

**The  
David Perry  
Challenge #1**

**By: Edgar Parente**  
[www.killerkorp.com](http://www.killerkorp.com)  
[eparente@killerkorp.com](mailto:eparente@killerkorp.com)

**Game Boy Advance**

**What impressed you, what would you change,  
how could it be better?**

# The Legend of Zelda: A Link To the Past

**Genre:** Adventure

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Profile selection menu and the game selection menu prior to any intro.
- LTTP intro is exactly like the SNES with text based story.
- 4 Swords intro is very lengthy and cannot be skipped.
- Menu system is all about profile management.

**Getting Going:**

- It took some 10 minutes to figure out I couldn't play 4 Swords alone. (length of the intro)
- Everything from LTTP seems to be intact from the original SNES version.
- Game is very easy to get into controls are simple, and the game allows for necessary experimentation at the beginning.

**Fun:**

- Good progression in story.
- Plenty of hidden items and secrets.
- Freedom to go anywhere.

**Visuals:**

- Graphics hold out well on the GBA, and keep the very smooth animation of the original.
- Very detailed tiles, nice explosion effects.
- Nice depth feeling from 2 different height levels within 1 room.

**Intelligence:**

- Many different enemies, all pattern based, but with different patterns.
- Varied bosses also with patterns, though some bosses seem to have some randomness.

**Immersion:**

- Mixed elements of puzzle, dungeon crawling and mini-games.
- Good communication between characters to learn about secrets and learn about the world.
- Plenty of surprises.

**Cameras:**

- Standard Isometric camera slightly elevated.
- Character stays on center of screen, as the levels moves, unless at the end of the map when going in/out.

**Controls:**

- Controls in this version are a little harder than the SNES version since the X and Y button are mapped to L and R.
- Still easy and smooth, responsive control.

**Ideas:**

- Same excellent game, plus extra game (though 4 swords in multiplayer only)
- Save anywhere.
- Added a few sounds here and there.

**Memory:**

- Excellent, engaging story.
- Large world that can be freely explored.

# Advance Wars

**Genre:** Strategy

**Dev/Pub:** Intelligent Systems / Nintendo

**Intro:**

- A simple short intro showing the main characters, and some game footage.
- Rotative menu with descriptions for every selection.
- Not all selections fit on the screen at once.

**Getting Going:**

- Obligatory combat training, explains all elements of the games (though it's a little slow).
- Plenty of different missions, though goals are often the same.
- Plenty of different game modes.

**Fun:**

- Strategy, strategy, strategy!
- Different missions encompass different tactics because of the different terrain and available vehicles.
- Game becomes very difficult, and strategy changes when Fog of war is introduced.

**Visuals:**

- Smooth animation.
- Good attention to detail (vehicles have exhaust dust smoke).
- Nice backgrounds.

**Intelligence:**

- As you progress through the game the opponents tactics change and adapt.
- They use their CO Powers as soon as their power bar is full.
- Usual tactics are to gang up on a single unit to destroy it.

**Immersion:**

- The story develops over time.
- Characters have histories with opponents and other characters in the game.
- Plenty of unlockable maps for multiplayer game.

**Cameras:**

- Very simple camera system. Most of the time being top down, but side shots during combat.
- HUD relocates itself when cursor gets over HUD element.

**Controls:**

- Very easy, straight forward control.
- Every action is taken in steps, so pretty much one button gets you through all the sequence.
- Extra commands are for support, and info.

**Ideas:**

- Different COs with different powers and strengths and weaknesses.
- Arcade style mode and map maker.
- Unlockable maps & and COs.

**Memory:**

- Fairly long game because the field training is 15 missions.
- Save any time during the game, so you can come back later.

# Super Mario Advance 4: Super Mario Bros. 3

**Genre:** Platformer  
**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- A more elaborate intro than the original NES version sets the stage for the game better.
- Then original intro starts.
- Simple menu with profile selection and then choose to play as Mario or Mario & Luigi.

**Getting Going:**

- Anyone who's played the original version (which is pretty much everybody), the game will be very familiar and easy to get into.
- The "open-ended" design is obvious from the start where you can potentially choose certain levels.

**Fun:**

- Felling of choice is great in a standard platformer.
- Mini games and hidden object/places in the levels.
- World themes vary greatly.

**Visuals:**

- Graphics similar to the SNES version in SM-All-Stars.
- A secret in certain levels allows you to change the priority of the sprite (effectively placing it behind the background.)
- Much attention to detail. (Plants dance, characters move around.)

**Intelligence:**

- Very pattern based characters, not usually very difficult, except when there are plenty in the screen at once.
- Mini bosses are mostly based on speed. They become extremely fast in later stages, and obstacles are placed on the map.
- Main Bosses all have their own pattern, and some will shoot at you, so not as much pattern dependent as other characters in the game.

**Immersion:**

- Once the game is finished you can replay through the game with added elements (like pulling out plants like in SMB2).
- God play progression, with varied levels in different themes.

