

Issue 17

SHOOT YOU SIR!



A FANZINE FOR SHOOT-EM-UP PLAYERS

March  
2022

Hi there and welcome to issue 17 of Shoot You Sir! Yes, your favourite shmup 'zine continues. Regardless of fashion and all the worldly horrors that try to distract us, we carry on with our collective obsession. A first for this particular fanzine, we have a book review, so I hope this adds to your enjoyment. Happy gaming.

## GAMER NEWS

Tempest 4000 coming to Switch and Atari VCS. Taking control of 'the claw', players will get to take on the game when it becomes available in March 22 for Switch. The game previously released on Steam, Xbox One, and PS4 back in 2018.

For those of you that are interested, the original Tempest was one of the frontrunners for using 3D Vector graphics and was allegedly one of the most popular games of all time. The game is fast paced, and has you taking on a large number of enemies, all coming at you, from background to fore.



It features three modes: Classic, Pure and Survival and there are a 100 different levels to play. The soundtrack will be full of 'techno bumping goodness'. I still have Tempest 2000 on the Sega Saturn, but it has not had any play time for over a decade. I must admit, a digital download of this title is the most likely option for me. Anyone with an Xbox One or a PS4 can download it now, with-

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LEVEL 7 VIDEO OLYMPICS

TEST  
TEMPEST 4000

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ATARI®





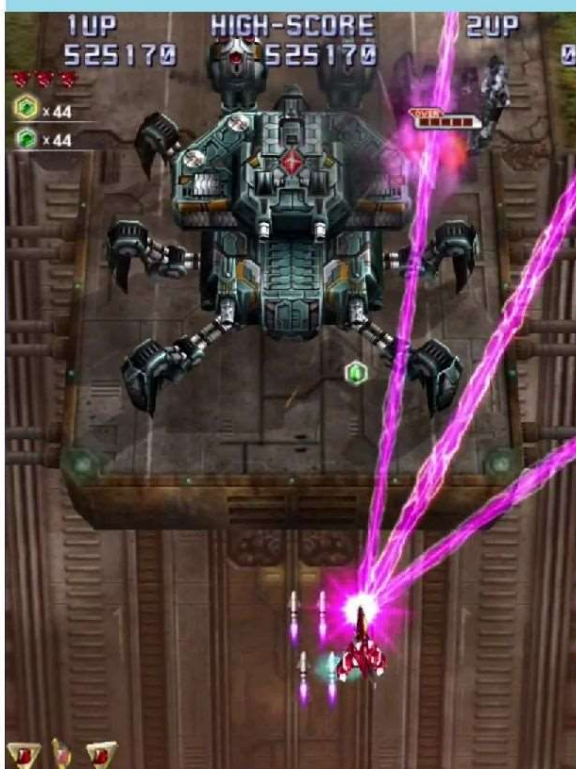
**Game Review**

**By**

**Slyelessar**

Raiden IV X Mikado Remix is a port of the original Raiden IV game that released in arcades in 2007 and Xbox 360 in 2008 and a more current port, to the Nintendo Switch, with a few additional features. Visually the game is presented very well, with crisp, modern looking graphics. They did a good job porting this game over to Switch

and it shows. Both in game graphics and cut scenes are colourful and 'pop' well. The background visuals are truly lovely to behold, are well rounded, and less clunky than some of the backgrounds you encounter on TATE shmups, on modern consoles. Enemy bullets are obvious, and look much different from all the shot types of the playable 'crafts. For the most part, you are able to discern and predict, without feeling cheated. However, the power up items do interfere with this a bit, but more on this later. At the main menu, you are greeted with several gameplay options. These consist of: Overkill mode, Additional Mode, Score Attack Mode, Arcade Mode, and Boss Rush mode. In Overkill mode (a new addition) you play with 2 missions and a new score system. Additional Mode is just an arrange of the arcade mode but with two new stages. The other two modes are exactly what it says on the tin, but with arcade mode featuring two difficulties: Light and original. You are also given options, replay & gallery, world rankings, and a credits option at the main menu screen.



