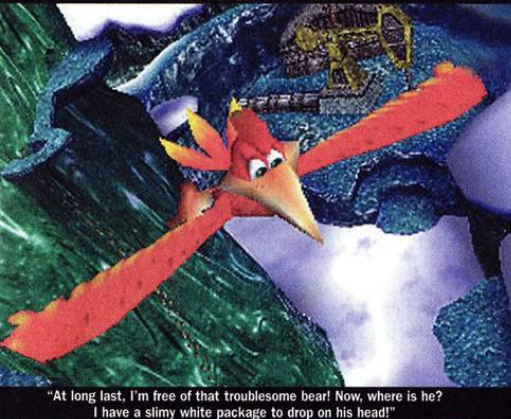




As if the game needed to be any longer, a slew of multiplayer minigames are included



"At long last, I'm free of that troublesome bear! Now, where is he? I have a slimy white package to drop on his head!"



IT'S BANJO-KAZOOIE'S MYSTERIOUS BLUE SECRET

All the mysterious, unreachable items from Banjo-Kazooie are now obtainable

NINTENDO 64

# BANJO-TOOIE

## THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE N64 TUNNEL

I honestly thought I'd be on my deathbed before this often-delayed game hit retail shelves. Either that, or hobbling around my porch with a walker and a BB gun, just waiting for some punk kids to step onto my lawn. As I stepped into the reviewer batter box, I intended to nail Rare to the wall for being a bunch of lazy bums. Alas, my fiery temper was quickly extinguished when a finished copy of the game finally arrived in the office. The screenshots scattered on these hallowed pages don't do the game justice. I'm sure you agree that they make it look like a straight-up sequel. In all actuality, it's quite different.

The first release was Rare's answer to Mario 64. The sequel is still a 3D platformer at heart, but the boundaries have been removed, which makes it more like *Zelda* than anything else. The new worlds are gigantic, spanning as far as the eye can see. While there are noticeable separations between zones, Rare tried to deliver the impression that everything is connected, like pieces in a puzzle. A lot of times the stages flow into one another very nicely, delivering the sensation that you're still in the overworld. A host of interesting new challenges are buried within this exciting world, and I have to say, I'm blown away by most of the minigames. Platforming and exploration are the main dish, but you'll also compete in smooth first-person stages, vigorous soccer matches, and button-mashing races.

For those of you who completed the first incarnation, the ending sequence mentioned the sequel. As a matter of fact, several secrets couldn't be reached without playing *Banjo-Tooie*. With this tie-in, the sequel regurgitates the gameplay from the original. All of the moves you learned throughout *Banjo-Kazooie* are available from the get-go, and you actually start in the exact same place. Of course, all the original levels are blocked off by rubble, and I'm quite disappointed to report this, but the infamous Ice Key and hidden Eggs



Trying to steal the spotlight from James Bond and Joanna Dark, several stages take place in first-person

have been moved to new locations, which completely eliminates the need to return to the first game.

Since you've already mastered the primary moves list, a wide array of new powers can be unlocked. Banjo and Kazooie can now separate and roam on their own. Mumbo is a playable character. A handful of new creature transformations have also been included. Rareware's enhancements touch the graphical front as well. The environments are much larger, and a host of new lighting effects round out the dynamic new look.

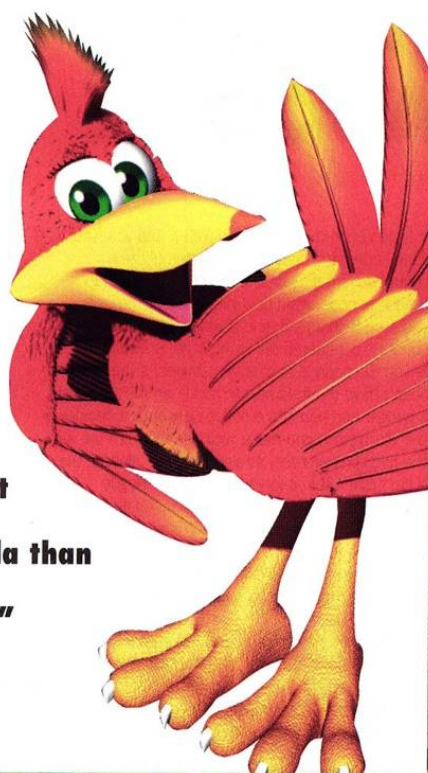
If you enjoyed the original, there's a good chance you won't like the sequel. You'll oftentimes find yourself stuck with no idea what to do next, and exploration highly outweighs the action. Personally, I like the first game more than the sequel, but not by much. If *Conker* continues to slide further away, this may be the last noteworthy title to grace the N64 system. — REINER

