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Sujet de l'article : Transfer Pak

The GB Pak is certain to be used for far more than just Pocket Monsters Stadium. And there are mysterious 'other' ways in which your Game Boy and N64 can become two halves of the same system. But what kind of games will use these features?

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DAVID DIENSTBIER

He used to be a body builder, he's about to buy his third car, he invented the Cerebral Bore and he was project manager on both Turoks. So, David Dienstbier, Creative Director at Iguana, how do you fancy your chances in the ultimate test? (We're a bit scared, actually.)

By Tim Weaver



life. Oh, and my name's David Dienstbier. Obviously.

N64: Good. You're a big bloke, eh? Well, I worked as a fitness trainer and I'm also an ex-competitive body builder.

N64: Not bad. So, do you reckon you could deck me? Listen, I've been lifting weights for 10 years and I could kick somebody's face in if I really wanted to, but what fun is that? It's much more fun to have a pleasant life and to work hard, live well and enjoy what you do. But, then, sometimes, you really just wish you could kick the crap out of somebody sometimes – and it's fun to do it. You know, it's a total release.

N64: Who are you, then? Well, I'm a native Nebraskan (that's in the middle of the country), I'm 30-years old and I've been a gamer my entire

life. Oh, and my name's David Dienstbier. Obviously.

N64: Quite ironic that you ended up at Iguana, then?

Yeah. I didn't enjoy my work in the advertising industry and I needed a change. Videogames seemed perfect. I've always loved the entertainment industry: film, television and theatre.

My duties consisted of the overall team management, scheduling, resource management and general administrative duties associated with making a videogame. In addition to that, I also served as the lead designer for both Turok and Turok 2. This is the really creative end of the process; storylines, internals, music, art, level design, AI, everything, really. Recently, though, I was promoted to Creative Director for Iguana Entertainment in Austin

"Right now I have 19 frogs, two geckos, four chameleons and a prehensile-tailed skink living in my office."



N64: Sounds healthy. What else have you done in your 30 years, then?

Well, I've worked as a waiter, a freelance artist, an assistant creative director for an advertising agency, and I've written one or two screenplays that I've yet to shop around (that's a secret, by the way). I've also got a degree in art and I'm a

I knew that I belonged in there somewhere. I just didn't know where. I've always been a videogame fanatic, and I see the videogame business as a legitimate part of the industry. Now I write scripts, direct music and artwork, and basically work with loads of really great, very creative people making fantasy worlds. It's amazing.

N64: So, tell us about your time at Iguana...

Well, prior to the release of Turok 2, my title was Project Manager. The

(That's Texas – Geographical Ed). My responsibilities now involve overseeing the concepts, designs and gameplay elements of all of our stuff. Currently, this consists of five titles. One of the conditions I had for taking the job was that I would still design games and, as a result, I'm serving as the lead designer on one of our current projects.

N64: Really? Can you tell us what that is?

I'm not at liberty to say, unfortunately.

SPECIAL INTERROGATION

N64: What does your average day consist of? Loads of power lunches?

My average working day lasts about 12 hours – though I needed to take a bit of a break after wrapping up *Turok 2*. As for what's going on these days, that depends on what's going on with the company and its current projects. My days are so packed it's amazing. I have to look over resumes, look over the games we're developing, critique what I see and have design meetings (so... many... meetings...). I am also writing a new game design and getting involved with some of the other aspects of the business. And trying to get back into the gym.

N64: Tsk. Is it right *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* was your first game?

Sort of. I was involved on several undeveloped treatments for the *Batman Forever* arcade game before helming *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*.

N64: Why *Turok*, then?

Why? Well, we had an agreement with Nintendo to produce a game for the as-yet-unreleased Ultra 64. Acclaim had recently acquired a comics division and we wanted to take one of these properties and make a game out of it. The decision had already been made to use *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*. There were some cool elements in the comic that we thought could be used, but in the end we decided that the game needed its own legs. We used a few things from the comic book, but 98% of the game was totally original.

N64: Were you surprised at its success?

Not really. I knew it was going to do well, but it did go further than I thought it would. I tend to try to be very realistic (downright conservative actually) when it comes to these things because I don't like getting ahead of myself.

N64: How much money did it make you, then?

More than I would have made in the advertising industry!

N64: Enough to buy a new car, say?

Yeah. I had a silver Dodge Durango, anyway, that I still drive every day, and I recently ordered a Dodge Viper GTS (also silver). I'm considering a BMW as well.

N64: Was it daunting trying to follow up the original *Turok* and surpass *GoldenEye*?

I'd have to say yes and no. I think *GoldenEye* is brilliant and I had the pleasure of meeting Martin Hollis (*GoldenEye*'s director) and a large number of his team at last year's E3, and they were very cool.

As a gamer, I get really excited when any of Rare's stuff nears

completion. They are quite simply one of the best developers making games on the planet. That said, *Turok 2* was never supposed to be in direct competition with *GoldenEye*. The two games have such different agendas. We always wanted to outdo our previous efforts, rather than worry about what Rare were up to. Certainly we pay very strict attention to everything they do because we do want to be competitive but we really wanted a worthy sequel to the original *Turok*. And I think we did just fine.

N64: How long did the project take?

