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Hello everybody and welcome back to Chapter Select, a seasonal gaming talk show where we break down one game each season and talk about its design, history, and legacy.

I am Logan Moore, I am your host for this fifth episode of the season where we will be talking about Super Paper Mario.

Joining me today as always is Max Roberts. Hello.

Hey Logan, it's a little weird to say Super Paper Mario, isn't it?

Because every other game has been Paper Mario colon subtitle.

It's a little bit.

It's weird to have another word in front of the word paper.

This one is the most different of them all though, so it does make sense that it's named differently though, so I kind of like that.

And we'll obviously get into that much more in detail as we move forward.

Our guest for this episode joining us to talk about this video game is, I was going to say,

I don't know where you write or what things you do.

You do all kinds of things now.

Bantam Banter!

You do Bantam Banter, you're also a game perman, you're also an IGNer, I think, as well, sort of.

Anyway, this is Ricky Freck is here.

Hi Ricky.

Hey, how's it going guys?

I'm okay.

It's going good.

Hanging in there.

You're almost at the end of the tunnel.

That is exactly it. As Logan's been saying, the light is at the end of the tunnel.

In real time as we're recording this, season one will be done in three weeks, and it kind of feels really good.

It feels really good. I feel like we keep talking about this on these episodes, almost in a negative sense that we just want this over.

We've talked about this publicly as well if you follow us on Twitter and stuff like that, but we've had this idea kicking around in our heads since last summer.

And specifically the idea has been from the beginning to do season one based around Paper Mario since like last June

So for us to be like, oh finally it's over. It's almost over. It's almost over

It's not just like a six episode run here that we've released over the course of the past couple months. This is like a

14 16 month project that we're finally going to finish for at least the first season

So that feels nice to be yeah

- Yeah, Paper Mario Origami King just celebrated

its one year anniversary and we decided on the subject

of this season before Origami King came out.

So it feels good to be kind of at the end

of this particular season and we already have

two and three lined up so we're eager

to get started on those as well.

- For sure.

So, Super Paper Mario.

Before we get into talking about our history

and what we thought of the game and all that stuff,

Let's break down what this actually is.

So this is the third game chronologically in the franchise.

Obviously we're doing episode five here
because of how we structure these seasons.

But the developer behind the game
was once again Intelligent Systems.

It released on the Nintendo Wii on April 9th, 2007.

And it released later in Japan.

That's an odd thing.

That's something you don't see all that often,
especially at least for games back then.

Nowadays maybe that would be a little bit more common in some instances, but almost
fifteen years ago that would not have been a thing.

Game director was Ryota Kawade.

He directed Thousand Year Door and he also worked on Paper Mario for Nintendo 64.

The producers were Kinsuke Tanabe and Ryoichi Kidanishi, I think.

The composers on the game were Naoka Mitome, Chika Sekigawa, and Yasuhisa Baba.

That's an interesting one.

That's one of the more unique ones we've had so far.

Metacritic average on this game was 85 out of 100.

So this was generally one of the more well received entries in the series.

I think this is actually above, it's above, Metacritic-wise, it's above Origami King
Color Splash, Sticker Star, and it's third in the series, Metacritic-wise, only below
the first two.

It's very strange to me that 93 overall for the original Paper Mario still, but you
know.

Yeah.

It just struck me as you were reading the date, but this game came out six months after
the Wii launch.

This is effectively a launch window game for the Wii.

Yeah.

Oh wow.

I remember like I think 2007, I want to say Warrior Wars Smooth Moves also came out like that same year, like in the early part of that year.

I think No More Heroes may have been an early 2007 Wii game as well.

These were the games I remember coming out like pretty early on in that console's life cycle.

I guess talking about our own histories with the game, I had never played this one before at all until we played it here.

I did have a neighbor back in the day who actually bought this and I was exposed to it a little bit through him.

So I have seen the game and I've dabbled with a level or two of it.

So in that regard, I knew that this game was different from the others and I knew kind of how it operated and what it was like, but I had never played any of it really until we started going with it here.

Ricky, you said you had played this though, right?

that's kind of not true but is true so so my friend had it and I played we played like the first two or three levels together and this came out I mean yeah this came out right before I went to college yeah right before I went to college and so I think we played it during the summer some and then I remember watching a playthrough like a full playthrough on YouTube because I knew I wasn't gonna be able to play the rest of it on my own so I've played like maybe half of it and then watched it so I guess that counts I don't know I mean you've probably played more of it than us like nuts not to speak for max but I know you you dabbled with it as well kind of similar to me right yeah is I borrowed it from a friend and maybe played I definitely only played one

world at most I never I haven't seen anything past the first chapter I didn't

even get to peach so I definitely have played very little of this game

But it was always on the periphery, you know?

I got the Wii later after launch, used,

'cause it was so hard to get a Wii and stuff.

- 'Cause your parents didn't love you.

- Sure.

(laughing)

You know, the Wii was so big

and we lived on an island at the time,

so that makes it even harder to get something too.

And it just, it was always on the periphery,

'cause I had loved Thousand Year Door so much on the--

on the GameCube and it just, it was like a ship passing by in the night.

I just always never got around to it.

That was one thing I dwelled on a lot as I was playing through it this time as well,

was because yeah, I had played Thousand-Year Door by the time that this had come out, and

so I was reflecting back on that and I was like, "Wait, I loved Thousand-Year Door when

I was a kid.

Why would I have not wanted to pick this up?"

And I think it was seriously just an issue where I would have been 12 or 13, which means

I had no income.

Oh, you're too cool.

So, I mean, yeah, I would have been 12.

You and I both would have been 12 when this came out, at least initially, right, Max?

We would have turned 13 a couple months later, but we would have been 12 when this came out,

which means I had no source of income, which means I can't just buy games left and right like I do nowadays.

So that was probably the main reason why I didn't.

Plus, I do remember seeing it at my friend's house being played and I'm like, "Ah, why isn't this like Thousand-Year Door?"

