

Issue 12

SHOOT YOU SIR!

October 2021



A FANZINE FOR SHOOT-EM-UP PLAYERS

Hi there fellow shoot-em-up fans and welcome the the 12th issue of Shoot You Sir! So we made it and have completed our first year. The months fly by almost as quickly as those shooters we so love. It's been a lot of fun and long may it continue. There is more news and reviews here and it's great to see our favourite gaming genre still has more to offer. Happy gaming.

SHOOTER NEWS

Cotton News: To celebrate 30 years of Cotton, it has been announced that 100% Cotton and Panorama Cotton will be released later in 2021. As stated in a previous Shoot You Sir news article, Cotton Guardian Force (Saturn Tribute) was released on 30th September. However, Panorama Cotton differs from the side scrolling found in GF, and has taken up what is being referred to as 'psuedo 3D'. To be more specific, this looks similar to the 'direct into the screen' shooting found in Space Harrier, albeit with Cotton aesthetics. The game originally released in 1994 on the Sega Megadrive. The story for Panorama Cotton is as follows: After the Queen emerges from the castle in a hurry to save the world from falling into chaos, Cotton & Silk are setting off on their new adventure.

100% Cotton was originally released in 1994 on the Super Famicom and is a traditional 2D side scrolling horizontal shooter. Graphically, this game is more basic, but is meant to be a solid game nonetheless. Both games will be available as digital downloads, or as a run of physical copies, on strictly limited basis.

Cotton Rock'nRoll is set for December 23rd release date - just in time for Christmas! This game will feature 2d side scrolling elements, traditionally found in Cotton Games plus on 'On rails' 3D elements. This potentially means gameplay similar to Panaorama Cotton, but with Cotton Rebootesque graphics.

Castle Of Shikigami 2 is being released on Switch & Steam in December 2021, the exact date is not given yet). This is an exciting prospect, as the game previously was released in Arcades, PS2, Dreamcast, Xbox, Gamecube, and PC in 2003. A colourful game visually, Castle Of Shikigami 2 offers the player up to seven characters (and potentially 1 bonus character). Another great SHMUP coming to the switch is exactly what we want to see!



COTTON

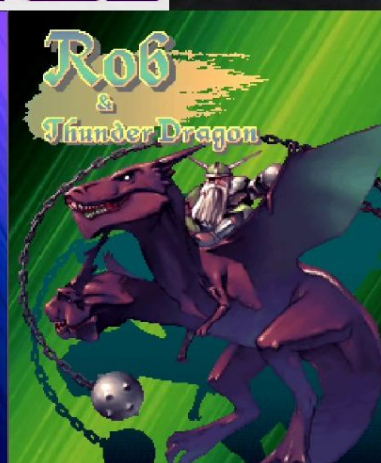


Originally hitting the arcades in 2000, this vertical shooter from Psykyo, was ported onto the PS2 in 2005, with an even better port making it to the Switch, much later, in 2018. As this scroller comes on screen, the music really dates it, with a very early/mid 90s sounding attempt, at orchestral, adventure music. But as a fan of 90's arcade shooters, it all seems pleasantly familiar to me. Moving onto the game demo, you'll spot that this is a TATE screen shooter, with the middle 3rd of the screen, being used for all the action. Also you'll see that this game has some rather nice, 2D, arcade vintage graphics. And rather like the title suggests, you are controlling the flight of dragons. Dragons with a lot of varied and impressive firepower, so let's get in there.

You get to choose from 7 difficulty levels, that go from "monkey" to "very hard". Then you have 4 dragons and their riders, to choose from. These actually have quite different firepower from each other and "Quaid" is the only dragon/rider combo to have a bomb that covers the whole of the game screen. So is probably a good one to start with. At this stage it is probably a good idea to press either the + or - buttons, to call up the Options Menu. Here you have a multitude of visual, sound and gameplay options, to tailor this game to your needs and abilities.

So finally, into the game and I have to say that I really like these 2D graphics. Old school but very sharply done. It's definitely a lot sharper than the PS2 version, I used to own. The backdrops have rather a nice, hand drawn look, with lush colouring. The attractive sprites are nicely detailed and well defined. The music reminds me of an old school RPG and although it's really nothing special, I quite like it.

