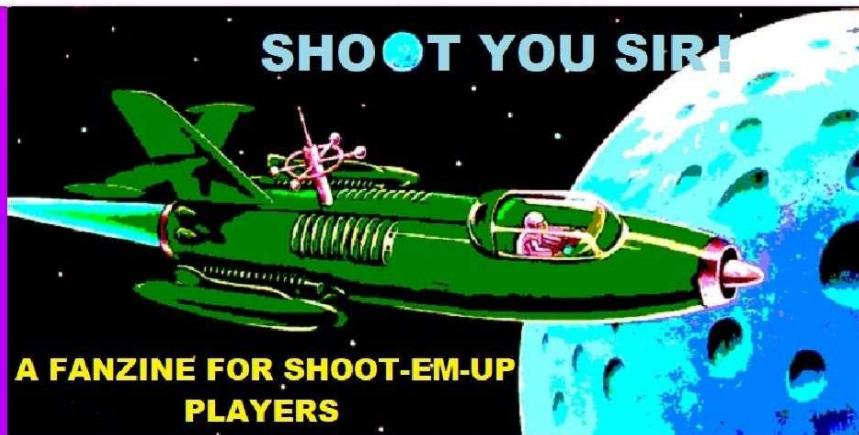


Issue 27



January 2023

Hi there and welcome to issue 27 of your favourite shooter 'zine. Well the festive season is well and truly over and in the northern hemisphere, winter is in full flow. Even with all this climate change, it's still better to stay in and fire up your favourite console. We've been dusting off some old games and in this issue have a selection of the very old and the new, for your perusal. There's plenty to look forward to in 2023, in our chosen genre, so please enjoy and if you wish, let us know how we can get better. Happy gaming.

SHOOTER NEWS



DoDonPachi Blissful Death (M2 Shot Triggers), the moment both I and others have been waiting for is finally here: DoDonPachi DOJ is being ported to consoles in 2023! The game trailer shows footage on PS4, but it is quite likely that this will be ported to other consoles. Yes, I may have this game on Xbox 360, but I would love to have this game readily available on Switch as at the moment only my PS5 & Switch are currently setup with my TV. Check out Shoot You Sir Issue 11, containing the 'DoDonPachi Special' article, which encompasses the story and mechanics of the game. But for a quick summary:

DoDonPachi was CAVE's flagship series, and DOJ was originally released in arcades, and later ported to PS2 and Xbox 360. It's a tough bullet hell style shooter, with a military aesthetic.

D.D.P.B.D. combines well thought out levels, great enemy designs, and has a soundtrack that gets stuck in your head. As the series is well-known for, the controls are spreadshot, beam, and bomb. The controls are tight and the mechanics are top-of-the-line. With the M2 ShotTriggers Team getting involved, this will mean that a load of control over the games features will be available. This game should be on everyone's wishlist, and is truly a standout in the genre. I am sure we will hear more news in the coming months, but for now this is a Japan release only.



