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Hello everybody and welcome to Chapter Select, a seasonal podcast where we bounce back and

forth between a series of games exploring their evolution, design, and legacy for this season 3E finale. We are here talking about Banjo Kazooie's Grunty's Revenge. I am one of your hosts, Max Roberts, and I am joined as always by Logan Moore. Hi, Logan.

They put the witch in a robot.

It's a great concept.

It's like a concept from that one Spongebob episode where Plankton threatens to put his brain in the robot, except they did that here with Grunty and she's off to get her revenge even though it's not really her sort of.

Anyway, hi.

Hi.

It's her soul and time travel also involved.

It's just the great fusion of things that Max loves.

Time travel, robots, prequels.

It's all the good stuff.

This is hashtag Max content.

It's very, very good.

It's weird that we are...

I feel like our final episodes are always weird with how these seasons work out.

Like our Paper Mario season, it was the 3DS game.

What was it?

Sticker Star, which is kind of like the black sheep of the Paper Mario family amongst many black sheeps in that series.

God of War, we moved things around, I think intentionally, so that we wouldn't end on like...

I think Blades of Olympus? Is that Chains of Olympus or something like that?

Wasn't there that game?

It's Chains of Olympus is the name of the game.

Originally, I think that order would have been one...

Two...

Three, four...

Five...

Spoiler alert, but we're doing future seasons as well,

and we know how those plan out, and some of the ones that we're ending with on those seasons are also kind of funny.

Anyway...

It would have been Ghost of Sparta.

Okay, so maybe not that weird.

I mean, but Ghost of Sparta is still a PSP game. It's, yeah, it's weird.

Yeah, it's funny how some of these back-and-forth ones kind of work out, but anyway, uh...

Banjo-Kazooie Grunty's Revenge. This is our final episode of...

Season 3e with the Banjo series obviously if you're listening to this we have past episodes about Banjo Kazooie, Banjo 2e and Banjo Kazooie Nuts and Bolts

But for Grunty's Revenge today, let's get into the history of this game

Once again like all the other Banjo games in the series it was developed by Rare

It released on the Gameboy Advance, which is the big difference with this entry compared to all of the others

It is not a home console game. It is a

It's weird to say mobile, and I guess it's kind of a mobile game. It did actually come to mobile as well

So so I guess it is technically a mobile game. It released on September 12th

2003 on the Gameboy Advance and it came out on in June 2005 on mobile devices

The game director of this one

We don't know. It's harder to find. It's actually kind of strange that some of these Gameboy games are harder to find

Like credits for people on obviously we could watch the credits themselves

Well, they were all they're just all clumped up even in watching the credits. It's just Gameboy Advance team

Yeah, testing team. So it's the hierarchy is not

clearly established and I wonder if there's a specific reason for that like if there was not like a general like

a single singular vision person with a vision behind this like we're gonna bring Banjo-Kazooie

to Game Boy and here's my vision for doing that and everybody listen to me. Maybe it

was maybe these Game Boy games were much more of a team effort but anyway the producer on

the game was Philip Holt and the music the composer was Jamie Hughes rather than Grant

Kirkhope. Max one thing you just wrote there which is something I was actually going to

mention, this game, as we said, was developed by Rare, but the big difference here was that

it was published by THQ, which is interesting for a couple different reasons, I think most

notably because this was post-Microsoft acquisition, correct?

>> Yes, it was bought, this was after Microsoft purchased Rare, and the reason that they still

put out both Grunty's Revenge and Banjo Pilot on the Game Boy Advance was because Microsoft

wasn't in the mobile space, portable gaming or mobile phones, and so they were able to

cook up this deal with THQ at the time to publish it on the Nintendo platforms, even

though Nintendo is a competitor to Microsoft in that traditional sense.

And that's something that, I don't know if we've mentioned this on other episodes, but

But looking back at the history of Rare, that's something they really continued to do for

a while in the early portion of the 2000s.

Up until, I want to say like, 2009 or 10, that really kind of felt like it came to an

end when they started doing Kinect games, and then they eventually, definitely by the

time Rare Replay came out, I want to say in like 2014, they were totally done doing that stuff.

But a couple years before, in the decade leading up to that, they were still releasing games and some different avenues every now and then.