This is dumb."

And that's kind of been the lingering thing with this whole franchise with every installment since Thousand-Year Door, but I definitely think of the ones we've played so far, and I'm gonna guess moving forward with the next one we're gonna play, because we'll potentially hold true as well.

I mean personally I think this is the best one outside of the first two like by far.

I think this is much better than Color Splash and it's much better than Origami King.

This would be up in my top three for sure.

So the first three are my favorite three.

Where are you falling with that since you've obviously been here playing them all alongside me in this podcast?

I wonder how much of that has to do with Ryota Kawade?

Because he directed the first three and then hasn't been involved with the series since.

I wonder how much of that is his influence.

I was also just in general surprised at how much of this game I didn't know about.

I really thought that this game, I suppose for lack of a better word gimmick wise, was simply rotating the world and turning it into a 3D game.

And it's way more than that with being the playable characters of Peach and Bowser and Luigi and the pixels.

All the pixels.

Providing abilities and stuff.

When we started this game, I thought, "Mrs. Mario and your partners are going to be the

pixels."

I was like, "Well, that's really lame."

But then they bring in Peach and Bowser and they're not partners per se, they're just different playable characters, which I think is actually a really unique spin with different abilities.

the pixels provide funky different things that you can do.

So I was really surprised by this game.

The thing I like about them being playable characters too is that it builds off of the first two games in that way really well because in the first two games, except for the first one you don't play as Bowser, but in Thousand-Year Door there are sections where you play as Peach and there are sections where you play as Bowser.

You don't ever play as Luigi in any of the other ones.

But they had always introduced those elements of giving you time to play as other characters in that world outside of Mario. So it's a novel, unique way to build on those concepts from the first game, obviously in a much larger way this time around and in a much different, much more different format. But yeah, Ricky, what were your general impressions, I guess, of playing through this time around? Obviously you've not been playing all the others with us but...

Yeah, I guess I think, I'm trying to remember which ones I've all played, because I reviewed Origami King I remember yes at the same time I was reviewing deadly premonition - the latter was a much better game then I think I've played the first two and I think that might be it and I might have just watched someone else play the first I don't remember but I'm right there with you I think of the ones I played this is in the top three I think it's probably my second favorite which a lot of that is just like which we'll talk about soon but when Oh Chung leaves he farts away stuff like that just had me rolling and I guess I don't know I don't really care about the combat systems so much as I care about

the writing or the jokes and I think this one had jokes that landed and I don't remember a thousand-year-old or Paper Mario as well as I do Origami King but it landed way better than Origami King for the most part for sure

Yeah, I think that's actually, let's talk about the writing I guess and deeper, do a deeper dive on that because I think that is the one thing a lot of people talk about with this game is, it's definitely one of the big takeaways is the writing of the game.

Because there are a lot of wacky characters in this world, some of them speak in rhymes or in the third person or there's just, there's some very wacky characters that you come across in this game.

I made it, this is a very inside baseball sort of thing, but every time we do one of these Bring a Guest in, we've been making like a Discord call with them and I made our profile icon for our group chat, Francis, because I knew he was supposed to be like one of the funnier characters from the game.

And that guy is nuts, that guy's crazy, there's some great sequences with him, with all the visual novel stuff that they pull out of left field.

Oh my gosh, it's so good.

That stuff is all great.

Yeah, there's just there's so many strange moments like that throughout the game too.

Like it's not like one-off instances with just, "Oh, we'll introduce a weird character who's doing this in one specific spot."

Like they're very, the dialogue is constantly engaging and it's constantly doing things you wouldn't expect and characters are saying things you wouldn't expect.

Yeah, definitely upper echelon writing for the series, I believe.

I think it's telling that in our Discord chat you sent a picture of, it just said "Eat Poop" and I was like "Oh, I don't remember that being in the game, but it makes sense. I could see that, there being a line in this game."

And of course, you wrote that in there so it wasn't something the game did, but I was

just like "Yeah, okay, I could see Ochunks or someone screaming 'Eat Poop' at me.

That makes perfect sense."

And I think that kind of like nails the tone of the game in a lot of ways.

Or at least the humor.

To explain the eat poop thing, there's one character in the game who when you meet them he's like "oh hey what's your catchphrase bro" or whatever and I'm like "I don't know" and that was just the first thing that popped into my head because I'm still 8 years old in a 27 year old man's body.

So I punched that in and I was like "let's see if it tries to stop me" because sometimes in Nintendo games you try to say "pooper pee" or whatever and it's like "oh that's a word you can't say" and lo and behold "nope, this man's screen eat poop" and I took a picture Very good.

So yeah.

You know, you were comparing it a little bit to The Origami King in that way.

I think we said about Origami King that it feels like the writing staff just wrote whatever they could and threw it to the wall and just if it hits, it hits, and if it doesn't, it doesn't.

And I feel like this is a more refined approach to that where they did write everything they came up with, but then they focused it in a little bit, which I appreciated.

you were talking about. There's third person, they break the fourth wall quite a bit. I wrote the word zany. Like it's very wacky kind of a game. But it also had a very tech focused theme. There were, what is it, Nastasia. Like she's very computer oriented. There's a lot of like hacking computer internet cyber references that dragon in the desert is like robot like it was very tech focused and that didn't this game really doesn't feel papery at all in any capacity paper isn't a part of it it's just art direction I suppose and it felt more they lean into those like storybook qualities that we've talked about before with the first two games like those are

still a little bit present but yeah as far as like using the art style this is far and away the one that feels least like a paper crafted type game. Yeah it just felt like a computer adventure more so which was interesting it's definitely unique in that way. I think the other thing with the writing and this speaks more to like the overall plot too is that I think they did a good job of not only making all the characters kind of wacky and out there like you said zany like every but every character that you come across even the straight faced ones in this game are weird and quirky in their own ways and they'll say things to elicit a chuckle out of you. But conversely I feel like this one has one of the better through line narratives as well and again no Mario narrative is ever going to you know stick with you forever make you oh it's up there with Bioshock and the Last of Us is the great stories and gaming told. But this the story in this game is much more cohesive and it is much more a centerpiece of the actual game, I feel like. Especially compared to some of the other ones where it is, on paper it's still very much just, you know, go collect all the things we tell you to go collect because that's kind of how all these games work. But they would, even at the end of every chapter, they would try to throw in these little asides of introducing these characters and like, kind of trying to keep your attention on, keep a carrot on the stick in front of you with like the larger things that are happening within the story to where it comes to some sort of neat conclusion that makes sense. Where the game starts and where it ends, it's like the stupid George Lucas thing. It's like poetry or rhymes or whatever.