In each of the game modes you are greeted with a very basic mode setup. This bugged me a little bit, as it is something that Raiden V Directors Cut did really well, was that the menus were laid out nicely and you had descriptions and names for the individual 'crafts on screen. Unfortunately, RIVXMR doesn't do this on the 'craft selection screen, it goes the route of just showing you the image of aircraft themselves. It also jumps from the menu into the selection screen in a laggy way, making it feel like it was hastily or sloppily put together. There are little touches within the menu that are missed, and it is noticeable. If you press 'X' whilst in this basic mode setup, it shows you an overview of the game controls and the different scoring system in each modes, which is a nice touch.





**Review continued**

The types of main weapon will be familiar to those that have played Raiden games in the last decade:  
**RED** - Vulcan (wide spread)  
**BLUE** - Laser (Straight Beam)  
**PURPLE** - Auto curvving, homing laser or a controlled swinging laser  
You are also greeted with sub weapons, that you pickup alongside you main attack type:  
**Nuclear Missiles** (explode on impact)

Homing missiles (missiles that auto-target enemies) and Radar Missiles (Chase enemies in front of your ship). You also get a screen clearing bomb, as a standard. You can select up to 7 bombs, that you can use as stock, in the main menu.

As with most Raiden games, this one has top quality sound FX. Nice big explosions, and great shot sounds. The music is also of a decent quality, led by rocky riff-heavy tracks. The first level track in particular is very catchy, bordering on the frustrating and there are less tracks than in RVDC, but it does make you think of the game when it randomly pops into your head, when making a tea or are out doing the shopping.

In regard to how the game plays, it's a Raiden Game. This means you are getting basic controls, with tight manoeuvrability and challenging gameplay. This is something that you can rely on when picking up a Raiden title. In terms of frustrating things during gameplay, the power up drops and changes in this game are really obnoxiously distracting. Not only do they drop and circle around the area you will likely be moving about in most, they also change colour very frequently. Sometimes you have no choice but to avoid



oncoming bullets and slam into a power up of a colour you do not want, or are interested in playing. Now, the different power ups in the game are very cool but I'm one of the players that likes the main spread shot and is not arsed about the other shot types. I don't mind using them once in a blue moon, but it's like the game wants you to change shot type every 20-30 seconds. To top this, you can't reduce the amount of power ups that are dropped, nor change them in the menu, to not drop certain type-colour of power up. This is frankly a bullshit combination and spoils the game somewhat for me. In RVDC, you would get power ups of all colours drop, just less regularly and they would move around the screen a lot better, forcing you to navigate a challenging amount of bullets to get it - achieving this feels great, or you'd just patiently wait until the colour/ shot type you want appears.





**Review Continued**

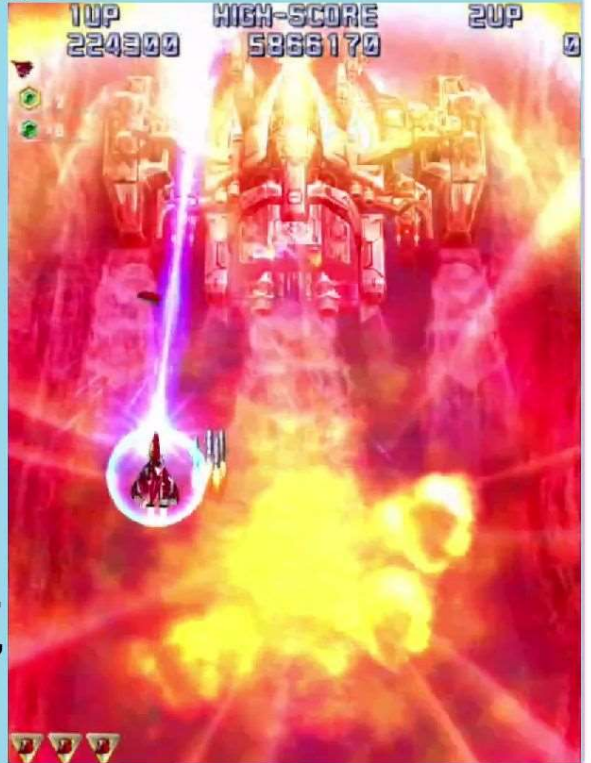
**This is a much better approach and it is a shame there is not at least an option to remove/add different shot types in the menu.**