- Yeah, most notably they did the Donkey Kong Country ports to Gateway Advance.

That was post-Microsoft acquisition.

Saber Wolf they ported to the GBA.

It's Mr. Pants.

So they took a lot.

It's Mr. Pants I think was originally some sort of other notable IP puzzler.

But then that got switched for licensing issues.

So most notably is the Donkey Kong games.

Like a lot of GBA stuff.

Oh, and they did Diddy Kong Racing on the DS.

Which I forgot that they were the studio that made that on the DS port.

They also did, please don't forget, Banjo Pilot.

I mentioned Banjo Pilot at the top.

Did you mention Banjo Pilot?

They also apparently had a Viva Pinata game on Nintendo DS.

They did.

In 2008.

Um.

Yeah, this all really continued up until about 2008 with Nuts and Bolts.

And then it became Kinect stuff.

Kinect, Kinect, Killer Instinct.

They were totally exclusive to Xbox from about Viva Pinata and Nuts and Bolts onward.

Is when they really tied themselves to that platform.

Yup.

Anyway, back to Grunty's Revenge, the last notable thing about the game itself is the Metacritic average.

There's not many reviews of this game out there, there's only 21 to pull from on the internet according to Metacritic.

The game scored a 72 out of 100 overall, which is not terrible.

I think, actually, is that the low- I'm pretty sure that's the lowest in the entire series.

The only one that may...

Oh it is, it's one point lower than Banjo-Tooie's 360 port.

Banjo-Tooie on 360 is a 73.

That's about right.

So this is the lowest rated game in the series, which is weird because jumping off point,

I don't think this game is that bad.

It's not.

It's really not.

handheld Game Boy version of Banjo-Kazooie. It is exactly what they pitch it to be.

Obviously that does not mean it is a 3D platformer by any means. They have to go

with the sort of top-down isometric viewpoint. But it works and it gets the

job done. And a lot of the same moves that are in all the other Banjo games are in

this game. The experience is much shorter for sure. I think I beat this game in

about four hours what about yourself same yeah like three and a half four

hours in there like I I messaged you when I started playing it and I was like

oh I played it for like an hour and an hour and a half and I was like oh I've

already got like 35 or 40 jiggies and you're like you're flying I'm like I'm

not trying to it's just this game is small which was kind of nice because I

just knocked it out in a single weekend and played a lot of it on a plane yeah I

I don't know, what's your general impressions on this game up front before we get too deep into talking about some of the more specific aspects of it?

My impressions of this game are, I love it because I had this game as a kid.

This is the only Banjo game I ever owned before Rare Replay made it a feasible thing.

I'm trying to find a rough time.

Yeah, I was like three and a half, four hours.

I was obsessed with finding a specific number.

But this was one of the few Game Boy Advance games that I convinced my mom to buy me while

shopping at Costco.

And why I saw it was because I knew Banjo from Banjo-Tooie Neighbors, just like I talked about in that episode.

And so I thought, "I like these characters.

I have a Game Boy Advance.

This will be a good game."

Turns out it is a good game.

And so bought it and I played that game for five, six hours as a kid before I would have beat it according to the save file and stuff.

So I remember this game quite fondly and I like the idea of Grunty as a robot.

With a childlike sense of humor I like it, not, you know, narratively or whatever.

It's fun.

It was a fun game.

replaying, so playing the other games first before replaying the one banjo game I truly

owned and beat, I kept wondering in Kazooie and Tooie, not some bolts, it doesn't count,

but where's the backpack whack? Like where, why am I not throwing my backpack down? Eventually

you get it, you get a version of it in Tooie like when you're a solo split from Kazooie

and you can spin your backpack around, but I kept wondering, I was wondering why Grunty's Revenge wasn't implemented sooner in the series.

So.

Yeah, well this game tears away half of its namesake for, what is it, a level?

Two levels?

Level and a half.

You get Kazooie halfway through the word.

Or, yeah, on uh, Bregol Beach, which is, I guess, makes sense, because she's a...