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2d Camera with certain levels where the level is in constant motion and the player needs to keep up with it.
- For level select a bird's eye view is used.

**Controls:**

- A very easy control since the game was originally designed for 2 buttons.
- No added functionality except where items are shown. All the items are shown at once instead of having to go through pages.

**Ideas:**

- Mario Brothers for Multiplayer.
- E-cards.
- You can play as Luigi (which jumps higher like in SMB2).
- You can trade lives between characters when they are on the same square.

**Memory:**

- You have memories from when you originally played this game. Playing this version brings back those memories.
- Luigi jumps higher, so he's better in certain stages.

# Super Mario Advance 2: Super Mario World

**Genre:** Platformer

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Longer intro that the original explains a little how they ended up on that island. a little too long for a GBA game.
- No menu except for top to bottom profile management.

**Getting Going:**

- The first few levels have little boxes that explain the concepts of the game.
- Easy control, but might be a little unfamiliar to people who haven't played the original SNES version.

**Fun:**

- Different level design that is not only left to right, but top to bottom also.
- Some puzzles elements, and hidden passageways.

**Visuals:**

- The GBA animation is very close to the SNES original.
- Smooth animation.
- Nice transparency effects on ghosts.

**Intelligence:**

- All enemies follow a pattern, some stricter than others.
- Bosses also follow a pattern, though more complicated.
- Levels and bosses are varied enough, to have multiple different patterns.

**Immersion:**

- Different levels and ideas for diversity in the game.
- Secrets and hidden elements to the games.
- Pretty hard puzzles in ghost houses.

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2D camera.
- Camera can only be placed forward, unlike SNES version that can be placed back.
- There are background items that are placed in front of the main characters.

**Controls:**

- Some buttons had to be remapped, because of the X, Y buttons not being available on the GBA.
- Responsive control; easy to use.

**Ideas:**

- You can play as Luigi, which plays the same as SMB2
- Some levels have multiple exits.
- Many hidden items.
- Save at will.

**Memory:**

- Great sense of nostalgia when playing this game.
- Game still holds well with good design elements.
- Rewarding when completed.

# Mario Kart Super Circuit

**Genre:** Kart Racing

**Dev/Pub:** Intelligent Systems / Nintendo

**Intro:**

- No real intro, just a short animation to the start screen.
- Iconic menus with good descriptions, easily navigable.
- Menu is step based.

**Getting Going:**

- No tutorial necessary for this game, by trial one can learn the controls.
- Game starts off pretty simple so it's ease to get accustomed to it.

**Fun:**

- Very easy to pick up and play.
- Game can be played in spurts, so good for quick fun.
- Good set of characters and tracks.

**Visuals:**

- Similar Mode 7 style graphics as the SNES game.
- Backgrounds leave a little to be desired.
- Perspective is well achieved.

**Intelligence:**

- Same racers almost always place at the same positions.
- Opponents use force (bumping you) and items skilfully.
- Opponents are aware of the weights of other cars (Toad will not bump DK).

**Immersion:**

- Plenty of unlockable tracks.
- Good replay value from plenty of game modes.

**Cameras:**

- 3rd person 2D camera, but engine makes it look "fake" 3D.
- Camera is always behind vehicle, and follows track.
- Since the map is mostly flat, it's sometimes hard to see where the turn is.

**Controls:**

- Clean and efficient controls. Responsive.
- All vehicles handle differently.
- Jump function is an excellent addition.

**Ideas:**

- Random character select.
- Auto save.
- Different modes.

**Memory:**

- Very easy to pick up a game.
- Interesting tracks.

# Metroid Fusion

**Genre:** Platformer

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Intrigue building intro, short.
- Menu is very simple, and has mostly profile management options.
- No difficulty options.

**Getting Going:**

- Always a blip on your map showing the next area of importance.
- When new items/weapons are obtained, there is an explanation on how to use them.

**Fun:**

- Interesting puzzles.
- Plenty of new moves.
- The Metroid feel is still present.
- Nice level design.

**Visuals:**

- When a parasite becomes visible or enters a body. Nice warping effect.
- Smooth animation.
- Fitting yet varied colour palette.

**Intelligence:**

- Enemies are patterns based, but there are many enemies.
- Some enemies attack on triggers.
- Larger than life bosses in varied environments, so you need to adapt to all the patterns.

**Immersion:**

- Interesting story only slightly based on Metroid.
- Plenty of hidden items.
- Good progression (maybe a little fast).

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2d Camera with character in middle of screen. Unless going in/out of room.
- Nice effect in a dark room with a circle of light acting as a "flashlight."

**Controls:**

- L buttons helps to shoot diagonally.
- Pretty standard controls from a Metroid game.
- Instead of select button triggering missiles, the R button activated missiles on hold; Easier for quick manoeuvring.

**Ideas:**

- Connectivity with Metroid Prime.
- Game is made to potentially be finished in 2 hours, so the game is short.
- The only replay value is collecting all the items.