The way the game ends is pretty much the exact same way that the opening cutscene starts, which is kind of an interesting, cool thing.

Yeah, I don't know, I thought it was much more cohesive, I will say, from beginning to end.

It's very focused.

It definitely has a singular goal, like end goal, of a story to tell.

It didn't have, I feel like Thousand-Year Door specifically kind of had a few more twists of like, "Here are the X-Nauts, but oh, it's really the Shadow Queen," and like that stuff.

That sticks with me a bit better.

Oh, we were actually working for the Shadow Queen the whole time!

Yeah.

that sort of stuff. Predictable but still a bit more exciting. This was fairly obvious like the relationship between Tippi and Count Bleck and like that that sort of stuff came it was pretty clear early on but it definitely has a through line. I do think they throw you into the action a bit quickly it's just like Bowser and Peach are getting married and now there's like this evil chaos heart and it's like bam bam bam there was no real easing into the plot it was just go I feel like they're all kind of like that though because I the first one I will sit the first paper Mario ramps up a little bit better but color splash was little genuinely I got mail the tone in the mail

Yes, but that was at least, it eased you into it.

It was like a male, what's happening in this town, and then it turned into a bigger thing.

And this one starts with a grand spectacle and a bajillion characters on screen.

Yeah, it's very quick and hard and fast.

You know, even Thousand-Year Door has like the cutscene before the menu with Peach getting the map and, you know, Mario shows up.

Like it, they've eased you in, but this is like, we are going.

They give you a heart within the opening five minutes of the game.

They just hand it to you.

Which is kind of refreshing if I'm being honest.

I was like, "Oh, okay, cool.

One of them's already done.

That's nice.

That's good for my completion screen."

What do you think about the story, I guess, in a general sense, Ricky?

Yeah, I mean, I think, you know, it's very predictable, like you said, but I guess I

Do think they like I don't know. I think they could have done some more interesting stuff

Like I really thought I don't again, you know, it's been 15 years

So I didn't remember the exact story, but I really thought

Nastasia or however, you say her name was gonna play a more prominent role

Yeah, and so I guess I guess me thinking she was gonna come into it. I didn't

It took me a while to figure out. Oh and again, I don't know how to pronounce all their names
Dementio

dementia

dementia, I didn't see him being the one to turn until a little bit in and I'm not saying like that's
some big, you know

twist or anything but they did like

To for me at least I was more expecting to go one way then it went a different way

so even of playing it before or at least watching it before

It was a little bit surprising in some regards. But yeah, I think like the main story is very, you
know

cut and dry, pretty basic, which isn't a bad thing, I don't think.

Because, again, I think a lot of it is they want to tell their jokes, and so if they can get to the
jokes in a way that makes sense, then I'm good with it. I do want to say that while the overall
game has a really tight, pretty through narrative line, I thought the individual stories in each
world or overall chapter weren't as strong as they've been in other games. They are very
forgettable to me. They're pretty hit and miss. Yeah. Yeah. I think part of that is the gameplay
though. Because I mean I'm thinking about the one, is it called Underwear? Or I guess you go
away from Underwear to out over there. And that place, like it's just you're walking up clouds.

There's no real plot.

Oh, find me three guys.

Hey, we turned a heart into our daughter.

But that's a lot of those areas, especially towards the back half, I feel, is a lot of those areas are just like

fetch quests with a lot of backtracking, which kind of makes it hard to tell a good story.

The Francis stuff was the one that I thought was really good,

but the one thing I didn't like about that is the three levels before his castle seems super

Disconnected from everything else involving him like he shows up and you're introduced to him right away in that chapter

and then he's totally gone there like you got to get to his castle and then you got a

climb a tree and go

Go through a meadow area like all these different things that don't have anything to do with him

And I think they would have done a better job of trying to put him at the forefront of like all four of those levels

A little bit more. Yeah, I didn't like the caveman stuff. I thought that guy with the TV cameras was not great

I think he thought I thought his dialogue was his dialogue annoyed me

I like yes, like some of the stuff like I think most of the writing in this game works

But his dialogue specifically like annoyed me. I was like, I don't like this guy. This is not funny

He was the one character I guess that got kind of on my nerves throughout the course of the game

But yeah, the caveman prehistoric stuff was fine. What else was there?

I don't even remember what the first chapter six the whole samurai tournament thing like is a total. Oh, yeah

Besides yeah, I'm play which we'll talk about I do narratively

It's just like go fight 20 people and well, I like that they show you what happens when a world actually gets sucked up

I thought that was like a cool wrinkle in it. But yes, everything before that is very much not super rough. Yeah

and even even the main hub of

Flipside and flop side I did I didn't feel encouraged to explore them whatsoever

outside of the pillars

and those you could usually kind of figure out where they were. Most of like

the townhouses, like there were so many homes in that game I don't even know what the point of them was. Like there'd be people in them that like you could talk to and they would imply that you would have to come back later but I would go back and talk to them every now and then they'd say the same things. I'm like is there just I mean clearly I'm missing some things and there's more to that game than meets the eye or more than what I played but I was trying to go out of my way at times, talk to certain people in the towns, and it just never led anywhere.