Yeah, let's get into just talking about the different worlds and stuff. I feel like that's usually a good

Jumping off point and we'll do our typical thing

We've been doing the rest of the season here, which is ranking all the levels

Obviously we have way fewer levels to rank this time around which is probably a good thing. Yeah in all honesty

but how did you feel about the levels in this because

my general

Take was that most of them were a little too similar to levels. We've seen in some of the other Banjo games

Which makes sense I mean again you got spiral mountain making a return here which

It just feels like it has to happen to some degree that levels in every Banjo game

But even outside of that you know you got your beach level which is reminiscent of

What's the letter true? Yeah, you got your treasure trove Cove style level with pre gold beach

You got your swamp style level, you've got your harbor level where you're swimming around and stuff like that

And then you've got your fire and ice sort of world mixed into one

So this game very much plays the greatest hits of the Banjo-Kazooie series

I think and I wouldn't say any of the levels are bad, but

None of them really stood out to me in a major way. The farm level is honestly maybe the most unique

Because it's a farm. It's wholly original. Yeah

I... it's interesting I think in two ways.

It's a fusion of Kazooie and Tooie.

It has that ability of coming after those games to mix and match from those games together.

Specifically, I think the biggest example of that is the Freezing Furnace,

where it is like Hailfire Peaks, but also a little bit of Grunty's Revenge kind of mashed together.

And then the other thing is,

as a weird sort of prequel,

I find it easy to imagine these are the same places,

just earlier versions of them before they are decimated

or changed over however long this time gap is.

It's easy for me to see Spillers Harbor turning into,

what is that Kazooie level that's really bad?

the ship. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I can't remember the stinking name of it. Oh my gosh, why can't

we not remember this game? The second to last level of the game, Rusty Bucket Bay. Yeah,

it's easy to see them as related and I understand development-wise they chose that because it's

like Rusty Bucket Bay. Bad Magic Bayou is like Bubble Goop Swamp but also a haunted

house in there so it's cool for them to mix and match those levels and let the imagination

kind of go with, "Oh, this is where this came from," or that or whatever, but it's also

not too heavily tied into the lore. It's not obsessed with being, "This is the origin of

Clanker's Caffern," or anything like that. You know, "This is where King Cole came from."

You know, it's just thematically tied together.

I almost feel like, not to, well, yeah, let's just get into talking about the story here,

but we'll come back to the levels in a bit once we rank them.

But you mentioned how the game does take place in the past, but it doesn't choose to introduce

certain things way ahead of time.



I feel like that's almost a way more interesting idea though that this game should have gone for in some ways.

Because as it stands, I really don't understand what the point of the whole going back in time thing is.

Is there a purpose to this?

You just kind of go back in time so that...

I get that, narratively, the purpose is for Grunty to be like, "Oh, if I win in the past, then Banjo-Kazooie will never exist and I win, hahaha."

Like, I get that point behind it, but there's really nothing else to it besides that.

Like, it feels very strange, I guess, to introduce time travel into Banjo-Kazooie, of all things, and then you don't really do anything with it, like, it's just like, "Oh, we're in the past now, and we'll do the same thing we always do which is beat the latest version of this witch and then

we'll go back forward in time afterward. Like that's about all it really does with it. I feel

like they could have played around with some of the whole time jumping elements maybe a little

bit more than they do. It's weird when you think about it. It's weird on paper because having Grunty come in a robot suit is enough to like spark the plot of we have to fight this robot version of Grunty now, let's run around the Isle of Hags and fight the robot. It's robot but also we're time traveling now to fight. So that is kind of just this interesting like this would be a cool idea. It also does help this game become entirely not forgettable but Rare can ignore it later on if they want to.

Because essentially, narratively, it's a wash.

Because they time travel back,

and I guess like 50 banjos show up,

so maybe it isn't a wash, but like--

- Yeah, that just kinda ends on that note too.

- That's why Nuts and Bolts doesn't have to acknowledge it.

And actually Nuts and Bolts doesn't acknowledge this game,

which is a little surprising, 'cause it is a Rare game.

- Yeah.

- So it's cool, it's cute.

We demand answers about the banjo lore, Rare.

Why? Why is Humble one but not in this game?

Where is she wasn't introduced yet?

Because technically this takes place between games.

But she could have been there in the present.

She could have, but they didn't introduce her to until Tooie, which this game takes place before.

This is true.