Gameplay wise it is all fairly conventional. Rapid shot - A button. Single shot, with charged Special - Y button. Special Bomb - B button. Dismount your dragon - X button. There is a Magic gauge, at the bottom of the screen and this has to get above a certain level for the charged Special to be used. The dismounting of the dragon works rather like the satellite on the front of space jets, in games like R-Type. The rider and dragon become separate, attacking entities. The dragon has most of the firepower but it can work out very well, with certain enemies. It certainly adds to the strategic side of Dragon Blaze. Also it can help you up your points scoring. Points tokens come in the form of silver coins but if you use your dismount attacks well, then often gold coins will appear.





In between stages there are pictures and text, that tell you the game's story. Basically you complete the 1st 4 stages to collect 4, different coloured gems and put the world to rights. There is a female, Japanese voice, that chimes in during play, when collecting power-ups etc. When you do release a power-up, it tends to tease you by coming down the screen and then heading back up, closer to your enemies, trying to draw you into danger.

This 7 stage game is quite challenging, though not super tough. The enemy's attack patterns can get hectic but safe paths through it are fairly easily discerned. As you'd expect, the end bosses are the most fun and many of the earlier enemies are pretty much, cannon fodder. Incidentally, the first 4 stages come in a random order, which gives a little variety. The final 3 stages come in the same order and ramp up the enemy firepower. I have to say, being a fan of old school shoot-em-ups, I very quickly took to this game. It looks gorgeous and even the antiquated music works well. It's not a sophisticated shooter and is fairly limited in it's game world. But it is what a good shmup should be. Big, bold, colourful and a lot of fun. With it's arcade roots, it's aimed for shooter fans, who want a quick, intense blast. Though it is challenging and well presented enough, for many a return visit. And it's mix of renaissance fayre and demonic gothic, creates a stylish ambience.



Game Review

By Slyelessar



With a very serious name, Sky Mercenaries establishes the fact it will not take any prisoners. This is a mission based SHMUP, where you need to upgrade different parts of your aircraft or pilot, before selecting an individual mission to play through. The reason I mention this is because some people do not like to play these kind of SHMUPS very often. Grinding and levelling up the different elements is integral to being able to play through the game. There is no arcade mode when you boot up and first play the game, so you will need to jump onto the grind train for this ride.

This game looks nice. You have a very flat field of view and sprites look and feel very close to this 2D background. Sprites look great, and the designs of the ships are very cool. There is a lot of detail in the textures of the background, despite them being very basic. Every mission has 3 stages, helping space out the different environments.



This game has an atmospheric to beats feel, in terms of music. It is looking to set the scene with the sound, and give you a challenge with the gameplay. The music tracks are good and glue the game together well and the sound effects help to do this too. The ship and sprites control well in terms of movement, responsiveness and agility.

Upgrading the ships and drones allows you to tighten up and do more damage as you unlock more things. The game starts of easy and fools you into thinking that this is going to be a fun, walk in the park. The difficulty spikes around the third mission, which is when you start to feel the grind of the game. You will need to farm points to pay for those upgrades. Other than that, the controls are simple. Move around with the analog or D-pad, and shoot. You do not have a button for bomb, but collect orbs that drop as you go along, collect enough

SKY MERCENARIES

and you will get a more powerful weapon burst, for a short period of time. There is a button that changes the colour of your craft and shots but honestly, this does not seem to do very much, and you cannot dodge incoming

bullets of the colour you have chosen. It feels a bit more like a gimmick than anything else.

This game will get you hours of gameplay, you will need to master the grind and each level, to truly get everything out of this game. Traditional SHMUP players will likely skip this game and move onto a more traditional arcade clone. It is not without it's



merits, as I mentioned, it plays well enough and looks the part, hell, the soundtrack is nice. I rate this game as a very good but ultimately it is not for me, even after pouring hours of gameplay into it. Sometimes you just click, and sometimes you just don't. I highly recommend this game to people that like RXN and Jamestown+, as it has the same sort of mission game-

play, that requires not only grind, but tactical nouse, when buying upgrades. The right upgrade at the right time might just get you through the level. Ultimately, it's down to what it always is: learn the level and live up to the challenge!



POLARITY FLOW

SCORES

Graphics: 16 Sound: 16 Control: 16 Fun: 15
Lastability: 14 OVERALL: 77%

SNK
Neo Geo

AERO FIGHTERS 2

TM

© 1994 VIDEO SYSTEM Co.,LTD.

TIME 29

Game
Review

By
Graham Pike

AERO FIGHTERS 2 or Sonic Wings 2 is from 1994 and is a vertically scrolling shoot-em-up, with 2 player co-op, developed by Video System and published by SNK, for their Neo Geo system. This is very much an old school, vertical shooter, in the general style of Raiden.