**Memory:**

- Good first GBA Metroid game. Keeping all the original elements plus new stuff.
- An enthralling game until you finish it. Not much replay value.

# Super Mario Advance 3: Yoshi's Island

**Genre:** Platformer

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Very long intro compared to what is usually seen in GBA games.
- Menu is just simple profile management.

**Getting Going:**

- Easy to learn control, plus a few little help boxes along the way.
- Game has secondary goals, which is to have a 100% completion rate at every level.

**Fun:**

- Always a certain sense of tension since there is many enemies, and you don't want Mario to fall off.
- Fun levels with a light, colourful tone.

**Visuals:**

- One of the first games to use cell shading style graphics.
- The starts screen has a very 3D feel to it.
- Intro has large amounts of parallax scrolling.
- Smooth animation

**Intelligence:**

- Though fighting enemies is mostly pattern based, many touches are added to add personality.
- Bosses have facial expressions.
- Fights are usually very strategic, even during regular level course.

**Immersion:**

- Not much of a story.
- Many puzzles.
- Good level desing.

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2D camera with main character in the middle unless in/out of area.
- Movement can be done in horizontal as well as vertical.

**Controls:**

- Simple controls, like any other platformers, responsive.
- A little hard to shoot the eggs since the target is in constant movement, so you need to time it good. You can't manually aim. Probably created this to add the tension in the game, for when you need to shoot a quick one.

**Ideas:**

- Mario Brothers for Multiplayers.
- Nothing added to the game unlike other SMA games.
- Yoshi can transform into many different vehicles, for extra puzzles.

**Memory:**

- Nice animation with cell shaded graphics.
- Interesting level puzzles, with bonus stages.

# Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

**Genre:** Extreme Sports / Skateboarding

**Dev/Pub:** Vicarious Visions / Activision

## **Intro:**

- No big intro except for stylised Dev intro.
- Menu is on a wheel, fully revolving.
- Options are non descriptive. Kiddie mode?

## **Getting Going:**

- Some of the controls can be confusing to the uninitiated in the style, but there is a tutorial to show you some of the basic.
- For each level, the challenges are clearly stated.

## **Fun:**

- Interesting levels.
- Varied challenges.
- Multiple challenges per level.

## **Visuals:**

- Character is in real 3D (not many polygons though. <100)
- Smooth animation because of the 3D character.
- Colours palette is very bland.

## **Intelligence:**

- N/A. The game is played single player, there is no competition except time.

## **Immersion:**

- Not much time to experience game play (1min 30sec), so just as you started doing good, the game stops!
- You can only focus on one challenge at the time because of short time frame.

## **Cameras:**

- Isometric perspective focused on the character.
- It's often hard to tell what is elevated or if you are going to hit the jump or not.

## **Controls:**

- The controls are very similar to the console versions, which is good.
- The character is always moving, which makes it hard to change direction at times.
- Controls take some time to get used to.

**Ideas:**

- Probably one of the first games on GBA to actually use some 3D elements.
- No bosses or sense of reward except for new levels.

**Memory:**

- Crazy tricks!
- Bad memories from the lack of time to practice or even pass the challenges on some of the simplest levels.

# Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga

**Genre:** Role Playing Game

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- No intro just a quick animation to start screen.
- Very little options.
- Easy, simple menu.

**Getting Going:**

- Game seems to be targeted to a younger audience; as such everything is explained to the minute detail.
- long beginning for a GBA title, a lot of non passable story elements

**Fun:**

- A little childish, with very childish humour.
- RPG style game with good elements of the style. Exploration, combat, level building.
- Fun combat system because there is more interactivity.

**Visuals:**

- Adequate animation, but nothing out of the ordinary.
- Very bright colour.
- Interesting darkening effect when using special combat techniques.

**Intelligence:**

- Varied enemies with different aggressiveness while roaming around the world.
- Most enemies during combat just attack, some with more than one attack type.
- Bosses seem to work on triggers, while still keeping a standard pattern otherwise.

**Immersion:**

- Humour filled story.
- Appropriate difficulty.
- Interesting environment dependant puzzles.
- Not set in an already existing SMB world.

**Cameras:**

- Standard elevated isometric camera.
- Very easy to tell depth and elevated areas from colour palette.
- During combat Camera is more in a 2D orientation, but lends itself well.

**Controls:**

- Clearly explained controls.
- A and B buttons make the front and back characters jump respectively. Maybe having 1 button mapped to the same character whether he is in the front or back would have been better. Or at least the choice.

**Ideas:**

- Supports Gameboy player on GC with rumble feature.
- You can't save anytime, but there are many save point locations.
- Standard RPG elements

**Memory:**

- Very childish elements might push away potential players.
- Enjoyable puzzles.

# Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising

**Genre:** Strategy

**Dev/Pub:** Intelligent Systems / Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Simple intro depicting the main characters of the game.
- Rotating menu, though not all selections can be seen on screen at once.
- Menu revolves.