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO ■ DEVELOPER RAREWARE ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 20

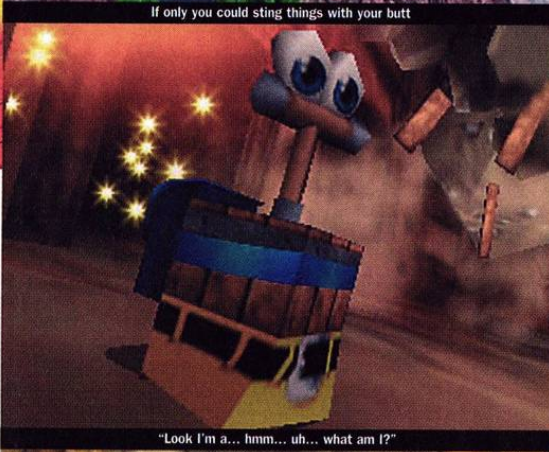


Does the name Rodney King ring any bells?

**"The sequel is still a 3D platformer at heart, but the boundaries have been removed, which makes it more like Zelda than anything else."**



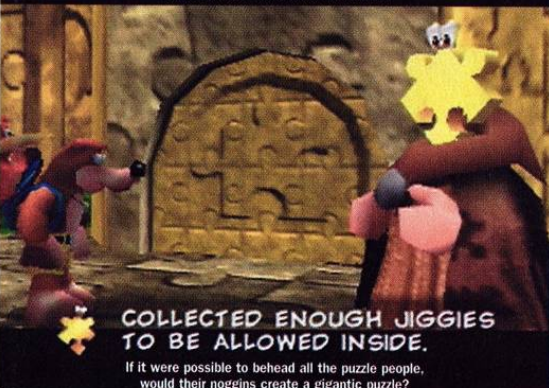
If only you could sting things with your butt



"Look I'm a... hmm... uh... what am I?"



With Bottles taking a breather, Jamjars is the new drill sergeant



**COLLECTED ENOUGH JIGGIES TO BE ALLOWED INSIDE.**

If it were possible to behead all the puzzle people, would their nogginns create a gigantic puzzle?

**THE BOTTOM LINE**



**9**

- **Concept:**  
The focus has shifted to an open-ended adventure. Platforming now plays second fiddle to exploration
- **Graphics:**  
The same artistic direction, with larger environments and a host of new effects
- **Sound:**  
Goofy voices and a wacky soundtrack set the tone for a silly game
- **Playability:**  
The original played like Mario 64. This one utilizes the same tactics, yet the overall package feels like Zelda
- **Entertainment:**  
Bigger, but not as exciting as the first release
- **Replay Value:**  
Moderate

**SECOND OPINION**

Rare has once again put together another humdinger with Banjo-Tooie. I would have to agree with Reiner that Rare has shied away from some of the platforming aspects that made the first game so outstanding, and even with all the time and effort it put into this sequel it doesn't quite add up to the first. By no means is Banjo-Tooie a bad game; it's just not the Mario 64 rip-off that was appeasing the saddened fans Miyamoto continues to leave hanging. So think of Banjo-Tooie as an adventure game and you won't be too disappointed, I know I'm not. There is a lot to do here, as Banjo and Kazooie have tons of moves that they can learn and different characters you get to control. Not to mention the numerous minigames you'll come across during your quest. Sure, the cuteness level in this game is pretty high, and at times can be annoying, but the adventure is still impressive.

**ANDY - 9**