About 21 months from start to finish. About 18 people worked on the game full-time, and then we brought in extra help at one time to pick up some slack.

N64: What was the single, most important thing in *Turok 2*?

Oooh. I think the technology behind it. That was paramount. We needed

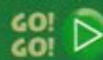
N64: Was that why *Turok 2* was delayed for so long?

Games of this complexity and size take an enormous amount of time to

"Turok 2 needed to bust the N64 at the seams and astonish people. I think we managed to do that in almost every respect."

to create environments that looked more realistic than anything anybody had ever seen on a console. We needed to bust the N64 at the seams and astonish people. I think we managed to do that in almost every respect. It was just about making it more involving for the player than the original.

create. There were 10,000 hours of game testing put into *Turok 2*, tonnes of new technology, and the team's sheer desire not to mess it all up. Some of these things are very hard to predict in terms of simple timelines. The project simply needed more time to wrap up.





N64: What are you most proud of? Aside from the team I worked with (of whom I am always very proud) I'd have to say that I'm most proud of the game as a whole when compared to the original Turok. I think this is the way sequels should be done. We raised the bar in so many respects, not just for the N64 or console games of this type, but for all games. The sheer scope of the game, the attention to detail, the little touches like retrieving arrows, our weapon design, level complexity and diversity, all of these aspects set new benchmarks for realism and immersion. I'm not saying the game is perfect by any means, but it succeeds in showing up so much of the mainstream product that's out there, that I think we've done something really special.

N64: How did you come up with the idea of the Cerebral Bore? It's fantastic!

Thanks! I think it's the coolest and most outrageous weapon ever put into a videogame. The idea stemmed from a brainstorming session that we had with the team. We were talking about weapon ideas and one of the

wanted it to be more gruesome and outrageous. I think the end result speaks for itself. That single weapon has resulted in so much commentary, e-mail and delight that I know we did it just right.

N64: Is it right you did some of the voices in Turok 2?

Yes it is. I did many of the voices in both Turok 2 and Turok. In the original, I was the Pur-Linn, the Campaigner and the poor human schlep that you blew away (I'm particularly fond of my 'choking on my own blood' work for that game). In Turok 2, I'm the voice of the Spirit Father (the ghost that grants Turok the Talismans) and Oblivion. For Oblivion, I recorded about 10 voices at the same session and our audio guy mixed them together and threw in some gurgling stuff to make it as creepy as possible.

N64: How were Nintendo involved with the game?

Nintendo have been superb, actually. They supported this game from day one, and helped at the end to get it ready for launch by working with our QA department. Their input is always

"The Cerebral Bore is the coolest and most outrageous weapon ever put into a videogame."

artists suggested a leech gun or something like that. The idea was that it would suck the life out of an enemy. I liked the idea of a slow, agonising process, but Turok is a hardware guy. He wouldn't have a leech gun. So, I stewed on it and came up with the Cerebral Bore. The mechanism was the same, but I

very helpful because they're gamers. Which helps us make the right decisions.

David Dienstbier's office or the local zoo's reptile house? He's braver than we are, that's for sure.

◀ The infamous Cerebral Bore. It's the sound effects that really make it...

N64: Is there a super-secret Rare-style alliance between Iguana and Nintendo?

Well, I don't know about that! It's certainly not secret!

N64: How else could you create the first Expansion pak-compatible game, though?

Well, we were shipped one of the 64DD development kits some time ago and it came with the Expansion pak. We kind of knew that the writing was on the wall (at least domestically) for the DD, but the extra RAM was another story. We added the hi-res mode to Turok 2 almost at once, and the result was brilliant. Going into E3 last year, it was of paramount importance to me that Nintendo saw Turok 2 running in hi-res. They hadn't announced any plans to sell the Expansion pak to us at all, but I knew they had to. Since I have no way of knowing whether this was going to happen anyway, I like to think seeing Turok 2 in full

was expected to be, and in less time than I was given. It was a simple matter of motivation. Even though a large part of the early work I was doing never came to fruition, I was willing to work as hard as I needed to in order to make a good game. I would also plead with people to avoid the ego curse that is all too common when young people make good money. It serves no purpose, and more often than not causes tonnes of problems. One should always take pride in what they have accomplished, but if you are getting into this business you must realise that every game is a matter of an entire team of people doing their jobs well. If you fail to appreciate your team, you end up alienating yourself and severing the most important relationships you have.

N64: Sounds like good advice. So, what's top of your shopping list this year?

Right now it's Perfect Dark all the way, baby! (Though if a Metroid title was made official I'd be doing chimp flips for a week.) What N64 games have I completed? Mario 64, Yoshi's

"I like to think that seeing Turok 2 in full 640 x 480 helped Nintendo decide to sell the Expansion pak."

640 x 480 helped them make the decision. We'll never know. Clearly it didn't hurt!

N64: What advice would you give to budding David Dienstbier's wanting to 'do' the next Turok 2?

My credo when I started at Iguana was that I was going to do everything that was asked of me better than it

Story, GoldenEye, Blast Corps and Banjo-Kazooie. Plenty of Rare and Nintendo stuff, there.

N64: And what next for David Dienstbier and Iguana? Turok 3?

Again, I'm not at liberty to say. Sorry. But, what I can say is that the company has some very cool things in store for the future...