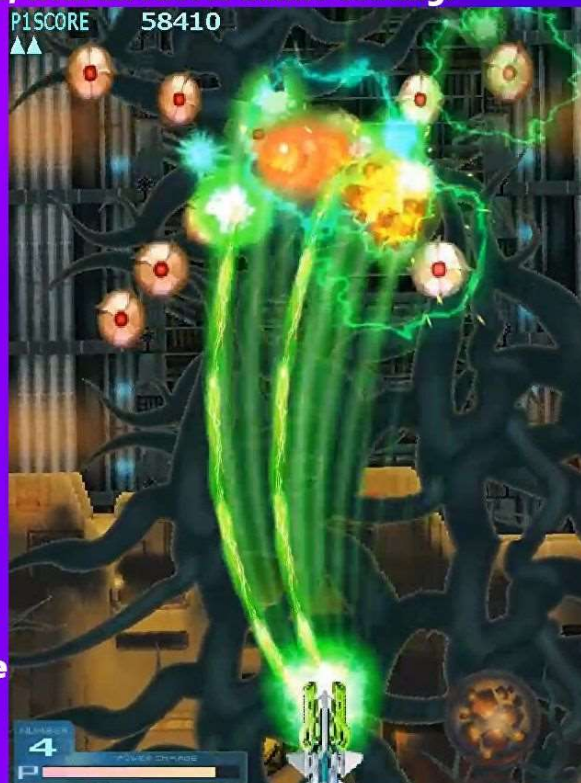
SHOOTER NEWS

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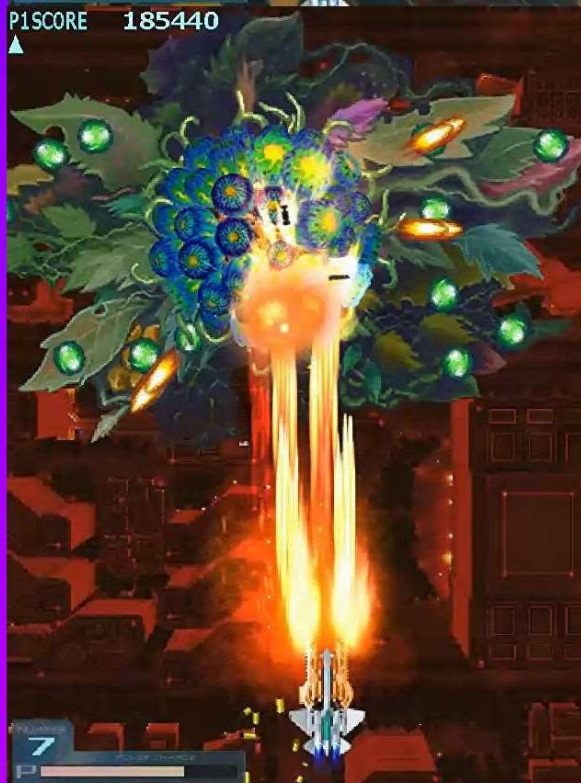
Aleste Branch, a new entry - that's right *new* and not a port, in the Aleste series of SHMUPS. This game will be a very nice looking 2D vertical game with crisp, 2D/3D sprites. My initial thoughts on watching the trailer for the game are that it looks like a cross between Ghost Blade HD, a DoDonPachi Game, with an Aleste anime coating.

The video trailer of this, shows the playable characters in the game, named Aleste Type-A, type-B, and type-C. The gameplay footage seems some



what kept in the background a little bit, but the trailer feels more like the games intro, than an actual game play trailer, which is fair enough.

There is no release date for the game, but the trailer asks us to 'wait a little



while'. So it is feasible to predict it will be in the first half of the year. The game is an M2 Shot-Triggers release, so by that merit, we already know a lot of time and effort will have gone into the game. It also tells that they will not want the release of Aleste Branch and DoDonPachi DOJ to overlap, so I reckon you will see Aleste Branch be

an earlier release, and DoDonPachi - Blissful Death, released later in the year. The M2 Shot Triggers team previously released the Aleste Collection in Japan. A review of this series can be found in Shoot You Sir Issue 13 - so please go and check it out!

M2 Shot Triggers
エムツー ショットトリガーズ

GAME REVIEW

Hot Tentacles SHOOTER

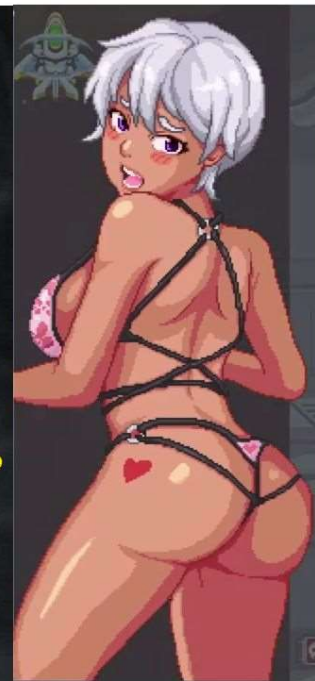
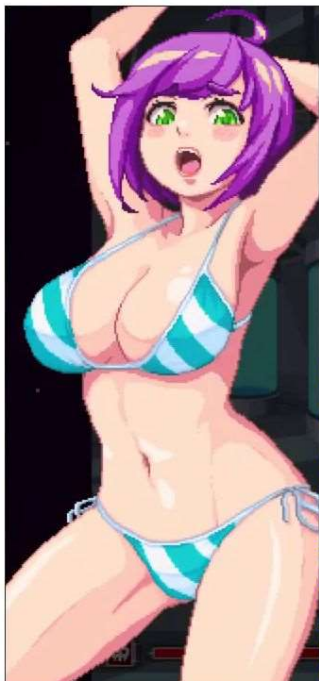
By Slyelessar