**The biggest knock against this game, is that it is less fun than RVDC. This game is a challenge, but not at any point is it particularly fun. Something that RVDC did really well, was bridge that minefield between challenging and fun. This significantly reduces the likelihood that I will spend a lot of time, coming back to RIVXMR, as it is merely frustrating more often than not.**

**A few added extras, like the cut scenes, really add to the game, giving you more of a feeling of being within the universe the game is set in. Probably the most fun part of the game, is playing as the fairy character that was originally DLC. All of a sudden, the game looks more like ESPgaluda or the like, rather than the airships we are used to in Raiden games. This adds an extra dimension to the game, and also allows for more playability.**

**The fairy's spread shot type makes the game a bit easier to play as well, as it is light blue. She also has a bubble attack when you pick up purple power ups, which makes a horrible repetitive noise when fired and a rubbish slowly fired 3-column laser thing. It is fun seeing the army of fairies attack the screen, when you press the bomb button, though!**

**One of the best and most fun scoring systems was in RVDC, yes another RVDC comparison, Im afraid. but it is the Bar with which to compare Raiden games on Switch. The line graph scoring system was brilliant. Not only did it show your previous best score as you went along, but it also showed average/online best scores for that level. This meant you were very aware, you were trying to beat your best score from moment to moment.**



**This game has been ported for a reason: It's a good quality game, that was well received with critics and fans. It deserves its place on Switch. Raiden is a name held in high regard in SHMUP communities and ultimately this game does no real bad against that name. My closing statement is this: Bring Raiden Fighters Aces to the Switch, as it would sit nicely just in between RVDC and RIVXMR. however, please just keep the title short, so the abbreviation is short and sweet, nobody needs RFADCR in their life. Thank you, and good night!**

### **SCORES**

**Graphics:19    Sound:16**

**Control:17    Fun:15**

**Lastability:17    OVERALL: 84%**



# Book Review

## SHUMP Ascension

by Dace Anaxyrus

Intrigued and always wanting to promote anything SHMUP related, as well as improve on my own STG skills, when I came across the book 'SHUMP Ascension' by Dace Anaxyrus, I thought I would give it a shot (dodgy pun alert!!). The blurb touts the fact that this is an essential guide to improving your Shoot 'em up skills, hitting astronomical high-scores and achieving gamer-god status'. This promotional aspect clearly states the objective, but does it do exactly what it says on the tin? I consider myself a fairly competent player, my strengths are routed more in vertical bullet-hells, but I enjoy playing most STGs. I am happy to learn anything that will improve my skills and knowledge. As with anything we have reviewed so far, I purchased this book with my own money and like any content creator, I have a medium in which to express my opinion.

Firstly, this is a novella sized book, well made, and is just right for a jacket pocket, or your gaming shelf. For all the new-book sniffers out there: It passes the initial sniff test, and is aesthetically pleasing on the eyes. The first few chapters feel rather bloated and the points they are trying to make, very much like any self-help type book is: You need to change your mind set to one that is positive, set your goals accordingly, and prepare for a challenge. In general, this is sound advice, but clearly the book needed to be padded out a little bit to make it more feasible for print & publication.

The book then moves onto a chapter where it alludes to mechanics and different types of ship types and weaponry. Personally, I feel this part should have been expanded upon. The padding in the early chapters could have made way for some basic illustration or more in-depth examples in this section. However, just to point out, this book is not about details of hundreds (if not thousands) of different ship-to-weapon combinations, but rather concepts you can apply to your gaming practice.