I think Flipside and ultimately Flopside were just purely Bob Worlds.

It's just to get you from one point to the other.

It's essentially the castle in Super Mario 64, but not interesting.

There's nothing to really do there.

The best aspect of it to me was the reveal of Flopside.

I thought that was funny.

I thought that when you did figure that out, I thought that was very clever.

Yeah, no, that's cute, but just the actual world.

And I think that leads to also the whole game feeling a little disjointed, because they did switch to this level-based structure, which from a gameplay perspective I loved.

It made it feel snappy and refreshing, especially after playing off the regular RPGs so far.

But this did not feel cohesive like The Origami King or Thousand in Your Door or even 64.

Even Color Splash with its world map and individual levels felt more connected than this did.

The one last thing I will say about the story and then we can talk about something else.

Going back to how cohesive it was and how it kind of made sense a little bit.

past couple the past few games we have played the stories have come down to oh why is this all

happening and it is oh i'm bowser and i just wanted to take a bath in some paint or oh i'm a

origami dude and i someone folded me or somebody wrote on me or something like they get to the end

of these storylines and they don't know like how to create an actual like reason behind the events

of everything that happened.

We've just been on a string of Paper Mario stories where the underlying motivations behind what is going on in the game are so bafflingly stupid that it almost takes me out of the experience to a degree.

Let's talk about the one thing that is totally different though, and that's gameplay.

This is the Paper Mario game that is unlike any of the other Paper Mario games, even more so than the other ones that are like pseudo-RPGs now.

This is just a straight up platformer, which is very refreshing within the context of the larger series and I generally liked most of what they did gameplay wise in this game.

There were some difficult puzzles and things like that I thought that I would have to look up assistance for that I thought were a little obtuse at times, but that's like one of my only main complaints with I guess general gameplay stuff.

How'd you guys feel about it?

I think that this is the one I've played that would be the most beneficial for a remaster.

And a lot of that is because I only have a Wiimote and so that D-pad sucks.

Yeah.

So the platforming was, it wasn't bad platforming, it was just made difficult because the Wiimote

sucks.

Is this...

And so I wish...

This is only playable with a Wiimote, right? Because you have to be able to point at the screen.

I think you...

You gotta point at the screen.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So I think like you're saying, I think that the gameplay is good.

I just wish, and also there's like, you can hit, uh, what is it?

One and two to bring up a quick menu to switch between pixels and characters.

If that was on a normal controller and I could just hit, you know, like a trigger

or a shoulder button to switch quicker, that would make this game so much more

fun to play for me at least, because there's so much where I'm just, you know,

"Okay, I gotta pause, take a break, who do I need to get out, what do I need?"

You know, I just wish it was faster, snappier.

Yeah.

But that doesn't mean it's bad, it just means that, you know,

games have come a long way in 14 years and

I think this one is the one that could benefit the most

from an update.

I didn't even think of it in that context of like bringing it to modern platforms.

It's, you know, I'm only saying this because it's so fresh,

but like Skyward Sword and other games designed for the Wii in its particular time, more motion

control based than just the actual Wii remote.

But you know, they were able to put button controls in it.

And I definitely think this game easily can be done with button controls.

There's no motion involved, it's simply just pointing at the screen which can be done with

the right analog stick or even gyro controls with all of Nintendo on the Switch and stuff.

And then the little circle comes up.

This game, I think you said a good word Logan, refreshing.

Not just in the context of us,

this is the fifth episode in a six episode season.

But for the series, this sticks out so much

because you can see that this, like the level structure,
well that definitely is carried through
the rest of the series.

And only up until The Origami King
has it really come back more to the Thousand-Year Door
64 style of a connected world.

But this whole world structure and real time combat,
like this game doesn't fit, but it does.

I thought I wasn't gonna enjoy this real time combat at all,
but it felt way more engaging and rewarding
than I ever expected, because there is experience,
I'm leveling up, and I can choose how to approach a fight,
and between Bowser and Peach and Mario and Luigi,
and then the different pixels, everyone gets a hammer
because of that, it just, that was really cool.

I do think the jump was like insanely floaty.

Like he's jump, they're jumping the whole screen.

It was, I was very surprised. - Luigi specifically,
but that's like part of his deal.

- Everyone was jumping real high.

- I think, so speaking to what you said, Max,
about how it is so different, but it feels so alike.

I get the feeling from this one,
that the team who made this game,
everybody over at Intelligent Systems working there when this game was put together.

I just get the feeling that they knew they wanted to make changes but they were calculated
changes and it was cohesive in thought and like they had specific goals and specific

aims, specific ideas, and they just went out and executed on it.

And that sticks out to me a lot compared to Color Splash and Origami King because those games feel like they are very disconnected at times. Like you can't figure out in that game like what the studio actually wants to do in some instances. Like they'll do a little bit of one thing over here and then there's this weird combat system and then there's they add mix in elements of this one thing and then they like those games feel way more like a grab bag at times.

It just makes them feel clunky and yeah, just like there wasn't a clear vision on those two games compared to this one where yeah, it is totally different from Thousand Year Door and Paper Mario, but at the same time all the changes that they made were changes that you know were like hashed out really, really well.

Like you said before about how we talked a couple episodes ago about how they just threw things at the wall when it came to the writing of Origami King and stuff like that.

Nothing feels like it was really thrown at the wall with this.

Things may not have worked out, but they were very well thought out if that makes any sense.

One, a couple of points that really stuck out to me that do make this game feel, I feel like Grab Baggy is wrong here, but you'll know what I'm talking about.

When it switched entirely for comedic or just cool nostalgic purposes like the, what was the program called, like Swagger or something, .exe, like the, where Francis tries to romance you, or the Earthbound fight with the Chain Chomp.

- The Earthbound fight's great.

- Oh, like it comes out of total left field, but it fits, you know?

It feels thought out, it doesn't take up a ton of time, neither one of them.

and they're really good comedic, especially the dating part.