Every now and again a shooter in this vein pops up: A raunchy, Japanese made or inspired, anime visual, shooter, involving women. These sort of games tend to have really basic sprites, but control really well, which almost seems counter intuitive. When you boot the game up, you select the language, and whether or not you want to have sprites in underwear or sprites covered up. Before we get into the bulk of this, let

me state: You cannot see anything. There are no nudes involved. If there were, I probably wouldn't be reviewing this. Believe it or not, the game has a story: 20 space warriors are captured by giant alien tentacles, and need to be rescued. If you select English as the language, the english appears to be poorly translated, but I'm not sure if it is deliberately done this way or someone threw some paragraphs into google translate and just took the results at face value.

The menu presents you with: play, settings, and overview of power ups and a gallery. The gallery has a collection of all the 'warriors' you have saved. It's basically just the image of the 'warrior' for the levels that you have defeated. When you enter gameplay, you are met with a nicely designed pixel map of a planetary system. At each stage, you are able to select a mission and once you beat said mission, you can move on to the next one. Every time you boot up the game, you can go and do any mission you have previously completed. When you jump into a mission, you have to choose the outfit for your main character. These are: spacesuit, maid outfit, bunny outfit or bikini outfit. I'm not quite sure there's much point to this other than just looking at pixelated anime people, in various types of kinky clothes?

The graphics of all these 'warriors' is actually really well done, the pixel art reminds me a lot of magical drop and the like, where the art style is big and well designed. During gameplay - this a third of the screen TATE shooter- around the borders of the gameplay area is the artwork of your character, and the character you are trying to save, hidden behind large tentacles. The actual gameplay sprites are fairly well detailed, but very basic. These range from alien space octopuses and bugs, to different kinds of jelly-fish. However, these look very much cartoony, rather than anime and don't stand out as well designed. Gameplay wise, the game plays more like Galaga or an 80s like STG. Movement is tight, and there is quite a challenge. I mentioned above that these type of games tend to have tight gameplay, and this game is





It is however basic and it does not feel like a massive achievement when completing a level, like it would in say a CAVE game or Raiden. Nevertheless, there is a game to be played here.



The worst part of the game is the boss fights, which are just naff. Boss designs are uninspired, and most bosses are so basic you just have to stand there shooting and move once in a blue moon to avoid being shot. Generally levels are more difficult than the boss battles. There are a couple of difficulty spikes, but you can probably play through the game in one sitting if you wanted to.



Overall, clearly this game was designed for pixelated manga 'warriors' that are on show. If more effort was put into the gameplay sprites, I think the game would jump up a lot more in people's estimates. But then you would be focusing on the enemies and not the manga ladies. This game is not for everyone, but it is cheap. This is one that I will likely delete from my switch, and forget about and move onto something else.



SCORES

Graphics: 14 Sound: 14 Control: 17

Fun: 14 Lastability: 10

OVERALL: 69%



A Blast From The Past

Asteroids is set in dark space and is a multi-directional shooter, arcade game. It was designed by Lyle Rains and Ed Logg and released in November 1979 by Atari. You control a single, triangular spaceship in an asteroid belt, which is occasionally flown across, by flying saucers. You must shoot and destroy those pesky asteroids and flying saucers, while not banging into either, or being struck by the flying saucers' return fire. Unfortunately more and more asteroids build up, as the game progresses.

Asteroids used hardware developed by Howard Delman, that was previously used for Lunar Lander. Asteroids physics, controls and gameplay were derived from games like Spacewar!, Computer Space and Space Invaders and then refined. The game is rendered on a vector display, in a 2D view, that wraps around both screen axes. In the 1980s it was ported to Atari's home systems, and the Atari VCS version



sold over 3,000,000 copies.

You control a triangular ship that can rotate left and right, firing shots straight ahead. You can also move the triangular ship forward, in short bursts. Once the ship begins to burst forward in a direction, it will continue in that direction for a time without your intervention, unless you apply thrust in a different direction. The ship eventually comes to a stop when not thrusting. You can also send the ship into hyperspace, causing it to disappear and reappear in a random location on the screen, but this runs the risk of self-destruction, if you appear on top of an asteroid.