It's like, it's a pre-sequel.

It's a pre-sequel.

Yeah.

There's baby bottles.

I think there's some more stuff they could have done, especially on the character front.

I think that this game is very much lacking with those memorable characters.

And there is usually a character or two that shows up in each level per usual, but for the life of me,

I cannot tell you any of them off the top of my head unless I am mistaken.

Is there anybody super memorable that you can remember in this game?

-Bottles' dad or grandfather? -Yeah.

I remember there's a Bregole on Bregole Beach who's like, "Please help me do this thing!"

And then you got, like, that's about-

There's a dolphin somewhere?

Yeah.

And I only remember a dolphin because the dolphin was in Rusty Bucket Bay.

Yeah, and again, in a series with very...

familiar, or maybe not familiar, but very recognizable faces and very charming side characters that show up at all times,

that's not really included here. And again, this is,

I get it, this is a Game Boy Advance game, so it's not going to have the same sort of charm and goofs that some of the other characters we've seen in some of the other Banjo games.

But still, um...

Yeah, I don't know, it's just, it's very...

It's very strange that they have these big ideas with time travel and souls going and robots and things like that, and then they don't really have anything else going on with the writing that's ever...

Any point all that interesting with the characters. I didn't I didn't even think the writing for Banjo and Kazooie like it was fine in this game. I don't know didn't you?

We'll say they brought Grunty's rhyming back. I think that's a big win. Yes, very good

She lost it. It said apparently when you beat up her soul, she loses the rhyme

I guess and that explains how it's lost in Tui

Sure. I do think this is definitely a more engaging, or engaging maybe too strong a word.

It's a more interesting plot than Nuts and Bolts. Like, come away by video game land and play games before Grunty boxes packages up. So, it's at least unique and stands out in the banjo, you know, world and lore. For sure.

Plungo's there, you know, he's the one that made the robot, and he does this whole potion thing which does come from Tooie, so that's kind of neat.

Yeah.

The Jinjos kind of get slight, Jinjanator I suppose gets a bit more of a, little bit of backstory there.

Yeah, if anything we kind of learn where that Jinjanator statue comes from out of nowhere at the end of the original Banjo Kazooie.

Because otherwise it doesn't make any sense, it just shows up out of nowhere.

It's like, "I am the Jijo-nator!"

Yeah, I will knock her off this tower now.

Let's talk about the gameplay here then a little bit, um, before we go back to the worlds.

We'll do the ranking of the worlds last, um, 'cause I feel like that's kind of how we've done things in previous episodes.

Um, gameplay-wise, again, I mentioned this before, but there's really not a whole lot to mention here, I think, that's vastly different from the other games.

I think the thing I'm most impressed about is that it didn't ever feel like they cut corners with leaving out certain moves that are in

the 3D Banjo games that are in this one

It's pretty much a one-to-one of all the moves that you see in those games appearing in this one even with the various egg types

And stuff like that like they really go deeper than I thought they would before I started this game in terms of the move set

That they give you

Yeah, I I too was surprised actually I

I really didn't remember a bunch of moves from this game except the backpack whack.

I was surprised that things like the Talon Trott, the backflip, were all here.

It was cool.

The shooting, I didn't expect shooting to be here like it was.

It's cool to see- The green launch pads are back in it too.

Flying's really the only thing that I guess isn't in this.

Yeah.

And what's cool is they translate this all into a 2D isometric view.

It reminds me a lot of Phantom Hourglass.

And the way that Phantom Hourglass took...

2D Zelda had been an established formula, obviously, up when Phantom Hourglass came out.

This wasn't new.

But it was, you know, top-down, but all controlled with the stylus.

and the way that they translated traditional Zelda moves to a new way to interact with the game,

I always thought worked fairly well. I enjoyed that game. And Spear tracks also mechanically.

And I think this is a similar design, like appreciation, in the way that this is a Banjo-Kazooie game. It feels like it. The moves are there, the worlds are there, the puzzles are there, the mini games are there, it really is banjo condensed, or not even, I guess condensed because just the scope of it is smaller, but it is the full, you would expect to find this in a full scale banjo game, and it's here. I think that's really impressive. That's the one thing that continued to surprise me about this game the whole way through, is that when I first picked it up and I started playing in front of you, I was expecting it to be something wildly different, and I got about 20 minutes in and I'm like, "Oh no, this is just a straight up banjo game like normal, like I've come to expect from all the other games in this series." And I don't know what I was, like I said I was expecting something else, I don't know, I just didn't know what to expect because I didn't think that they would be able to mirror that sort of formula this well on Game Boy.