It just, it hits.

It's funny, it doesn't overstay its welcome,

but it also moves the plot along at a good time.

It's not like, and now you have to do this part.

Like now you have to shoot at paper planes

flying at you or something like that.

These were mini games that felt thought out

and really earned it.

Like they stuck the landing on them.

And because there were so few of them,

it didn't feel like it overstayed its welcome.

The shorter nature of the game as a whole too made it feel like it respected your time

a lot more in that sense.

We talked about with Color Splash and Origami King primarily how those games felt bloated

and they would make you do so many things repeatedly in those games.

Or "Oh hey, there's a rock blocking this valley, go to the completely other side of

the world now to go hop on a boat and do some stuff. Ricky knows what I'm talking about

because he played that game. But there are just instances within Origami King and Color

Splash that just feels like a huge, huge waste of time. They could have shaved a couple hours

off of both of those games if they would have just maybe made some different choices. This

game, yeah, it throws some weird stuff at you, but it's never stuff that takes up a

lot of your time. And you're always right back into the action of going through a level

pretty soon after it throws those things at you which is great yeah what did you

guys think about the difficulty because this game is so easy I mentioned it

before I thought some of the puzzles were hard honestly like there are so

many different maybe not hard but tricky yeah they make you like really pay

attention to the environment sometimes and there are some there's just a lot of

mechanics in this game like between all the different pixels in between all the

different characters, each of whom have different abilities, and then pointing at the screen

to reveal certain things. I would totally forget that that was a thing sometimes. There's just a lot of gameplay mechanics in this game, and sometimes the puzzles would want you to use one specific thing that maybe you hadn't done in a while, and that would kind of throw me for a loop. Gameplay-wise, though, yeah, I don't think I hit a game over screen except maybe once and that was maybe intentional on my part when I did it because I wanted to reset or something so yeah yeah I had more trouble than Logan did I died I've died quite a few times not like more than five but it's been more than it's definitely more than just like hearing what other people say about easy it is it was surprising and I think again I think a lot of that comes back to being bad at controlling on the d-pad because a lot of it is missed jumps or sliding off something or you know not being able to go where and like you know like you said it's floaty so if you know you miss something with Peach and you run into somebody then you're gonna get hit and I never went and bought any items so it's partially my own fault. I was gonna say you lose health quick if you miss they hit hard and if you don't have health or any by the end of the game I was really running low on health. Yeah. Yeah I went to the store a lot and stocked up personally. Oh well I should do that because I haven't I don't think I bought one thing once. Oh my gosh. At all. There's a good store in Flopside. Run over there. Flopside store that's the place to go. I think and you know that's another thing I guess is thinking back what you guys are saying about how it respects your time more than origami gaming is definitely true but there is a lot of places where I was getting frustrated how long it took to get around and I think like flopside is a good example of you know okay I get into a level now and this is a me problem every time I come to an elevator that has a down I press the down button and I get mad at it so I'm like why can I not why is it not working and then you know I have to go down three floors and then I have to use Mario's power to turn 3d and then run through all this stuff but I can't do it all at once because my meter goes down and then finally I'm in

flopside now I have to go back up another level you know just like it's a lot of steps to get somewhere that's pretty simple and then you know I don't pay attention so like the last I mean this is very specific but the very last door that opens I just immediately hit my pipe to work back up to the other doors yep and then it's like oh no this is a theater place so no so I mean yes I agree as someone who played you know 25 or 30 hours of Origami King in like five days to review it this game is way better at respecting your time but I still do think you could easily shave an hour or two or even three off of this game and it would be just as good if not better.

- Yeah.

The 3D mechanic, I think we've briefly mentioned it, but I mean, that's like the whole game's gimmick, right?

- One of them.

- I actually had to look this up, what came out first,

'cause I genuinely couldn't remember,

but Super Paper Mario obviously is 2007.

Fez came out in 2012.

Now I'm not saying that Super Paper Mario

paved the way for Fez,

but they do have a very similar mechanic of like looking at a 2D thing, but it's actually in a 3D world.

Now Fez keeps it all in 2D but you're rotating it, but I thought that was interesting that there's a five year gap between those two.

I like the 3D thing way more than I would have thought.

If I was ever stuck, I was like, "Oh yeah, turn and go into 3D."

I thought that was a better gimmick than, you know, cards or painting a bunch of stuff

or folding a bunch of things.

tossing an origami into the air throw just confetti yeah like I

Thought this was actually a really interesting

Mechanic because it always revealed something when you would turn into 3d

Even if it's just as simple as like a secret or something like that in the environment like if you use it every now

And then you're going to find something whether it be the main path forward you're supposed to take or just like oh

What's that over there? Oh treasure chest in a corner? I didn't know was here like yeah

There's always something to it. Yeah, I I generally like that mechanic. I think it's a good idea. I think it's something fun that they

Introduce early and continue to kind of iterate on it in interesting interesting ways throughout the course of the game

I

Wish the other characters could do it though

I understand that's what makes Mario unique, but it was just another one of those things or like Ricky said earlier

You kind of need to constantly flip-flop back and forth between everybody

And and that's the point like they want you to use everybody. But yeah, I that that that ability is so

prevalent that I wish it would have been something everybody could have used or

There was a way to level up the meter

Like yeah, there is is there there is you do what do you have to do one of the in-game trials?

Yeah, I think it might be I think you might have to have beaten the game too, but you can get it infinite

Oh, it doesn't ever go out

What I don't know what that benefit to that would be if I'm being totally honest, but I don't yeah

I mean you might be able to do before the end of the game. I don't know for sure

I haven't obviously haven't done it

Certainly running to flop side easier like if you had to find a nice pillar of heart

well, you just did you know that there's a

There's a pipe that you can get from flip side to flop side that you can build

Yeah, but you have to pay for it and I didn't have enough coins ever buy it. I paid for it

Where is it big money?