**Getting Going:**

- Initial missions are easy and commands are explained as part of the story.
- Mission goals are mostly the same though how they are accomplished changes.

**Fun:**

- Deep strategy game, with plenty of units and tactical possibilities.
- Good multiplayer modes.

**Visuals:**

- The general cartoon-ish feel of the game alleviates the severity of war.
- Very smooth animation.
- Very detailed, vivid backgrounds during combat sequences.

**Intelligence:**

- Different COs have different combat styles, and those combat styles differ depending on area and units.
- Character personality is portrayed through the story of the game, and communication between players.
- All COs have strength and weaknesses.

**Immersion:**

- Strong story mixing in multiple factions.
- Hidden items to be found within the maps add a dimension of exploration.

**Cameras:**

- Top down camera when in map view, HUD moves around to accommodate like the first game.
- During combat, the camera is on a side view. Exactly like the first.

**Controls:**

- Very easy controls.
- Everything is done in steps with some shortcuts available.
- Very simple command interface.

**Ideas:**

- Unlockables for one off battles.
- Make your own map or CO.
- More playable CO than the first game.
- Link battles.

**Memory:**

- Many different strategic elements.
- Just more of the good stuff from the first game.
- Good feeling of reward after a mission.

# Metroid: Zero Mission

**Genre:** Platformer

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Short intro, simply depicting the goal of the game.
- Very simple menu with only 2 options.
- No difficulty settings.

**Getting Going:**

- Game will seem vaguely familiar to anyone who played the original game on the NES.
- A map was added pinpointing the next important location to visit.

**Fun:**

- A lot of exploration is required.
- Nice set of puzzles to obtain secrets.
- New puzzles and areas added to this version of the game.

**Visuals:**

- Very smooth animation
- Special effects for explosions and special skills are very well done.

**Intelligence:**

- Many enemies have very basic patterns; walking around a block for example.
- Bosses have slightly more complicated patterns.
- Some of the enemies must be used to reach certain areas.

**Immersion:**

- Even though your map shows where next important location is, it is sometimes necessary to go through another location first.
- Can be annoying to go through all that exploration.

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2D camera where character is always in middle except for when entering/exiting room.
- Good ambience and fair amount of area visible on screen at once.

**Controls:**

- Easy to learn controls.
- Added the possibility to shoot diagonally.

**Ideas:**

- Extremely expanded game with new rooms, weapons etc.
- Game is conceived to be finished within 2 hours, so not much replay value.

**Memory:**

- Larger than life bosses (Kraid isn't the size he used to be).
- Interesting way to replay the original game.

# Golden Sun

**Genre:** Role Playing Game

**Dev/Pub:** Camelot / Nintendo

**Intro:**

- No intro, just quick animation to a sun.
- First time intro game starts automatically after inputting character name.
- Second time there is profile management

**Getting Going:**

- Fairly long story sequence to start off with.
- Standard RPG controls, so it's pretty easy to get into the game.
- Selection is iconic, so it's possible that someone might get confused.

**Fun:**

- Quirky characters.
- Interesting level/dungeon design with plenty of puzzles.
- Good combat system.

**Visuals:**

- Very smooth animation.
- Nice magic spell effects.
- Interesting 3D rotating like feel created with panning a background image and using different angled sprites.
- Very good 3D feel during combat.

**Intelligence:**

- Combat enemies usually just attack, not much patterns. Multiple attacks available for most enemies.
- Bosses and stronger enemies seem to work on triggers, so when their life is low they use a potion.

**Immersion:**

- Very involving story with many twists and turns.
- Interesting sidekick management system.
- Good level progression.
- A lot of decision making, making the player feel like he's more part of the game

**Cameras:**

- Standard top-down/isometric perspective during regular play.
- Combat uses a style of fake 3D perspective, very impressive.

**Controls:**

- Easy, responsive controls.
- A sub menu is opened at the press of a button but the menu choice is iconic.  
Maybe a menu more in the tone of Final Fantasy would have been more adequate and easy to navigate

**Ideas:**

- Save anytime, but not during cut-scenes.
- Certain environmental puzzles require the use of spells. Interesting since most RPG use spells only during combat or for healing.

**Memory:**

- Strong story with interesting gameplay elements.
- Cut-scenes a little long for the player on the go.

# Wario Ware Inc.: Mega MicroGame\$

**Genre:** Puzzle

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Fairly long intro, explains the story behind microgames.
- There is no start screen menu; only in-game menu.
- Help text at the bottom shows explain the current selection very well.

**Getting Going:**

- Will take some time to get used to because of its different style of play.
- Only 3-5 seconds per game, so you don't get to feel the game much the first few times.

**Fun:**

- Plenty of different games, and longer boss battles.
- Many different themes for the games (NES, Sci-Fi, etc.)
- Very easy to play a few quick games.