And it's, you know, that's a kind of a video game industry thing, especially when we were growing up in this era of Game Boy games and things like that, movie tie-in games, like There were all sorts of stuff was fraught with,

is this good or is this not so good?

And how did they move this from one platform to another?

I mean, other games that were also on the GBA, there were Crash Bandicoot games, Spyro games.

- Yeah.

- And I'm speaking, I haven't played those.

Those may not have translated super well.

- Well, I can tell you the Crash games were bad for sure.

- Uh-huh, sure.

I'm sure they were.

(laughing)

So that's one thing that's really, that's a big accomplishment I think to successfully capture the feeling of a well established 3D game and translating it to 2D.

Kind of an inverse of Ocarina of Time in that way of going from 3D to 2D instead of 2D to 3D.

Let's talk about some of the other aspects of the gameplay which I guess would just be

Like minigames, let's touch on minigames here for a second because I think, yeah, there's not a lot of them

And I don't think any of them are particularly good

They were more often than not

I want to say easy, but the fishing game

Terrible, hate it, awful. Fishing got really bad when it

Took away your ability to see what you were catching. Yeah, what is the point of that one?

It's just like blindly fish and good luck. I think it was the speed of the shadow was at least now

I was interpreting that I that was not fun. That's not a fair mechanic change-up, but

No, I thought it was interesting that like the boating go-karting mechanic like that minigame is in other banjo games

Where you are in a car a vehicle kind of coasting around shooting stuff at people

But the slide and the fishing were entirely unique

The slide wasn't too bad, but it was just straightforward and pretty, I don't know, pretty easy to understand and nothing much to it.

I appreciate that they put mini-games in the game, you know?

Because that feels like something that would be cut, but they didn't.

They found three types and incorporated them and found enough variation between making the slide a race between fishing different types of things or points and

negatives and then the boating one was only a couple of times. And the shooting

gallery one too. That's right, I keep forgetting that. The pirate ship and stuff like that. And the grantees, there was a boss fight like that.

That was cool. Those are, yeah, nothing to write home about but they're trying to

do different things I think they just recycled things a little bit too much especially for how few worlds are in the game in the first place to have like three different instances of the fishing game. Okay that's I mean how many jiggies is that I mean that five percent of the jiggies in that game were tied to the fishing it's a little too much I would say. Yeah but I also wonder I don't know this but I wonder how much of that was mobile oriented too like yeah this would work well on a phone, so let's do it like this.

I would love to see the phone version of this game.

I'll find you a video, I'll send it to you.

I'll put a link in the show notes.

It's a thing.

It's a site.

How did we used to play games on singular razors?

Remember that company, Singular?

Where they were bought by AT&T?

Oh my gosh, yeah, that was iPhone with Singular.

Yeah, that was the thing back in the day.

I wanted to talk about the difficulty spike.

At least that I thought.

I died the most in this game.

This is the banjo game I died the most in.

- Really?

I didn't have any problems. - I died a lot.

I think it was the last two worlds specifically.

- Were you visiting the bee lady

and trading in your honeycombs?

- I was, but I just was, I was very prone to death.

And there was,

The spike in Spillers Harbor and Freezing Furnace I thought was pretty aggressive.

The curve was pretty harsh.

Yeah, uh, they definitely get more tough around that time than enemies do.

They hit way harder and if you do not have all of the honeycombs and you're not going to upgrade your health bar it is pretty, it is pretty staggering how hard that they can hit you.

I didn't have, I wasn't, I mean I died a fair amount but it wasn't anything where it was noticeable for me I guess, where I was like, "Wow, this game is kicking my butt right now."

So huh, that's interesting.

I mean obviously it didn't inflate the amount of time that you played the game if you still got in around the same sort of time as me, but was it more just an annoyance for you then in that regard?