It doesn't matter now, but it's at the end of the hallway on the first floor and flopside you talked to this

Yeah, the main the main

The main floor with Merlin on it

There's a dude in flopside. You have to turn into 3d though. That makes me so mad

Yeah, it's 300 coins. I

- I only used it like twice, but hey,

I mean it was convenient those two times, so.

- I have like 800 coins because I never buy anything, so.

- Yeah, and I was always dirt poor

'cause I kept buying things.

- I do miss badges.

Like I feel like that part of it was kinda stripped away.

It kinda just reminded me, like pixels are the abilities,

but the only thing ever leveling up was attack and health.

And I never really felt like I was getting,

I don't know how badges would have even fit

into this type of game with real time combat.

But I do miss them.

I miss their presence for sure.

- I did appreciate that they tried to put some sort of

RPG system in there in a general sense.

Because like they could have gone down a different path

and made it like a Zelda sort of situation where like,

oh, every time you get a pure heart,

we're gonna increase your health by five or something like that like they could have not put in any

Mechanic any sort of RPG leveling up systems like that in the game. So I kind of appreciated that they were there because it always

Encouraged me to go fight enemies or at least make sure that I wasn't actively going long periods of time with just

Avoiding enemies like I would try to make sure I was oh, there's a person there. Hold on

I can just hit him real quick with my hammer and kill him and then okay. We'll keep moving on here

Definitely incentivized me to fight

Yeah, so I think the inclusion of the score system even though it's incredibly straightforward and there's not a lot going on to it

I think that that was a good choice. I mean, you know how I feel about badges personally. It's it's a cool

It's a cool system, but it's it was never my favorite from the other game. So I didn't really

Miss that per se so in a general sense. Yeah, I think gameplay works in this even though it's quite different from the others

The thing that you talked about earlier though, Max, that I don't think

really works to the same effect as it does in the other games though is the visuals.

The visuals are good in this game. They hold up somewhat well, but they're just not unique. It is just a

colorful Mario game, I think. I didn't really have any sort of lingering takeaway with the visuals from this game or even the art direction

compared to

maybe any of the others.

Like I think this would be on the lower rung when it comes to just generalized

art direction in the visual component of the game. How did you how did you guys

feel about it? Yeah outside of Mimi and the way she switched the way that woman

turns into a spider is definitely the creepiest thing that Mario's ever had

but outside of that I can't really think of anything that stuck stuck out too

much visually for me. I think the dragon's one of the cooler things early on. Sorry to cut you off, Max. I think that's one of the cooler things early on that they show, and then there's never really anything as cool like that throughout the rest of the game, that first boss. The closest probably is Bonechill at the end, another dragon with a cannon at his foot. Again, dragons seem to be kind of the cooler things than the earlier Paper Mario games. This art to me is actually very box boyish. Yeah sort of. Like cubes and like spacey and again this game has like a tech dimensional space vibe to it and I the art really leans into that but this definitely doesn't feel like Paper Mario visually at all. I could you imagine though this 3d like rotation mechanic but with that paper aesthetic, I mean essentially you'll have, wasn't it Yoshi's Woolly World or Epic Yarn or something? I think it was Woolly World where you could change the perspective and like flip to the backside and see everything was made out of paper and tape and things like that. I feel like that really would have worked in this game if everything was made out of paper in some way and you could see the world from that 3D perspective that would have cool. But this game feels so generic in its art style. I think that also lends itself to the characters. This game doesn't have the Toad problem from later games, but it does have the "what are these things and who are they and why do I care?" I like that though! I like that a lot. Like that was the one thing of the visual component I was going to say. I like how many unique looking characters, except for like the main citizens of Flipside and stuff. I thought they were kind of, yeah, whatever.

They're weird looking.

They just didn't...

We're not in the Mushroom Kingdom, which is fine.

Going to a different place is totally cool, but they didn't feel like Mario characters to me.

And the earlier games, and then obviously the later ones because they stick so...

It just felt like we were in a different dimension, which I guess is the goal, but I just couldn't connect to anything.

Well I think my feelings on that too, I can't separate from the fact that we've played four paper mario games before this so when we get to this one and things are looking a little bit different it is refreshing in that sense i i guess for me like like you said i'm tired of seeing toads get the toads out of here no more toads uh so it was it was nice to see a bunch of different character designs and a bunch of different looking people showing up pretty regularly um and yeah and some of them definitely miss i i would say as well i'm not saying every character

that shows up in this game is grade A Mario character design. But like to mention Francis again, I think he's great. I like that even the Merlin dudes, I know they look similar, are they actually the exact same? They're like clearly related to the Merlins of 64 and Thousand Year Door. Like it's that same image. I like both of them and then Count

Bleck and all of his of his count black is a great design count black dementia is the one I didn't really love

If I'm being honest, it just looks like a clown court jester, dude

Yeah, kind of okay. Whatever like I guess they wanted to make him unassuming since he is kind of the

main villain of the guys twist

yeah, if they would have made him look too much more like a

Bad guy you maybe could have seen that coming a mile away even though I mean they telegraphed that

They kind of loop in the player on that and make it make the player aware that that's a thing that is happening. So

Yeah character designs I didn't think were bad but also

Yeah, I I have toad fatigue. So that's definitely part of it. Sure. I yeah and just it felt

generic to the point where it was forgettable when I I can tell you except the main people

What they look like I can you know, I had no relation to any characters or flip and flip or flop side

It was they were just

things

the one other aesthetic component would be that of the soundtrack and music and

This is the one in the series that I have I

Don't know. I'm very mixed on this one more so than the others. I think it has some really great tracks. Like I think the

music that it plays at the end of every chapter as the background music to like flesh out the

Tampani and Blumier stuff like I think that track is great the one with like the ticking clock in the background for the memories

that's a great song and

Then there are others in this game that are just kind of wonky sound and kind of sort of like you said max

or everything is a little bit tech influence in this game and some of the tracks are

Tekken techie or can they try to sound high-tech or a little bit wacky as well?