**Visuals:**

- Almost every mini-game has a different visual style.
- Some nice pictures and blurring effects.
- Some Mode 7 like graphics like F-Zero.
- Some Pre-rendered graphics like Mortal Kombat.

**Intelligence:**

- The most important game elements are done randomly & speed is the major difficulty factor.
- Some bosses use very basic patterns.
- Each mini-game has 3 different difficulty setting.

**Immersion:**

- Very intense gameplay because of the speed of the game.
- Plenty of unlockables. (New games, and variations).

**Cameras:**

- Various Camera angles depending on the game being played.
- Top-Down, Side-Scroller, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person,
- The cameras are employed to portray the type and style of game.

**Controls:**

- All games have a different control scheme, with some overlapping.
- Most controls are very simple, using only 1 or 2 buttons.

**Ideas:**

- Plenty of games.
- Plenty of unlockables, including Dr. Wario.
- Only 1 profile, so no one else can start a game.

**Memory:**

- Plenty many choices of games and an interesting concept.
- Good replay value, since you can always beat your high scores

# Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow

**Genre:** Platformer

**Dev/Pub:** Konami

**Intro:**

- Intro with text explaining the story of the game.
- Menu is very simple; profile management or Soul trading.

**Getting Going:**

- Game play is a little different from the previous versions, No whip!
- Hearts have also become your MP.
- General feel of the game is very similar to the other games.

**Fun:**

- Sombre level design like other Castlevania games.
- Interesting soul set idea where you gain enemies' abilities.

**Visuals:**

- Much smoother animation than the previous games.
- Very detailed graphics.
- Less special effects since this one doesn't have magic spells.

**Intelligence:**

- Most of the enemies have to do with pattern recognition.
- Some patterns are hard to figure out, adding to the difficulty.
- Difficulty is mostly managed through levels. Leveling up renders the game easier.

**Immersion:**

- Good level progression and interesting enemies make you forget to save; a bummer when you die.
- Plenty of souls to collect.
- Standard Castlevania story.

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2D platformer camera.
- Character always in the middle of screen, unless going in/out of area.
- Player is of good size on screen.

**Controls:**

- Controls are similar to other Castlevanias.
- Depending which weapon you are using, the control might vary slightly (mostly the timing).
- Other acquired skills are easy to understand.

**Ideas:**

- Acquiring enemies' abilities.
- Different weapon than the standard Castlevania whip.
- Over 100 different enemies.

**Memory:**

- Refreshing new Castlevania game. Moves away from many established standards.
- Plenty of new abilities, and the more you play, the more you want.

# Fire Emblem

**Genre:** Strategy

**Dev/Pub:** Intelligent Systems / Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Text based Intro, depict the background story of the game.
- Plenty of options to customize certain aspects of the game.

**Getting Going:**

- The initial missions are pretty easy; elements are described one by one.
- Different mission goals.

**Fun:**

- Strong strategy elements.
- Plenty of things to do in a map; (visiting villages, shops).

**Visuals:**

- Smoothest animation I have seen on the GBA.
- Nice character design.
- Backgrounds during battle are only small squares where the characters are instead of being full fledged backgrounds like in Advance Wars.

**Intelligence:**

- The general, yet effective, pattern of the enemy is to attack the closest and/or weakest member available.
- This usually makes it so they gang up on a character and dismiss him.

**Immersion:**

- Strong story with new characters added to the game as you progress.
- Many hidden elements and explorable areas in the map.

**Cameras:**

- Standard strategy top-down camera.
- Characters are very small, smaller than in Advance Wars.
- Combat camera is from the side.
- Story camera has characters to on a back ground, with interesting mouth moves.

**Controls:**

- Very easy controls.
- Most everything can be done with one button.

- Other buttons provide necessary support functions.

**Ideas:**

- When characters retreat from battle, they don't come back. Maybe having them miss a few battles and return later would have been better.
- The game is automatically saved after every move.
- Hidden missions.

**Memory:**

- Very enjoyable story.
- Really suck that your characters never come back. It doubles the difficulty of certain levels by you having much less man power.

# Tony Hawk Pro Skater 3

**Genre:** Extreme Sports - Skateboarding

**Dev/Pub:** Vicarious Visions / Activision

## **Intro:**

- No intro, just start screen.
- Menu is a little hard to follow, Going down the list you make your selections, and press start to play. Names are not very descriptive.

## **Getting Going:**

- For any new player this game will be a little hard to get into.
- Good and extensive tutorial is available.
- Challenges for each level are scrolled through too fast. You can check them again in the in game menu.
- Some challenge names are real hard to understand.

## **Fun:**

- Hard game. Some areas are very hard to reach, unless you are able to put together large combo.
- Only 2 minutes playtime at once doesn't allow you to experiment the stages enough.

## **Visuals:**

- Actual 3D characters. Very low poly, but nonetheless 3D. You can even customize your character with shirts, Tattoos, and pants.
- No special effects or other interesting visuals.

## **Intelligence:**

- N/A. No enemies or other elements in this game that have to do with other characters. You just go through things on your own.

