

Nintendo 64: The final delay?

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Nintendo of Japan have officially announced yet another delay for the Japanese Nintendo 64. What? No! You must be joking! Would you believe it!?! To cushion the blow Nintendo swear that this time it's for real...

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This month, inspired by "Why is it...?" (see page 10) we all look a trip down that old Lane known as Memory and got carried away by the television heroes of our respective childhoods. Just who did the Super Play team want to be when they were kids...?

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PROFILES

Alison Harper



I was obsessed with *Tarzan*. Who could resist those glistening biceps, a chest most girls would kill for and the ability to dive into a swamp, wrestle with a crocodile and still stroll out – not a hair out of place – ready to snog me, erm I mean Jane. Yes, you guessed it – I wanted to be Jane and still do, if truth be known.

Ollie Alderton



I always wanted to be Popeye. Not that tatty cinema version starring Robin Williams and a half hundredweight of latex though. Oh no, the original cartoon one complete with forearms bigger than mine. His bird Olive looked as though she needed a few of my mum's Sunday roasts in her though. Way too skinny.

Sean Atkins

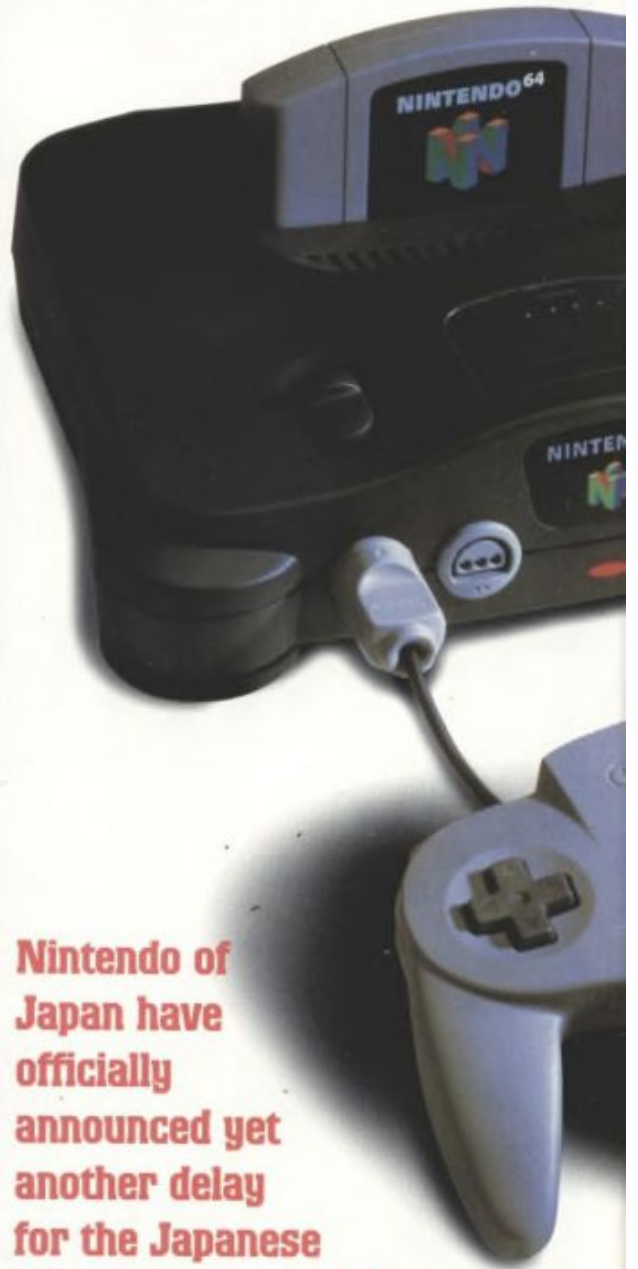


I couldn't get enough of *The Invisible Man*. What a top talent, but why didn't he wander into girls' changing rooms? This wouldn't be a very interesting photo if I pretended to be him so I found the next best thing – stupidly skinny man. Oh! I'm talking about the one on the right. Good grief, some people!