The dated intro doesn't really inspire you but the in-game graphics are OK. Even back in the day though, this game never really excelled in the visual or gameplay originalty departments. But having said that, it did provide some solid, shooting fun and was easy on the eye. The game runs at a good speed, with responsive controls, which you'll need in this full screen, vertical blaster. This is a game you can enjoy in one or two player, co-op mode.

The bullet patterning and speeds, are well thought out. And there is a fairly forgiving difficulty curve, that gives you plenty of time to tune into this game. The power ups work well, in a fairly basic way and add to the fun factor. And with 8 difficulty levels to choose from, you can find some challenge here, to suit your skills.

Video System also chuck in some short, bonus stages, where you can fully power up and gain more points, for very little effort. Not sure this adds much to the game really but it's a respite from the regular game's pressure.

The game's designers, A. Okawara,

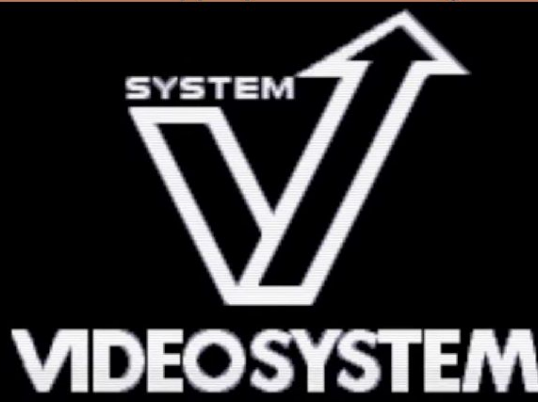


Katsuyuki Yamamotoya and Hiroko Yokoyama provide you with fast jets that are very tasty and have their individual, special weapons, that make impressive viewing and have a devastating effect on foes. The enemy come thick and fast, virtually every type of craft on land, sea and air comes at you, intent on your downfall.

Your jet travels from one part of the world to another, with various well known sights passing beneath you. The graphics are quite good. Both sprites and backgrounds are competently done. A few are a little flat, but most are well shaded, with appropriate colouring.

Sonics are where this game does excel, with some really creatively composed music from Hiroyuki Itou, Norie Aoki and Soshi Hosoi, that's clear and evocatively performed. Sound effects too, work well, although nothing particularly spectacular.

The game suffers from occasional slowdown. Another negative is the extreme brevity of the 10 stages. Ruddy hell, two blinks and you'll miss a stage. I know Neo games aren't renowned for lengthy stages, but this has gone a little too far.



AERO FIGHTERS 2

REVIEW CONTINUED.....



STAFF

COUNT IKUEI

ARMORED CRUISER

So really it's a balancing job. It's an OK looking and very good sounding game, that's very playable but the short levels do nothing to help it's cause. Oh yes, when all the 10 levels are completed, you start from the beginning again. Second time round it t s a fair bit tougher with a slight colouring change. I have to say that on balance I like Aero fighters 2. The full screen give you plenty of strategic movement options and it's

traditional, classic shoot-em-up stylings work very well.

SCORES

Graphics: 16

Sound: 18

Control: 18

Fun: 16

Lastability: 14

OVERALL: 82%



TOP 5 Games, Most played in Septemeber

Slyslessar

1. Razion Ex - Switch
2. Cotton Bomberang (Saturn Tribute) - Switch
3. ESPgaluda II - Switch
4. Aliens: Fireteam Elite - PS5
5. Fifa 22 PS5



Graham Pike

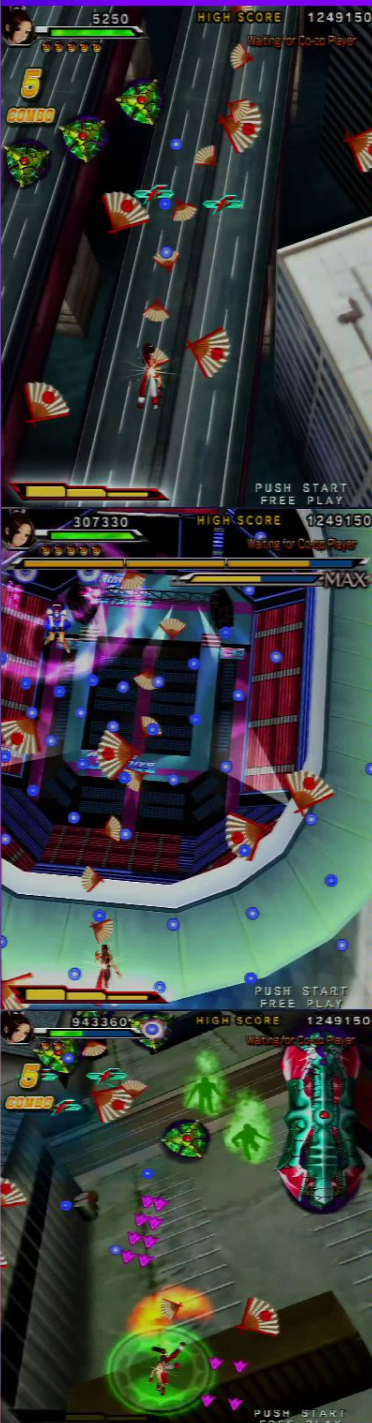
1. Earth Defense Force 2025 - PS3
2. Valfaris - PS4
3. Death Smiles - Xbox 360
4. Thexder Neo - PS3
5. Aero Fighters 2 - Neo Geo