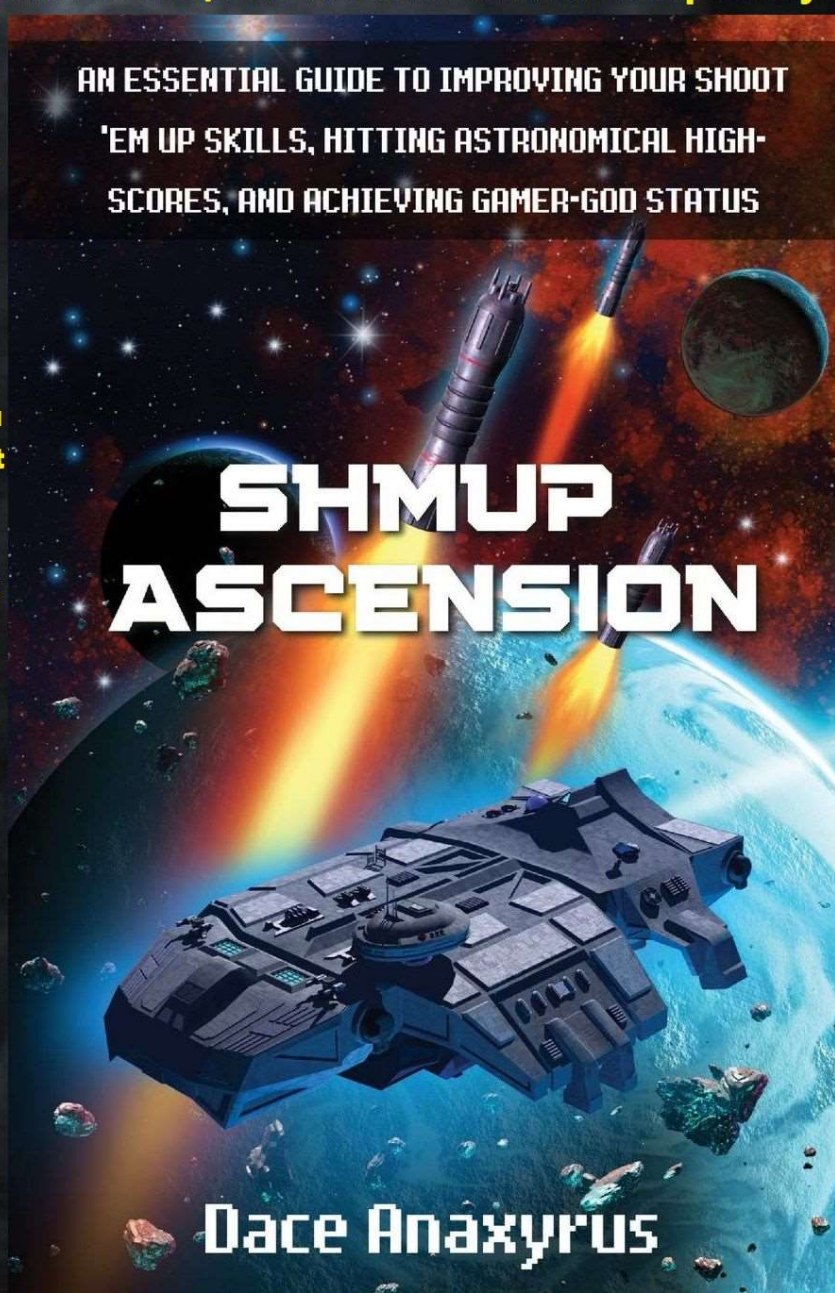
Suffice to say, the first third of the book is for anyone new or thinking about getting into the genre, and I think that is a fair enough, considering that a lot of people starting out need a platform of understanding from which to launch.

So that brings us to the meat and potatoes of the book and tackling our original question about the tin label analogy and the quality of its proverbial contents.

AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR SHOOT  
'EM UP SKILLS, HITTING ASTRONOMICAL HIGH-  
SCORES, AND ACHIEVING GAMER-GOD STATUS

# SHMUP ASCENSION

Dace Anaxyrus





The book starts to delve deeper during the 'learning the layout of your dominion' chapter, where it lays out practice ideas and learning the ropes of the different stages of SHMUPs that you are playing through. This section bridges the first few chapters with the next few, which cover resource management ideas and lead into things like pattern recognition, bullet herding, tips on screen observation, and other important topics that I wish I knew when I originally started playing STGs. The book ends with a charming little conclusion, adds a screen shot from the top scores of Ghost Blade to show credentials, and a really nice after thought of adding a section in the book where you can track your own scores.