Levels start with a few large asteroids drifting in various directions on the screen. Objects wrap around screen edges, so for instance, an asteroid that drifts off the top edge of the screen reappears at the bottom and continues moving in the same direction. As you shoot asteroids, they break into smaller asteroids, that move faster and are harder to hit. Smaller asteroids are worth more points. Two flying saucers appear occasionally on the screen. The larger saucer shoots randomly and wildly, while the smaller saucer fires frequently, directly at your ship.



I remember playing this in pubs and thinking it was quite a tough game. I think it was the rotating firing that put me off and the fact that the broken, smaller asteroids got quicker. Games like Space Invaders and Pheonix, seemed a lot more straight forward, to my fledgling shooter brain. Primitive by today's standards, Asteroids was clever for it's time and quite a challenge.



Game Review by Graham Pike



I say that because among a world of super intense shooters, Twinkle Star Sprites from 1996, that was originally created by ADK, came as a really good alternative. It retained the challenge and immersive shooting gameplay but broke it up into bite sized peices. Giving you plenty of time to breath and enjoy your progress. Yes it is nauseatingly cute at times and only the seriously young at heart could be bothered to follow the storylines that evolve throughout the play. But underneath all that is a quality game, that looks good, sounds OK and plays excellently.



chains though, it will send one or more fireball projectiles into the opponent's screen. Obviously they'll be doing that to you too. But if you can blast those enemy fireballs, rather than just dodging them, you'll send them screaming back toward your foe, in an extra powerful form. Again, your enemies can do this to you and if you are smart enough to send those back, you can build up to Boss Attacks, that really reek havoc. Add to all this, power orbs and other super attacks and there is one hell of a lot to rain down on your

Now here is a really classic shooter, that has appeared on a multitude of consoles. But for me, it all started on the Neo Geo. More specifically, the Neo Geo CD. And way back then the Neo had awesome fighting and shooting games, that were serious contenders, when along came Twinkle Star Sprites, with it's super cute, anime styling and wierd, split-screen, 1 or 2 player, competitive gameplay. How could this revoltingly cute, kids game appear on the mighty Neo Geo? Well it did and anybody who took the trouble to play it, were very glad that it did.



It has that lovely balance of strategy, reactive gameplay and at times, just hanging on in there until your opponent is knocked from the skies, in a dramatic and whimsical manner.

Like many a shooter, you have rapid fire or hold down and charge up a super shot. My technique is pretty much to use the super shot most of the time. And of course there is the screen wide bomb, that you only get 2 of, although the occasional extra bomb shows up as a power-up, from destroyed enemies. Now destroying enemies is crucial, like all shooters but here, if you can destroy your enemies in



SUPER HIGH TECH GAME
NEO-GEO

At Last, Match Play Shooting!!

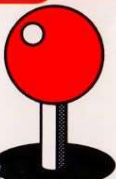
1 Coin/2-Player Play!

2-Player Shooting Game!

TWINKLESTAR SPRITES

How to manipulate buttons

©SNK/ADK 1996



Move Characters



Shots
Power shots



Bomb
Emergency Bomb

SNK

DEVELOPED BY

ADK

NEO GEO is a trademark of SNK Corporation
PRINTED IN JAPAN

S-9611

enemy or indeed have rained down on you.

This game's sprites may be super cute but they are very nicely realised and imaginatively designed. They have good detail and character and are pretty well animated too. The whole thing has a bonkers element. But as a shooter fan I welcome this. If you are put off by a multitude of crazy sound effects, nursery rhyme melodies and a screen full of manic and varied enemies, you will not like this. but I suspect that most of you will indeed like this game.

This is a good shooter that gives you a different experience from most. Don't be put off by appearances, Twinkle Star Sprites can charm you and draw you into it's mad, shooter world.



SCORES

Graphics: 16 Sound: 14 Control: 18

Fun: 18 Lastability: 16

OVERALL: 82%



With the potential to be the most groundbreaking SHMUP I have played in recent years, Risk System offers something different from the norm, but stays true to STGs gone by. A horizontal scrolling shooter, Risk System is a cyber-punk, pixel art, brute em up from Newt Industries. But what exactly does all this mean? Let's start with the main concept and the mechanic at

the heart of the game: the risk system. At the bottom of the screen you have a meter (denoted by B for Bomb) that builds up as you get close to enemy bullets. Once this bar is charged, and it charges even more quickly when you graze a larger number of bullets, you can press B and discharge a bomb attack. Now grazing bullets is not a new concept, but using this to have to charge up in order to take out very specific targets without fail, is. There are various points in stages and boss fights where you will die if you do not use this mechanic. More on this later.