Game Review

By Slyeessar

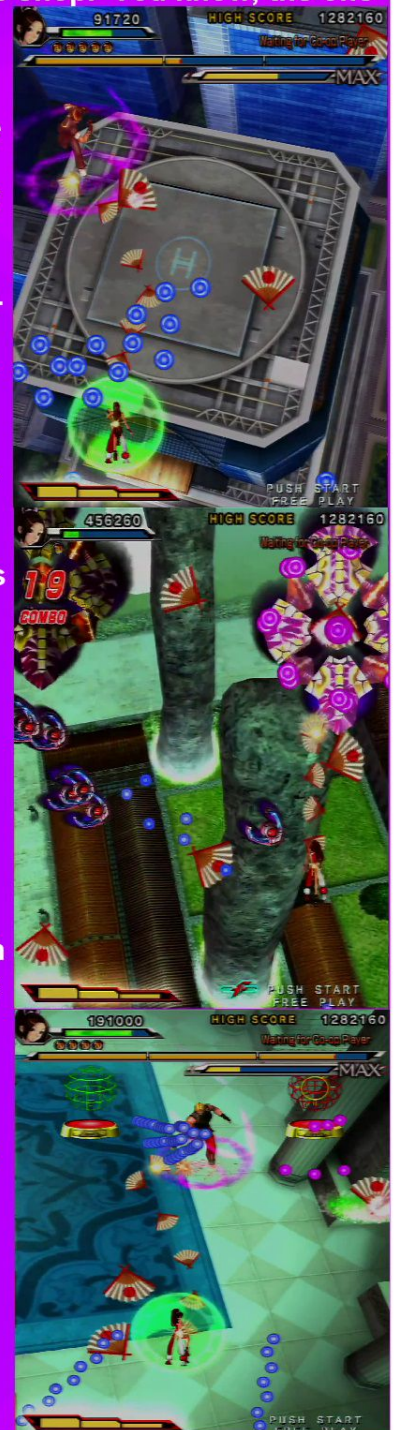


So it's early 2010, you are heading up a project for SNK, and are on your way to pitch the next big game for one of their most beloved franchises. You are running a tad late, but the lift is not busy, and you managed to grab a cup of latte of from your favourite indie coffee shop. You know, the one



with the rare South American beans that has a hint of vanilla chocolate. The lift opens, you nod to the secretary as you walk past, who shoots you a grim look because you have made the board wait, and you open the doors to the board room. Several board members with busy schedules eye you up, and the atmosphere intensifies. "I've got it, the next big thing." Everyone seems happy and much more interested now. "King Of Fighters..." The room moves to clap, as this franchise is always successful-'Shoot 'Em Up Game...". They all stop and look at one another. Surely this person is jesting? One of the best arcade fighters, as a shoot-em-up?. Surely this is madness, or is it genius? Yes, would you believe it, SNK made a KOF SHMUP in 2010, called KOF SkyStage. Now, this is not exactly something you would normally expect to be any good. Okay SNK has dabbled before, but a fighting game franchise on a SHMUP. That's just ridiculous. Actually, it's very good.

As far as graphics go, K.O.F.S.S. is a good looking game, very much in the vein of Caladrius Blaze. In fact, it looks, sounds, and feels somewhat closer to this than any other SHMUP I have played. This is a 2D shooter, with 3D backgrounds and sprites. The backgrounds have that naughty's arcade look to them, are not distracting as you are moving around, and look pleasing to the eye. The sprites are animated well, with the players' character and boss characters stance changing as they move around the screen. Your generic enemies are spaceship based baddies, but the bosses are all KOF characters. I have to say, it does look great, and makes me wonder why this has not been attempted with Dragonball Z yet?