There is a section earlier in the book, wherein the author has referenced games like Rolling Gunner, Pawarumi, and Danmaku Unlimited 3. As these games are readily available over a couple of generations and types of consoles, and certainly via digital download, it allows the reader to use these strong titles as grounding for the point the reader is trying to make. Someone that has been playing for some time will surely be familiar with these and anyone new can discover them and gain more experience and knowledge with which to call upon, and therefore gain more from the examples used in the book itself. I would have liked more game comparisons and references later on but the author does touch on the fact the intention is not to get bogged down, focusing on a particular type or title.

Reading this book has got me thinking about what my advice would be to another player. I certainly cannot claim to be in the gamer-god tier the book makes reference to. I think a lot of my advice would be concise and simple for anyone new approaching the genre, probably in bullet point format with little things nobody tells you about.

Things that you discover over time. I feel that the book struggles to straddle the line between newbies to the genre and improving intermediate players to effective high scoring ones. This may explain the bloated chapters at the start of the book. Maybe there could be a section referencing where to start from if you are above a beginner player level, but I think that possibly the book was pieced together and reads more casually, with more applicable concepts than a 'how to' guide- and that is okay. Overall I think that approached in the right way, this book can provide a platform of reference for players wanting to improve. There are certainly parts that I can take on board. So who is the book for? Anyone that is striving to improve on STG's, and is looking for any tidbit that will allow them to improve. I certainly feel like this would be far more useful for beginning to intermediate play. However, the concepts touched on if followed will allow for more growth down the line. It provides reassurance that sometimes it is the simple things that are most effective. **Mr Anaxyrus, please contact us, we'd love to do a podcast.**

## DO YOU WANT TO DOMINATE THE SHMUP GENRE BUT AREN'T SURE HOW TO APPROACH THEM?

At first glance, games in the shmup and bullet-hell genres will send all but the most courageous running in the other direction. With games as demanding and challenging as these, it's understandable.

But I have a suspicion you're here because you want to improve and, deep down, know you can do better. Sometimes a little guidance is all we need to push us toward greatness, and I aim to help you get there.

In Shmup Ascension, we'll take a journey through:

- Dissolving the things that may be holding you back
- How to practice effectively and see guaranteed results
- The importance of knowing your shmup
- How to spot advantages and become more resourceful
- What it takes to come out on top of the leaderboards

Though the learning curve may seem daunting at first, with a few simple adjustments to your approach, you can absolutely crush even the most challenging shmups and bullet-hell games in no time. There's no sense in holding yourself back when mastery is right around the corner.





# Buraigun

Game  
Review



By Slyelessar CREDIT 00

She is animated in a very sexualised, 90's, Japanese manga way. Meaning that the breasts are in the foreground and are animated the most, with the face pulling awkward or pained expressions when your ship takes damage. A more obscure choice for the left panel, is the frame rate counter. This wouldn't normally feel too out of place, except for the game spends a lot of time struggling to provide decent frame rates - more on this later.

Sprites look very cool and the colours pop well. In fact, this is some of the coolest 2D sprite designs I've seen in a while. Bosses are big, although the fights themselves feel fairly standard, with nothing overly interesting being thrown at you. Background environments look great, and really suit the overall game look and feel.

Pixel Game Maker Series Baraigun Galaxy Storm has a very cool 90's look it, but fails to deliver in very specific places. More on this later! BGS is a vertical 2D Shmup available on the Japanese **Switch** store. It was released in late July 2021, but what is it like?

The biggest strength of the game is the way it looks. You are treated with a very cool anime style intro, very much in the vein of 90s digital manga, with lots of colour and contrast. The game has a space/ sci-fi based world. As you boot the game up and jump into story or arcade mode, you notice this style continues. The gameplay area is about half the size of the screen, with the side panels next to the gameplay area containing high score, lives, bombs, and on the left hand side an animated manga female pilot (the player character).



When you get hit, the screen cracks like glass, which at first seems distracting, but actually is quite good at making you frustrated and wanting to go back in and blow everything to pieces. This may frustrate some people, as it pauses very briefly but not enough to interrupt game play.

The soundtrack is reminiscent of 90's 16 bit consoles, along the lines of Megadrive and the like. There's some cool synth-like sounds, but overall the soundtrack is not memorable, but it does suit the game and is not distracting. The sound effects are also reminiscent of this time period but vary in quality from actually sounding alright to the odd effect sounding a bit naff. The warning sound when you are about to enter a boss fight sounds really cool though! So the SFX are not a complete disaster, by any means.