## **Immersion:**

- Well built levels, but the challenges require a large amount of coordination to accomplish.
- No Story. You just go from level to level accomplishing the challenges.
- Varied goals.

## **Cameras:**

- Isometric camera centered on the character.
- The angle makes it very hard to depict where the rail, ramp, etc. is.

**Controls:**

- Genre specific controls. Anyone with prior experience will not have any trouble.
- Creating combos is not too difficult.
- Control difficulty comes having to perform different moves every time.

**Ideas:**

- Bigger levels, sometimes too big, you get lost.
- A lot of the goals you don't clearly know how to achieve.
- Customisable character.

**Memory:**

- Too hard a game, and too genre specific.
- Challenges are confusing.

# Castlevania: Circle of the Moon

**Genre:** Platform

**Dev/Pub:** Konami

**Intro:**

- No intro, just quick animation to start screen.
- Simple menu for profile management.

**Getting Going:**

- Game starts off relatively slow, so you can easily get used to the control.
- Free to roam around, new places are available to explore when you acquire special skills.
- Map shows previously explored areas.

**Fun:**

- Many RPG style elements added: Level up, equipment, etc.
- Interesting larger than life Bosses.
- Multiple weapons.
- Nice level progression and exploration element.

**Visuals:**

- Nice transparency effects.
- Nice elemental visuals (wind, fire).
- Most interesting visuals come from the boss areas.
- Very sombre background and characters. Hard to play on original GBA without a light.

**Intelligence:**

- All enemies are pattern based.
- Because of the RPG elements, most enemies will become easy to fight after a while.
- Most attack patterns have to do with timing.

**Immersion:**

- Can be hard to play the game on the go since Save Points are usually pretty far one from another.
- Standard Castlevania story.
- For the completist, the percentage of the map is shown, and there are plenty of cards to collect.

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2D platformer camera.
- Main character is centered on the screen, unless going in/out of area.

**Controls:**

- Standard control, and very reminiscent of the controls from the original NES games.
- Easy control for special moves and magic spells too with the shoulder buttons.

**Ideas:**

- Teleport gates, so it's faster to travel across the map.
- New sub weapons and main weapons.
- Large free roaming map.

**Memory:**

- Excellent play mechanics with limited amounts of puzzles.
- Whole bunch of new skills.
- Many different enemies.

# Final Fantasy Tactics Advance

**Genre:** Strategy

**Dev/Pub:** Square Enix

**Intro:**

- Longer than usual intro for GBA, not related to setting of the game.
- Simple Top down menu
- Load screen has very detailed info from save game.

**Getting Going:**

- Obligatory training as part of story. It explains the basic strategies and play mechanics.
- Very long intro, the beginning of the game is not suitable for quick spurts of gaming.(30 minutes+)

**Fun:**

- Strong strategy elements.
- Laws add another element to the general combat strategy.
- Knocked out characters can still be revived during combat.
- Random events as you walk around the map.

**Visuals:**

- Most special effects come from spells.
- Animation is ok, though rotation is limited to 4 directions.
- Some of the animation has very limited frames.

**Intelligence:**

- Difficulty of the game is progressive.
- Enemies attempt to attack from the side or behind to maximize damage.
- Enemies gang up on characters.

**Immersion:**

- Many new elements not previously in strategy games.
- Not much of a story, game mostly based on missions.
- You can construct the world as you see fit.

**Cameras:**

- Isometric camera, pans only.
- No rotation, so some sections stay obscured.
- Map is top down.

**Controls:**

- Most everything can be done with one button, so control is very intuitive.
- Actions are done in steps, and can usually be undone.
- Help button is always available and explains the current selection.

**Ideas:**

- 3 different colour modes to have better display on GBA, SP, and GB player.
- Save anytime during combat.
- Monster breeding
- You can hit your own team members and get experience.

**Memory:**

- Some element different elements not seen in standard strategy games.
- You can never tell if purchasing an item will be stronger or not, since you can't directly compare between what is already equipped.

# Mario Golf Advance Tour

**Genre:** Sports Golf

**Dev/Pub:** Camelot / Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Short intro depicting the idea and characters of the game.
- First time game is played, it starts automatically.
- When there is already a save there is profile management.

**Getting Going:**

- The initial story intro is a little long for a portable.
- Training area available to learn all the parts of the game. You gain experience by doing tests there.

**Fun:**

- Good RPG elements in this Sports game.
- Good progression between championships.
- Many varied courses.

**Visuals:**

- Animation during non golf play is very similar to other GBA Camelot titles.
- Good expressions portrayed through bubbles.
- A good fake 3D view when taking shots during golf play.

**Intelligence:**

- Various characters have different play styles and attitudes towards your character before and after you play them.
- Other player on your team when you play doubles has its own style of gaming.
- Much communication between players gives them all personality.

**Immersion:**

- Pace of the game is very relaxed compared to all the other high intensity games. Good to relax.
- Standard story, not extravagant, but fits the game.