The controls you have are fairly familiar. Shot Fire, which can be set to be player controlled using the trigger button or set to auto fire, which will fire when you are in line with enemies. You can also barrel roll up with Y or barrel roll down with the B button. None of this can be re-mapped, which is unusual for a modern game - perhaps we will get a patch for this down the line?



Manoeuvring the craft takes a bit of getting used to, as the devs clearly have tried to give it the feel of a spacecraft with boosters- with it not feeling direct in 8 directions like your traditional 2D SHMUPs. This has been a large complaint of a lot of people online, with words like 'inertia' being thrown out of the pram along with other toys. I do not mean this with any malice, and I understand the frustration as this game is tough. In fact, it wants you to die over and over to learn how to beat specific enemies and bosses. It does not hold back from this, and there are even more comparisons to R-type and the like, so make from this what you will.



with the game saving your progress in the main game mode. Essentially telling the player you will need to take breaks from this game for your own sanity. It allows you to continue from the state you left off or choose a previous level if you finish the game. You can enter the Trop-haeum section after you complete the story of the game.



The tropeum is a challenge tower section of the game, which is a nice adage. Other options are leaderboards, options and files. In files, you can find some in-game law that adds to the story. I like the personnel files, with redacted information, that unlocks the more you play through the game and achieve higher ranks. Visually the game is beautiful to play. Very detailed pixel art

environments give the game atmosphere, and the designs of the sprites are big and impactful. Bullets are bright, with cyberpunk looking neon colours, and it really compliments the way the backgrounds and sprites look. Different stages are very different from each other, and the inclusion of things like rain and the way different elements are lit are very cool indeed. It certainly is an impressive game to witness when playing in full flow.

In terms of sound, FX are where the game shines, with some really cool laser and explosions sounds. Where it does fall short is the soundtrack. Very basic industrial like bit synth sounds and generic drum beats litter the game, and whilst this allows you to focus more on the action, I feel they could have taken the game to another level with the choice of musical direction. With that said, it is



not a game killer, which for some will be the challenge, as it offers (you) up (as a sacrifice). Yes this game offers up a very meaty challenge and has no intention of letting you sail through because you have that snazzy STG badge sewn onto your scouts uniform. This will likely separate casuals from the completionists. That is to say, there is a rinse and repeat grinding element to the game that some people just will not be interested in. For the most part, I found the game intriguing enough to keep playing. Beating a stage or next boss just felt like it was within arms reach a lot of the time, and just takes a bit of practice to get right. As someone that is not particularly arsed about R-Type games - sorry folks, I know you love me really- I strangely wasn't too bothered about this element of the game. I think because the game's speed is generally quite quick, allowing you to get a few attempts in a stage that you wouldn't get in your slowest of scrolling shooters. That, and it feels bloody cool when you chain together several graze attacks and blitz through enemies like there is no tomorrow.



I enjoy playing the game but the term 'fun' is not one I would use to describe it. The challenge is of a level to make you feel great when you ace a boss or level getting a good rank. I do not think this is the kind of game most people will come back to either, but I think it is worth playing through to the end, and we might even see updates, to help it be more accessible to gamers in the future? Who knows.



It's currently fairly cheap on Switch, and the game even has voice acting for very brief dialogue exchanges of characters, between levels, to keep the story ticking along. This is a nice touch, and a lot has gone into the presentation of the game. So does it fulfil that potential I was talking about earlier? For me, not quite. It certainly feels and plays differently to its contemporaries,

even ones that utilise heavy graze mechanics, but I think it is an acquired taste. Something that looks sweet and tasty to the fly, but then traps you; either by breaking you down with the grind or in fixation and determination to see it through to the end. Analogies, we're buzzing. This one is best left to be judged by yourself, if you feel that you have read enough to graze the bullets and



take a chance on the game. For me it was an experience, and certainly will be remembered for good or ill, and likely brought up in future Shoot You Sir podcasts, as a bench mark game. Interesting thought...



SCORES

Graphics: 17 Sound: 13
 Control: 16 Fun: 15
 Lastability: 14

OVERALL: 75%

