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GBA faq

Ty updated our GBA faq. Is there really that much more to say? Not really, so have you clicked [here](#) yet?

Mario Kart Advance Impressions

Well, it's a bit late, but we finally have Gameboy Advance impressions up. [Check out](#) our impressions of Mario Kart Advance!



Monster Rancher Explorer

review by [Ty Krys](#), written on 08.30.00

Rather than following the misadventures of Genki and his pals, **Monster Rancher Explorer** takes place 35 years before the current Monster Rancher series and follows the adventures of a daring young anthropologist named Cox (from **MR Battle Cards**). On Mt. Sekitoba, there's a gigantic white tower that is said to hold the power of a tremendous beast. Nada, an evil priest has turned all the friendly monsters into evil monster. The townsfolk, determined to rid the tower of evil, venture into the tower, but are never seen again. Cox goes to the tower along with the townsfolk, to write his final paper for college. Now he must ascend the tower and find the Phoenix. With a plot like this you'd expect a role-playing game right? Not quite.

graphics: Beautiful animated cutscenes introduce the game and menus. The in-game graphics have quite the retro look to them. Background textures are detailed, with an artistic look to them. Foreground objects are kept simple and functional. The characters are fairly small, but for a game like this, that's somewhat crucial to the gameplay. All around, it's a very pleasing game to look at.

audio: The game's audio is well thought out. It goes very well with the situations and doesn't get annoying like other games. The sound effects are about as good as you're gonna get in a game like this. They're easy to listen to and work well with the background music. Very NES-like.

gameplay: When I first put Monster Rancher Explorer into my Gameboy Color, I was expecting some sort of Pokémon-esque RPG. Instead, I got a wonderful action title spanning

Rating:
9.5/10
 System(s):
Gameboy Color

Developer:
Tecmo

Publisher:
Tecmo

Genre:
Action

Players:
1-2

Release Date:
November 2000

SCREENS



latest screens

many, many levels and extremely varied degrees of difficulty. Players must beat individual stages by collecting the Gold Key to unlock the door, allowing access to the next level.

Mocchi
Golem

**archived
screens**

Your main puzzle-solving tool is the Box Hammer. It allows you to place an unlimited number of boxes wherever you hit it down. You can place boxes in midair and have them stay there, which helps a ton when you're trying to reach new levels on the stage. Your hammer can also break existing boxes, which sometimes reveal precious powerups (most of which will either increase your ammo, time, or lives). Enemy monsters can be killed by breaking the boxes underneath them or with your second major tool - your supply of fireworks. Fireworks can travel along any surface, allowing you to kill enemies that you wouldn't be able to with just the hammer.



Every once in a while you'll face a boss and his monster, which works as a refreshing break in the action. In these levels, you have a set health meter rather than time meter, so you know they're a lot tougher than the normal levels. The control in the game is perfect. Unlike most games, you use Up on the D-pad instead of A to jump, which is surprisingly functional. A is used for the hammer and B is for fireworks. There is no delay in control. Wonderful!

This game is oldschool, and that's a wonderful, wonderful thing. If you've ever played a NES, chances are you played a game like this. Games like Donkey Kong, Snow Bros., Nail 'N Scale, and the Adventures of Lolo series made this genre great. Unlike similar games, this game doesn't get monotonous and boring as soon as you get stuck. Somehow, all the puzzles seem solvable, even if you've been stuck on it for hours. Its "one more try" appeal is very high.

One of the coolest functions of this game is the Level Editor. I would have been content with the game without this, but this is just the icing on the cake. But that's not all. Via a link cable, players can trade levels with their friends. Wow. Level editing as well as link cable compatibility? Hell yes!

The only real problem I can see with this game is the save slots. You only have one slot in

which to save your game, and only three slots to save your custom levels. This is a good game to use your Brain Boy with.

overall: Monster Rancher is a great anime series based on a great PlayStation game. It's only fitting that it would make a great Gameboy Color game as well. You don't need to be an MR fan to enjoy this game, but hardcore MR fans will get a kick out of the story and characters. Probably the only people who will be disappointed with this game are the folks who buy it hoping for an RPG, but my guess is that they'll discover a gem of a title as well. With a ton of replay value, it's an all-around wonderful game.

rating: 9.5/10

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