filtered and relatively aver-

age looking, but as far as the N64 goes, Rare have done an absolutely wonderful job. The variety and size of the environments still impress, and the textures are perfectly suited to the gameworlds. The characters also look excellent - all this without utilising the RAM pack. And let's not forget the particle effects from splashing around in the water (coupled with the bubbles under the surface) - two years on from Banjo-Kazooie and they still haven't been equaled on a console.

Sound is mostly the same as it was in Banjo-Kazooie, which is to say very good. The music is context sensitive, so moving from the land into the water will slow its pace right down and distort it somewhat, and moving from a safe area into a dangerous one manically increases the pace. While good, the music is just a little too familiar, and after going a straight 14 hour stretch of the game

near the end of my playguide for the original, I sincerely hoped that I'd never have to hear that same theme loop again. Such is life. The voices still





NOSEY OLD HAG

ONE OF THE MANY MINI-GAMES! GAMBLING!



FORGET IT, PUNK!

BANJO TRIES TO LOOK IN JAMJAR'S HOLE

BANJO AND KAZOOIE WAIT FOR THE STUNT MATRESS

...GRUNTY'S KILLED POOR BOTTLES

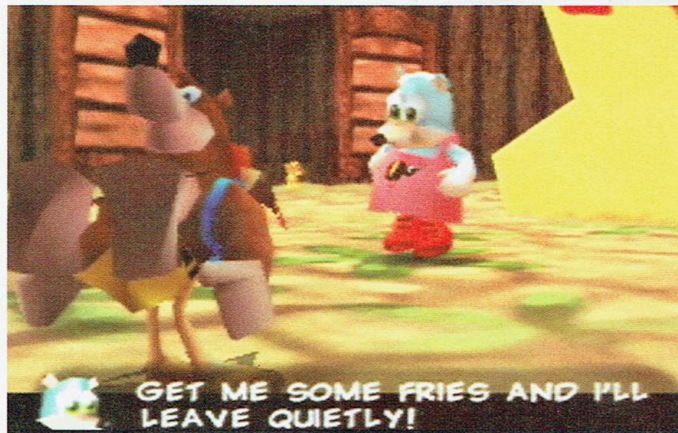


### STORY SCHMORY

Banjo-Tooie opens with Gruntilda's sisters Mingella and Blobbelda arriving to free her from the boulder she's been trapped under since the end of the original. The skeletal Gruntilda is freed and attempts to fry Banjo, Kazooie, Mumbo and Bottles with a nasty spell. Only Bottles gets hit, and er, killed. Hooray! As Kazooie comments, he was one of the least popular characters from the original anyway. Heh heh.

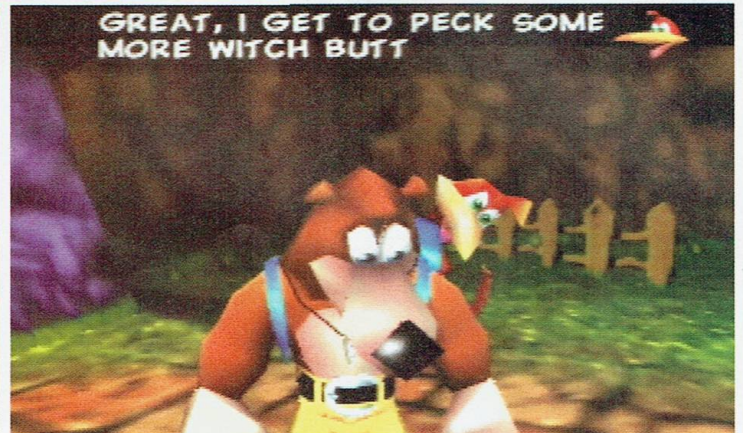


THERE'RE SOME BIG BEAR BREASTS



GET ME SOME FRIES AND I'LL LEAVE QUIETLY!

QUE THE FASTFOOD PRODUCT PLACEMENT



GREAT, I GET TO PECK SOME MORE WITCH BUTT

WITH YOUR PECKER NO DOUBT

consist of endearing gobble-de-gook, with each character having very distinct sound parameters and appropriate intonation. Jamjars, your military instructor, for instance, has a very militant "hut hut hut" way of talking. Besides, with the amount of dialogue in this game, it just wouldn't be feasible to sample voices.

### LEARN HOW TO PLAY THE BANJO

There's a near incalculable amount of gameplay locked away in Banjo-Tooie, and once again, the adventure is hardly what you'd call linear. Every area seems to have a whole host of puzzles there for the solving, but chances are that many of these won't be solvable until later in the game when you learn a particular ability. As you progress through the game you're constantly learning new skills, and there's quite a bit of backtracking required. Lacking the skills to beat certain puzzles early on in the game may frustrate some, but personally, we found it enjoyable that if

you couldn't solve one puzzle there always seemed to be plenty more to try out instead.

The worlds are absolutely massive, almost dauntingly so, but unlike Donkey Kong 64, they don't seem huge for the sake of being huge, and are rarely confusing. Rare have cleverly made separate areas within worlds instantly recognisable, as well as utilising a variety of warp points throughout the worlds for easy travel. For instance, if only Mumbo can beat a certain puzzle, you can simply use the nearest pad to warp to the pad outside Mumbo's skull-house, change characters, then warp back again.

Across the worlds - Mayahem Temple, Glitter Gulch Mine, Witchyworld, Jolly Roger Lagoon and Terrydactyland, Banjo-Tooie keeps the challenge and entertainment levels high. It will take some perseverance to beat, so if you're looking for something to tide you over until Gamecube, Banjo-Tooie will hit the spot. ■

! As a New Years card, Nintendo sent out a picture of Conker from Conker's Bad Fur Day spewing into an open toilet. Nice. [www.conker.com](http://www.conker.com)



### PLUS

A great sequel that's constantly poking fun at itself and everything else.

### MINUS

Framerate does tend to drop at times.

| VISUALS | SOUND | GAMEPLAY |
|---------|-------|----------|
| 90      | 90    | 93       |

### OVERALL

# 92

Banjo-Tooie is a fantastic swan-song for the N64.