**Cameras:**

- Mostly a top down view like standard RPGs, but various different camera views when playing golf.
- Camera views during golf game are very similar to Mario Golf on the GC.
- Very nice 3D feel during golf game.

**Controls:**

- Generally speaking, most common controls are easy to accomplish.
- Some of the special manoeuvres are pretty hard to perform.
- Very hard to put a spin on the ball and ball hit area.

**Ideas:**

- Game glossary with real golf terms.
- RPG elements.
- Plenty of different game modes.

**Memory:**

- Enjoyable story and character building scenarios.
- Play singles or doubles, many courses.

# Tactics Ogre: The Knight of Lodis

**Genre:** Strategy

**Dev/Pub:** Quest / Atlus

**Intro:**

- Textual Story based intro, very short.
- Simple top to bottom step based menu, no options.
- When choosing save game, plenty of information on save is available.

**Getting Going:**

- Main character is determined by hypothetical questions.
- First battle explains all the commands.
- At the start of every battle goals are explained.

**Fun:**

- Strategy based gameplay.
- Interesting level design with many obstacles.
- Many elements must be managed during combat.

**Visuals:**

- During opening sequence, there is a sort of sphere with texture scrolling effect.
- Different weather conditions for the levels.
- Nice magic spell effects.

**Intelligence:**

- Generally enemies are of similar or slightly high level than your characters.
- Enemies will use support items and spells.
- Tactics are good; going for the stray and using support troops.

**Immersion:**

- Solid story involving many different characters.
- New players are added/lost through story elements and hiring/dismissing.
- Good team management section.

**Cameras:**

- Isometric 3D Camera. Camera only pans, no rotation.
- Levels do not usually have any hidden locations.
- Character directions is always shown

**Controls:**

- Very easy controls, most everything is done with one button.
- Actions are performed in steps, easy to cancel.
- Help button provides info on selected option.

**Ideas:**

- No predetermined name.
- You can hit your own team members for experience.
- Training sessions.
- Badges obtained from doing certain tasks in battle.

**Memory:**

- A solid tactics game with plenty of intricacies.
- Can't know if item/equipment being purchased is stronger than already equipped because there is no comparison during the purchase.

# Golden Sun: The Lost Age

**Genre:** Role Playing Game

**Dev/Pub:** Camelot / Nintendo

**Intro:**

- Quick animation to start screen. No intro.
- First time game is played it starts automatically.
- Following times, menu has profile management.

**Getting Going:**

- Very similar to the first game, long opening sequence.
- Very easy to get into, easy control.
- All elements are explained quickly at the beginning of the game.

**Fun:**

- Magic system is interesting since it must be used outside of combat.
- Good environmental puzzles.
- Interesting level design.

**Visuals:**

- Incredibly smooth animation during combat.
- Quirky animation with good expression displays.
- Good spell interpretation with particle-like animation.

**Intelligence:**

- Most enemies just attack. Bosses and larger enemies work on triggers.
- Difficulty in the game stems from the level of your character versus strength of the enemies.
- Character personalities are displayed through story cinematics and communication.

**Immersion:**

- A very interesting story, it continues the story from the first.
- Many decision questions make the player feel like he's the character.

**Cameras:**

- Cameras are the same to the first game.
- Battle sequence has that same 3D effect, but the background seems disproportionate tot the rest of the characters.

**Controls:**

- Very easy to get accustomed to the controls.
- Non menu elements are always icons, making it a little confusing sometimes to know what the selection is.

**Ideas:**

- You can continue the game with stats from the previous game.
- Save anytime not during cut-scenes.
- Characters can change class with deep djinn managing system.

**Memory:**

- More of the same, the story continues, but most of the game is very similar.
- Better understanding of the second game if you played the first.

# Classic NES Series: The Legend of Zelda

**Genre:** Adventure

**Dev/Pub:** Nintendo

**Intro:**

- No intro prior to start screen, but when you wait a text story appears.
- Simple profile management menu.

**Getting Going:**

- No Tutorial on how to play or any indication of what to do.
- Game starts off slow so you can experiment controls.
- Map is recommended to play game.

**Fun:**

- Very interesting levels, with good exploration elements and puzzles.
- Good open ended feeling from being able to go everywhere.

**Visuals:**

- Exactly the same graphics as the original NES version
- Very simple animation; 2 frames only.
- Colours look a little faded.

**Intelligence:**

- Fairly large amounts of enemies.
- Most enemies seems to have random patterns, just wandering around.
- Bosses follow a pattern.

**Immersion:**

- Many hidden items to find in the immense world.
- Next goal can be hard to find without map.
- Good progression in item acquirement and difficulty increase.

**Cameras:**

- Camera is fixed between screens and character moves around.
- This camera style is good to give the player time to relax after beating some the enemies on one screen.

**Controls:**

- Simple controls, but effective.
- No diagonal movement.

- Item is clearly labelled as to which button it is associated.