I mean, I don't know how well all of those worked

So I definitely go

Back and forth with the soundtrack on this one compared to some of the others. Did you have any strong feelings coming out of it Ricky?

Well, okay. So here's part of the problem is a lot of this game

I had to play in the room where my wife is working

So a lot of it was muted or at least very quiet

Yeah, so I'm probably not the best person to talk to about music

But I will say like I do the one thing I specifically remember is the ones when the music that plays when you meet a new

Pixel and they're talking to you and yeah, I think that music is pretty good

But otherwise, I don't really have too many strong feelings most links. I didn't hear a lot of it. But uh, did you I

Forgot to ask at the top. Did you play this on a Wii or Wii U?

Wii U so you both played that Wii U we both we both have our

Are heads screwed on properly? Yes.

I just, you know, I played it on a Wii with the TV.

But anyway, I was trying to think if there was a way you could have, like, plugged headphones into the gamepad, but I guess then you would have had them playing off the gamepad and pointing a Wii remote at the game, and it turns into a whole mess.

So it's probably not real feasible.

My notes on music are...

Nothing really stuck out to me.

me. I couldn't tell you a single song from this game. I would tell you to go back and listen to that one song I mentioned specifically and the Pixel song when you get a new Pixel I can hear that one in my head right now as well. I know I'm better with that stuff than you are. You are definitely way better than I am at that. I... A Thousand Year Door was the other note I had. But not in that catchy way that I know Thousand Year Door so well. I just...

Like the characters, this music was just generic to me. Even Color Splash or Origami King stuck to

me more than this, which is a real bummer because... Yeah, I think it does fall on the lesser end of

the tracks. Like, the complete composition of the game is definitely on the lower end for the series as a whole. So I don't disagree with you. But there are still a couple good ones.

So, um, I mean we've talked about basically everything at this point. Um, so, and I know this is harder for, well, before we get into that conversation, which I know kind of leaves Ricky out a little bit, um, but I guess what's the legacy of this game? I mean, what, how do you guys think about this game in a larger sense, especially since we're almost a decade getting a half removed since it released which is crazy. But yeah, I guess this is the, like we said before, this is the one in the series that is very much different than all the others. And it's looked upon fondly but I don't feel like people, when people want more Paper Mario they never are asking for one in this style even though this game is generally appreciated by fans and critics alike or whatnot. So I guess my question is why don't more people want a game in this style?

Hm. It's weird because the GameCube itself wasn't a grand slam. Like the system sales and stuff weren't very widespread. Obviously the Wii phenomenon, it saved Nintendo to a certain degree. But this came out early in the Wii's life. And I wonder if, I don't know what the sales on this game were, but I just wonder if a lot of people haven't played it. This could, it was came out when the Wii was still hard to get. I mean it was re-released later as one of those like \$20 select titles. But it almost feels like the forgotten Paper Mario game. And then you

have to think, I don't remember when Sticker Star came out, but I know Color Splash was 2016, almost a decade later. You know, like, they never, there was never like a back to back style hit, like the first three games really were relatively close. And like, you know, people's consciousness that, but so much time had passed and the style clearly didn't stick. Like I just feel like people don't know about this game and at least the difference in its style, you know. So let me, sorry to cut you off but I actually looked this up because I was curious. It's actually the best selling game in the history of the series. Wow, okay. What are the numbers on that?

As of 2000, according to Wikipedia, as of 2019 the game had sold a little over 4 million copies and it's the best selling Paper Mario game to date. By comparison, like, Sticker Star only sold about 2 million, has sold about 2.5 million, Color Splash sales have never really been given. No, that can't be good. Okay. I just... maybe... Origami King is second best selling. So basically, however Nintendo console sales go, so go the sales of Paper for Mario games.

Oh, that's so interesting.

I don't know.

So you gotta throw out your entire theory you just had.

My own theory I guess is just Nintendo creates a lot of platforming games already.

So it's a harder sell to keep making platforming games in this one style when you're already trying to sell people on 50 other Mario platforming games that they release every now and then.

So even though this worked, I'm going to guess that's Nintendo's reasoning for why.

As for why fans don't talk about it more, I'm not really sure.

Yeah, it is very much Thousand Year Doors and one you hear about a lot.

People always talk about how they want a game to come back in that style or them to remaster that one, but you don't hear too much about Super Paper Mario it seems.

And I don't know why.

I don't know.

You don't have a theory, Ricky.

don't have like a Pepe Silvia type theory? I don't I don't have I don't have a good theory I mean no I mean I think I think this is probably and again my memory is you know kind of hazy up past 30 but uh this feels like the darkest one they've done like they not that it's you know some super gritty take on Mario or anything but they do go to you know the Mario version of hell and and yeah but they lessen that by calling it underwear yeah well you can they can't do it out they get it all Logan so I think that could be a reason people like it but at the same time I just can see Nintendo not wanting to go back to that so maybe people are just choosing to fight the battle where they think they have a chance would be the only thing I could think of which I guess kind of ties with what Logan said about you know they're not gonna make more platformers so why would we ask for another platformer? I could see that. I think you're, I mean personally speaking I have not played like a Mario platformer type game like this in a while so I think it definitely scratched that itch for me on that front. Maybe if I had you know played New Super Mario Bros. the Switch version like a month or two back and then I had played this maybe I wouldn't feel as positive on it afterward. But yeah, it is an interesting thing. Yeah, it definitely... I don't disagree with everything that you said though, Max. It's strange. Even though it is the best-selling one, it seems like the one that's talked about the least.

You've got the first two that everybody praises a lot. You've got the later, the most recent which everybody kind of, not really dogs on, but like, it's, people just don't, aren't as fond of them

because they want them to go, you know, full RPG back to the roots of the series and it just doesn't seem like

they're willing to commit to that. And then this one is smack dab in the middle and it's something totally different

and people accept it for what it is, but they also don't really talk about it too much.