And now for the weakest part of the game: The frame rate issues. The game continually feels laggy due to slow frame rate issues, which drop regularly from 29 to the low 20's almost consistently when playing. How do I know this? Have I been using a rather expensive app and hardware to measure this? The answer is no: as I mentioned above, the game provides this for you on the panel, on the left hand side.

I have a feeling this is partly down to showing they realise the frame rate is not great, but flagging this up just goes to show they know they haven't made a fantastic product. If there is some sort of update or patch in the future that fixes this, the game score would swiftly go up. This shows the game has a lot of potential, but is held back by this issue almost entirely. So movement can feel laggy and sloppy, which is even more awkward as the game also has a 'near miss' mechanic, which is not easy to manipulate due to the poor frame rate. Other than this, you have a main shot and bomb, and are able to pick up power ups that change your main shot as you progress through the game. Everything else is in place, and the game is playable, just not ideal. The game at first is not a fun experience. Having played through the game a bunch of times now I have come to enjoy it but a lot of people will be put off early on - and this game not a cheap one. This game is just itching to be taken to the next level, where a lot of people would fall in love with it, but for now it falls short.

Even if the game was intended to emulate poor frame rates of earlier games, you should at least have the option to toggle it on/off in the options. So overall: manage your expectations with this game. Anyone producing shmups for the switch now has to compete with the top tier stuff such as the Cotton games, Mushihimesama, Crimson Clover, and even the more vintage classics that are being ported such as Blazing Star and Raiden. To simply release something that does not feel finished will mean it will fall into obscurity. For now STG lovers, may I suggest you look elsewhere.



## SCORES

Graphics:17 Sound:15

Control:11 Fun:11

Lastability:10

OVERALL: 64%





# Game Review

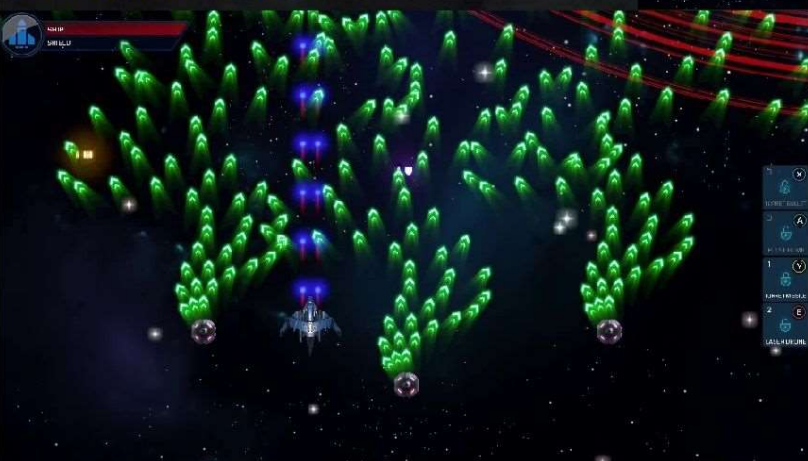
By Graham Pike



## X-FORCE -GENESIS-

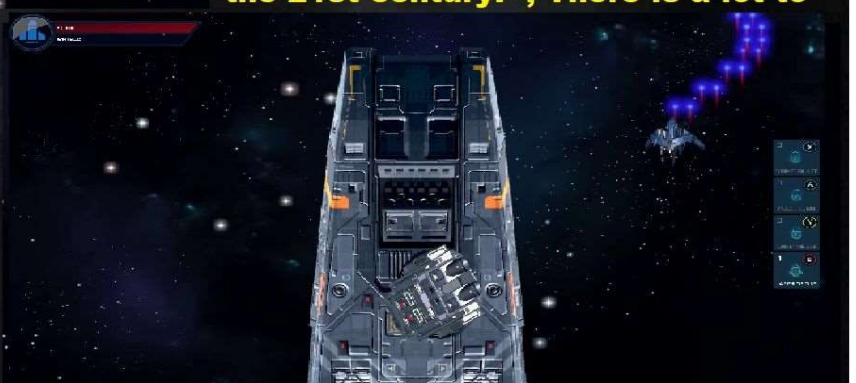
**X-Force Genesis is a space opera themed shoot-em-up. Take a quick look at the "How To Play", and you will notice that there are a lot of attack weapons at your disposal. Start to play and you'll see that this is a full-screen, vertical shooter. The artwork, although 2D, is much more CGI, than traditional pixel art. But within the space theme, it does look very pretty. From the very start, there is a lot to shoot at and a lot to pick up in the form of firepower-ups and health restoration. For in this game, you have a health meter, which can be refilled by power-ups, which is fortunate because if your health depletes to 0, it is Game Over, with no extra ships or continues.**