**Ideas:**

- A timeless classic on the GBA.
- New Sleep function
- 2 quests with different dungeon locations.

**Memory:**

- Good nostalgia effect for one of the greatest games during the NES era.
- Game has a lot of substance, but nothing in the game pushes you through, or hints at the hidden items.

# Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance

**Genre:** Platformer

**Dev/Pub:** Konami

**Intro:**

- Quick animation to intro screen only, no major intro.
- The animation sets the tone of the game well.
- Menu is just profile management.

**Getting Going:**

- No tutorial for controls, but game starts off slow so you can learn them.
- Map shows the visited areas, but not current goal.
- Game is mostly played through exploration.

**Fun:**

- Interesting spell system.
- Good level design.

**Visuals:**

- Your character has a blue outline, doesn't look very nice
- When you run or jump, the outline drags in a spirit type way.
- Fog is always on top and bottom but never in the middle where the character is.

**Intelligence:**

- Most enemies follow a pattern based on timing of attacks.
- Most enemies have more than one attack depending on distance from main character.
- Bosses have multiple attacks and changing patterns.

**Immersion:**

- A percentage of the total map increases as it is explored. Pushes you to get 100%
- Standard Castlevania story.
- Game is a little hard, and you have a feeling of not knowing where to go

**Cameras:**

- Standard 2D camera with character in the middle unless in/ out of area and during jumps.
- Many layers to backgrounds.

**Controls:**

- Standard control.
- You can either use spells or sub weapons, not both. this is different than the previous Castlevania.
- Easy to dash using shoulder buttons.

**Ideas:**

- Divergence from COTM with spells instead of cards.
- New sub weapons.
- Collectable furniture (to add to a special room)

**Memory:**

- A sense of there not being much in the game (2 hours in and 50% of map uncovered)
- Interesting level design, with plenty of different enemies (and a bestiary)

# Tony Hawk's Underground

**Genre:** Extreme Sports - Skateboarding

**Dev/Pub:** Vicarious Visions / Activision

## **Intro:**

- No intro.
- Menu is top to bottom and better than THPS 3 since it works in steps.

## **Getting Going:**

- 2 Main modes for this game: Arcade and Story.
- Arcade mode is the same as previous versions of the game.
- Story mode has your character grow and learn new moves.
- No tutorial, but Story mode has you start off slowly and explains new moves.

## **Fun:**

- Free roaming. No 2 minutes timer anymore.
- Varied challenges that you can trigger to start.

## **Visuals:**

- Like previous versions, the character is full 3D, and you can add some elements such as pads and helmets.
- Game goes through time (Night day). Good progression.

## **Intelligence:**

- N/A. You speak to some characters who give you challenges, but they don't perform any tricks with you.
- Always play the games alone, and the difficulty is either time, or a specific score.

## **Immersion:**

- Story makes this game much more immersive than previous versions.
- Large environment to explore and train in.
- Unlockables for Arcade mode.

## **Cameras:**

- 3D isometric camera focussed on character.
- Like previous versions, the camera angled can sometimes makes it hard to know if you are going to make the jump or not.

**Controls:**

- Controls are exactly the same as the previous versions of the game.
- Some moves are a little hard to perform.
- No tutorial, but game starts off slow.

**Ideas:**

- Story mode.
- Custom characters/boards.
- Your character has health. You need to by food to bring it back up or use protective gear.

**Memory:**

- Better game than the other in the series.
- Can still be little hard for some players because of the camera and the controls

# Chu Chu Rocket

**Genre:** Puzzle

**Dev/Pub:** Sonic Team / Sega

**Intro:**

- No intro, straight to title screen.
- Large menu that readily shows all the available options.

**Getting Going:**

- The help screen is very good in explaining the game.
- Multiplayer game is a little hard to get into because of the chaotic style.
- Puzzle mode will let you get accustomed to all the controls.

**Fun:**

- Many different game modes.
- Good puzzle elements.
- Multi player can be played with other players or the computer.

**Visuals:**

- Nothing extravagant in the visuals. Game looks also exactly the same as on the Dreamcast.
- 4 Frame animations, so pretty smooth.
- Plenty of moving object on screen at once.

**Intelligence:**

- AI is only available when playing multiplayer games.
- Several independently chosen difficulty settings for each opponent.
- Random difficulty setting.
- Solid AI; even at easy the AI is pretty good.

**Immersion:**

- Easy pick and play mechanic where you can play a few puzzles.
- Very frantic multiplayer mode.
- Many puzzles (200, maybe more).

**Cameras:**

- Top down camera where the whole level is displayed on screen.
- Adequate for this genre of game.
- Camera is fixed.

**Controls:**

- 3 different control configurations.
- Each well explained.
- Control does take some time to get used to no matter which configuration you use.

**Ideas:**

- Added player submitted puzzles from the original Dreamcast version.
- Great new puzzle game type game. Innovative.

**Memory:**

- Cute mice & cats.
- Addictive puzzles