Um, and this is all obviously anecdotal, so.

Do you think the audience, gamers, however you want to phrase it, consumers, would be receptive to a new Paper Mario in this style?

I think if it has this specific style of writing, then yes.

Now if it has the hit and miss writing of Origami King, yeah, he has to get a harder sell.

Because I do think the writing is the one thing that really helps carry this game at times because I mean the game plays good

But it's also not like so special that it can carry the game as a whole or whatever

So it would really hinge on who's right in this video game

What do you think max?

I don't really know. I just asked the question

No, I think the Paper Mario at least the vocal

community would not. I think the "fans" 1000-year door or 64 and nothing else.

Yeah. I think if they do, I think this would be a good, going back to this style,

would be a good second, like a return. So if they do, they go back to the pure RPG,

then they could do this and people would come. I feel like it needs a buffer of a

good game in the series first, if that makes sense. Like coming off Origami King,

people want what they want and if they don't get that they're not going to be happy with it.

Yeah. If that makes any sense. Something to like ease the blow so to speak kind of get people back

in the good graces. I think even if they remade or remastered or whatever one of the first two, I feel like then whatever was next could theoretically be in this style. You have to think too, there's probably a whole generation of kids that grew up and this was their first Paper Mario game. Out of the four million sales, how many of those were back in...

Zoomers first Paper Mario is what you're saying.

Probably. I mean, there has to be a level of nostalgia for this.

For sure, yeah. Again, anecdotally, our mutual friend Grant has told me that exact thing,

He knows people younger than us who when they talk about Paper Mario games

they like they mentioned this one before they mentioned the first two because they were born in the early 2000s and they would have been

five or so and when this came out I see Ricky over here like

Realizing that just having this coming soon for us. Yeah, like in like three years you guys will be in the same place

Once you hit 30, that's what dude. Yeah, it goes down. Yeah, we don't need to get off on that tangent metal

That's another three hour conversation talking about where I'm at mentally with that part of my life.

I'm not prepared for three years from now. I'm not ready.

But will you have a child by then, Max? That's the important question you have to ask me.

That is the question.

That's largely our discussion on

Super Paper Mario.

This is, yeah, a very... this was a unique one to play.

This is a very different game for all the reasons we've obviously spent the last hour talking about.

about. And the end is in sight as we said at the top. Max and I are nearly done with

this series. And again I'm not trying to make that sound as like a thank god it's over type

of deal. But it's more just a relief that we are going to finish it seen through a thing

that we thought of sixteen months ago or whatever. So, but yeah I really enjoyed this one. And

I'm glad that I really enjoyed this one because my fear was that coming off of Origami King

and Color Splash that we would dive into this and it wasn't going to be anything super great.

And I couldn't deal with four...

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm counting you already, Sticker Star.

I couldn't deal with four mediocre Paper Mario games in a row.

So I'm glad that this one has kind of buoyed us here at the end and surprised us in ways

that maybe we were not expecting. And also thanks for playing through it with us Ricky and coming

on the show. I hope that you had fun both returning to it in the year 2021 and coming on here to talk

about it with us. Yeah I've been meaning to play it for a while so it was a good excuse and a fun

excuse. That's what a lot of people have been telling us when they've come on. Really? Even the

people that had, I guess you guys didn't do Origami King with a guest. Yeah we didn't do Origami

King but Tomas came on for Color Splash and he kind of told us this. He's so brave.

He'd been meaning to replay it? Or just play it the first time? Yeah he likes

Wii U stuff. That man played paid \$60 to that video game as well.

He bought it digitally on Wii U. He paid full price. I would have watched a

playthrough if I couldn't have found a copy. Just come into the show and lie. Yeah, love it.

It's great. Just like I do when I do reviews. No, that's a joke. That's not true

I will say out of out of all the guests you got the shortest game

You definitely that was nice the most accessible like quickest to be

Title out of all of them so far in our first season

Ricky if people want to keep up with you moving forward. Where can they find you out on the internet?

easiest place is just on

Twitter at Ricky freck ric ky

I was gonna say they could also follow your work at all the different places but

you probably have a better chance of just finding your work popping up

through Google SEO searches or whatever then that's the truth then just going to find it manually some of these websites that's the truth the life of a full-time freelancer oh it's the I'm not a freelancer and I can tell you that's my life as well so it's the life of nearly anybody involved with this industry nowadays it feels like so yeah be sure to follow Ricky over on Twitter if you want to follow Max and myself and keep up with I mean anything we've got going on or follow along with when we do talk about the show I as we're recording this it's just on I have not even tweeted about the last episode yet I know good job Logan I need to do that follow my Twitter where I don't plug the podcast that I co-host. The only thing you did was retweet my Origami King turned one twit. Max, it's been a busy last week, sir, between trying to prepare for this and then like three other embargos, one embargo I totally missed and have not invi- it's just- there it been. My brain's been on fire, I'm ready to take a nap. Anyway, you can follow me on Twitter, I am @Mormon12, You can follow max on Twitter. He is at max Roberts one four three

Other than that, we will be back next time with our sixth and final episode of the season which will be for super

not super paper Mario paper Mario sticker star on the Nintendo 3ds our

Nintendo 3ds Majora's Mask special edition XL handheld consoles are

Charged and ready to go. I charged mine up last night max. So

We're done recording this we will I mean max has already started. I think I will probably be right behind him here pretty soon

starting it up and

Yeah, and next episode as well just to give you a heads up. We will not have a guest on that one

So it'll just be max and myself

And we will do a breakdown of sticker star and then probably

Maybe have like a larger discussion at the end about all of these games and a larger

Conversation about the series as a whole and where it could go in the future and all that good stuff kind of wrap up this season

That's all you can expect in episode #6, but as for episode #5, thank you for listening and we will see you back here again next time.

Bye bye!

Adios.

Adios!