**Unfortunately you start the game with just basic firepower but as well as getting power-ups, you can also buy upgrades, between stages and you'll have to progress a good way before all the weapons on the "How To Play" page. A rather helpful shield can also be got, as a power-up and this shield can be depleted and refilled during play.**

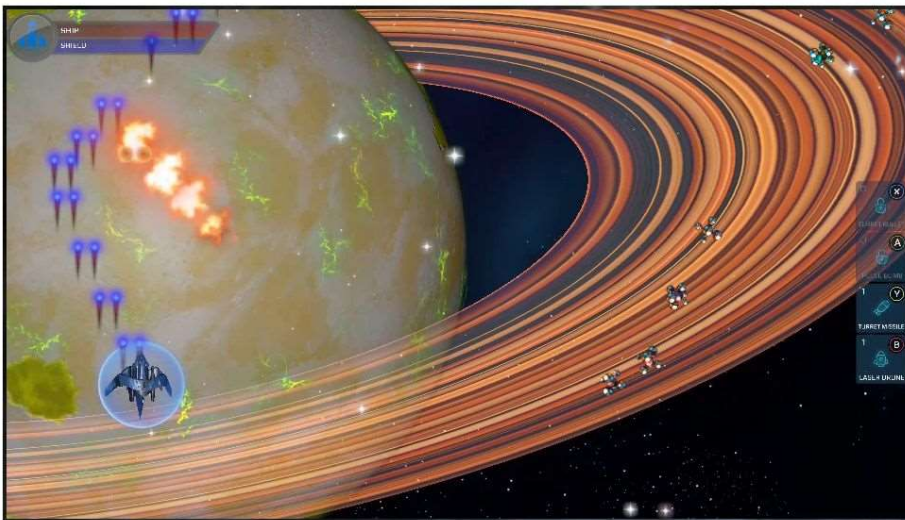


**X-Force Genesis is a good looking game, with generic, instrumental rock, playing behind it. The game has an old fashioned feel to it, in style and gameplay. Kind of an 80s shooter, with a lot more variety and smart, hi-def visuals. Old school attack patterns are straight from Galaxians and Astro Wars but spruced up and busied up, to work in the 21st century. , There is a lot to**

**be unlocked, as you progress, which adds to the impetus. There are a good variety of power-ups to be had and the enemy sprites not only look quite stylish but have enough variety in their movement and weaponry, to keep you busy and entertained.**







The game eases you in, starting nice and easy and has a good difficulty curve. But beware because it soon gets pretty hectic, with enemies coming from all angles. So you'll have to have your wits about you and keep on the move. Once you have completed a stage, it is available for a re-visit, whenever you re-start. And you will need to play

through a number of times, to acquire all of the extra combat upgrades.

The background visuals and sonics may be well done but where they fall down is variety. It is all very samey, so actually, there is very little variety at all. Which seems a shame, as a lot of effort has gone into the gameplay and sharpness of the game. Overall though, the enemy sprites are well done and the bosses, although lacking in imagination, are



good, solid features of the game. X-Force Genesis definitely has the feel of a PC game, that has been influenced by 80s shooters and has tried to bring those influences up to date. And they have pretty much achieved that. I just wish they'd put more work into the variety needed, to keep a player's interest.

This is not a great shooter and there are a good number of better games in the genre. But I did get a good buzz from it. I like retro with vastly improved graphics, so I will enjoy having this shmup in my collection. So if you like that mixture of old and new, give it a try.

## SCORES

Graphics:16    Sound:15    Control:18

Fun:16    Lastability:15    OVERALL: 80%