Wil Overton



I must admit to having a bit of a weakness for *The Fall Guy*. Lee Majors was a big hit with the ladies and his character was a stuntman. That's an even cooler job than playing top notch SNES games all day! Why the picture of Bomberman? Because I got it today and I'm childishly pleased with it.

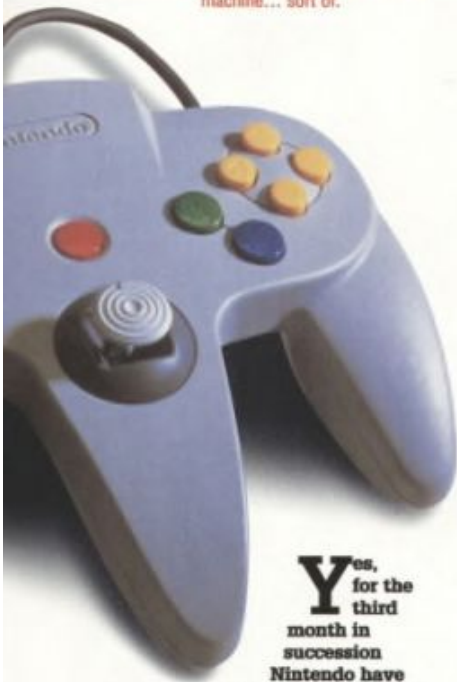


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THE FINAL DELAY?



A midsummer night's dream machine... sort of.



Yes, for the third month in succession

Nintendo have changed the official

release date for the Nintendo 64. This, according to Howard Lincoln, should be the last change and will only affect the Japanese machine. Hmm...

The Japanese launch date will now be June 23rd, two months later than the earlier anticipated April 21st. For once, Nintendo have come clean and given us reasons for the delay. According to a

statement made by Mr Arakawa and Howard Lincoln: "The reason for this slight delay is two-fold: there have been supply limitations on the chips because we are using state-of-the-art technology which only an SGI-licensed foundry can produce; and Mr Miyamoto has requested an extra few weeks to fine-tune his already spectacular software."

It has also been confirmed that the system will launch with three games: *Mario 64*, *Pilotwings 64* and *Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi* (see Seta Surprise... below). Nintendo will begin displaying hardware in Japanese stores from June 1st to tease Japanese consumers into a rabid frenzy. That shouldn't be difficult.

Nintendo of America have assured US gamers that this delay will not affect the planned September 30th US launch, but all is not as simple as that. The shortage of semi-conductors is, according to a source, likely to be more long-term than Nintendo envisage. This could lead to all

available chips being used to satisfy the huge demand in Japan while the US and European markets play the waiting game – again. The next major announcement will be at E3 in May where North American software plans will be revealed. Don't be surprised to read another delay story within the next couple of months.



"Er... Mr Yamaguchi sir, I've not finished yet. Can you annoy the entire world again? Pleeeeeese!"

SETA SURPRISE WITH LAUNCH TITLE

The biggest surprise to come out of Nintendo's announcement (let's face it, Nintendo 64 delays don't rock the gaming world any more) was that one of the Japanese launch titles will be the previously unheard of *Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi* by Seta (best known for middling racing games such as *Exhaust Heat*). Not the snappiest title in the world or the sexiest genre, but hear it out...

Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi is based on the popular Japanese board game Shogi – a variation on chess. The objective is the same – trap your opponent's king – but the method is a little odd. Still, 20 million people can't be wrong. Without boring you into a coma (we are trying to sell magazines here) the main difference is that you

can re-use the pieces that you've captured from your opponent. Other than that the game is played on a 9 X 9 board and sounds a bit dull, if you ask us – which the Japanese didn't because they have absolutely no plans to release *Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi* in the western world.

So why the long title if it's just a Shogi game? Because it features Yoshiharu Habu, a famous Shogi player who has reached celebrity status since his engagement to one of Japan's most popular actresses, that's why. It does seem a strange choice for a launch title, but we suspect that Nintendo are gagging for any finished titles they can get their hands on at the moment and a chess game was never going to be the lengthiest programming task in the world. We'll have shots next month.