GAME
REVIEW
CONT....



The music consists of riff driven tracks, you tend to hear in fighting games and this suits the game well. There's also a bunch of synth thrown in, for good measure and I like the slap bass sounds used. The sound effects are decent, explosions hit home well, and your main shot sounds like the one from Caladrius Blaze (yes, I maintain this comparison. If you play it, you will get what I mean!).

The controls are tight, meaning that your character does not feel loose when moving around the screen (except for Mai - wink wink, nudge nudge). You can happily move between bullets without feeling cheated by your movements of the controls. You can use analog or D-pad, but I prefer D-Pad for this kind of SHMUP. You have a main shot button, a charged attack button that has 3-stages of power, and a bomb attack. The characters all have different special attacks for the 3 stages but more on that later. The Y or LB to use your bomb attack, this will clear the screen of bullets and deal damage to your enemy.

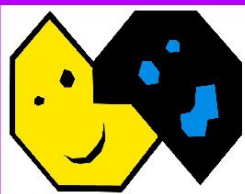
The game is so much fun to play and I have been looking for it for ages but could not find a physical copy. I previously even looked on the Xbox store, but it wasn't there for a longtime. I Happily stumbled upon it recently, when searching the XB store. You have a choice of 6 playable characters: Kyo, Iori, Kusanagi, Terry Bogard, Mai Shiranui, Athena Yagami and Kula Diamond. All of which have different main shots, and all of which have 3 different special attacks (or defence) with the X button. They range from weak (1 bar), moderate (2 bars) and strong (3 bars). You need to charge each bar in turn, and some characters have ranged specials, like KYO, others have more status specials, like Iori and Athena.

There is enough here to make the game quite replay-able. It is also a fairly challenging game, although it eases you in with the first level. Dialling back the difficulty gives you more continues (easy = 5, Normal = 3) but this can be changed in the menu, if you want to adjust it, so you can play with 5 continues on any difficulty. There is a difficulty spike within the third level, but after a few attempts of playing you will be able to get through.

I will state here and now I am a King Of Fighters Fan but objectively, this game is a good SHMUP- feel free to check other reviews. I did not expect too much from this game, but it has delivered and is definitely a hidden gem. Okay, it's not the next Ketsui Deathtiny but it is a bloody good game.

SCORES

Graphics: 17
Sound: 17
Control: 16
Fun: 19
Lastability: 16



OVERALL: 85%



Nintendo Switch

TENGAI

Game Review

By Slyelessar

© 1996 PSIKYO
Produced by Zerodiv Inc.

Psikyo ports are finding a new home on the Switch, and Tengai (AKA Sengoku Blade) is one of the better options available. Originally released in the arcade, this game has found it's way, many years later, to the Nintendo Switch.

Graphically, it is not the best looking title Psikyo released from this time period, but it certainly has a lot of character. The Sprites look rougher than those from the Gunbird series, but the characters differentiate from each other, a lot better. A horizontal scroller, aestically this game looks like it takes place in a more modern, feudal Japan. Each character's shots look and feel different, and they all have their own unique special moves, whether that's a magical mirror or a fire breathing Lima!

The music suits the game, going for a more classical Japanese-folk feel, but it will not blow you away. With that said, I like the music, but if you were to compare it to something like Samurai Shodown's soundtrack, then Tengai falls short. The sound effects are alright and do the job. Once again, nothing to write to your pet, fire breathing Lima about.

This game controls fairly well, with the player controlled sprite being fairly responsive, but not feeling as tight as some of it's Psikyo cousins. The main controls break down to main shot, bomb, and special attack.

The special attack really shows off how much



character and charm is in the game. You will swiftly find your favourite character after a few play throughs, and the game certainly makes you want to try all of the characters. Above all else, this game is fun. I find myself coming back to it, for it is a great introduction to Horizontal shooters for anyone looking to break into the genre. This game will hold a lot of fond memories for a lot of people and it is easy to see why. Despite it's flaws, this game remains fun and I enjoy the different enemies and environments you have to play through.

This is a game we will likely seem ported to the next generation, as it has managed to survive this long, with players all over the world enjoying it's offerings.

There is something to be said about being able to play as humanoid characters, flying through the sky, dodging bullets and taking enemies down, with magical cards, shuriken, and fire breathing Limas! This game will find itself in many peoples collections, merely for the charm and the smiles it brings.

SCORES

Graphics: 13

Sound: 13

Control: 13

Fun: 18

Lastability: 18

OVERALL: 75%