Yeah, I think a part of it was obviously later enemies hit harder, so two or three honeycombs, But also the respawn rate in this game is super fast.

If you just like walk a little bit off the screen, everything's back.

That was particularly frustrating with the wall of fire that surrounded the switch to Grunty's little castle launcher.

And so if you even nicked a fireball, you lost health, and if you walked away it was bad.

the jiggy in Spillers Harbor in the top part of the map where you have to start a timer, run to the middle, jump on top of that building, start another timer, and then you have to run up more buildings and it's like all timed and you have to do it super quickly. That took me a while. I would get within a frame or two away and it would disappear. That took me a bit. I eventually got that one, but that one was probably the hardest jiggy in the game for me, for sure. Bosses is the last aspect of gameplay I did want to touch on.

I think for me, one of the things when we played Tooie, I don't know if we really talked



about it too much, but Clungo, his boss fights obviously get repeated and recycled a couple times throughout that game. They do that in this game, but it's with essentially all the boss fights for the most part, or to some degree, like even the final boss fight has elements that you've seen before in the previous Grunty fights.

And then all the Klungo fights kind of build off of themselves.

So there's really not a whole lot to say, I think, in regard to the bosses.

Luckily, I found them all to be easy, like you're talking about difficulty.

I did not have any trouble with them.

I know I texted you and told you this, but I got to the final boss and I got to the final phase of Grunty and I had one honeycomb left and she had her full health bar and I was like, "Well this sucks, I'm not gonna be able to beat this." And I did end up beating it without getting touched in that entire final phase of the fight, which, thank god, I would have been very upset if I had to restart it. But, uh, but yeah, I, the bosses are, I don't know, they're fine, they're serviceable, I guess I shouldn't expect ten different bosses.

Banjo-Kazooie's never really been a boss-heavy series in the first place, so that's not something

I think of when I think of these games anyway, but yeah. I don't know. What was your thoughts?

I appreciate that Clungo is a boss. It keeps that consistency with Tooie. I like that.

But it was all super easy. The ghost? Like why is there a pirate ship ghost? I don't know. That seemed like really weird and out of the blue. And was that also the only quote unquote, additional boss.

It was Grunty, Clungo, and a ghost.

Like that just feels a little weird.

Grunty herself, everything up to her castle's super easy.

There's no hard phase or what have you.

It's all super straightforward, three hits, memorize the pattern and go.

The final boss version of her though,  
little bit dragged out, little long in the tooth,  
and again they hit pretty hard.

So the first phase is easy.

There's a quiz.

Can't forget that there, it's a Banjo game,  
so there has to be a quiz, right?

- Yeah.

- And then Klungo in the middle of it,  
in his most annoying form of invisible shield,  
and summons enemies that could only be killed by the gun.

At least in my experience, it was only with the gun.

And then of like a 12 hit final fight with Grunty,

I think they drag.

For a game that has a pretty brisk pace, the final fight did not feel very brisk.

And I have to admit here, I used the safe state because I was just so annoyed with...

Did you have trouble with the final boss?

Were you not in my camp of being able to beat it in one try?

I was not.

I would get to Klungo and he would take all of my health.

And it's not because Klungo is hard,

it's because I'd get cornered by those floaty ghost things

while trying to find ammo that would hurt them

and take two damage and then Klungo would throw a thing.

So I'd go into Grunty like you with one thing

and I couldn't last.

So when I got to Grunty with a decent chunk of health,

I used the analog pockets save state feature.

- Nice.

- And just did it until I won.

So, you know, game shame or not, I don't know, I don't have the skills childhood Max had, so I used save states to get through that fight.

But I did beat it, credits rolled.

I win?

A win's a win.

I used save states back in the day on Millennial Gaming Speak when we played Mega Man 2, because

there's no earthly way I was going to beat that naturally by myself, so all is forgiven.

That's funny though.

The power of the analog pocket, otherwise you wouldn't have been able to beat the game.

Regarding the final boss fight too though, we have to bring up the quiz.

Because of course, as Log says in Banjo Kazooie Nuts and Bolts, it's not a real Banjo game unless we put a quiz in it at the end.

I really did not think one would be in this game though.

I guess I should be...

Is there one in Banjo Pilot?

I mean, I feel like there has to be somewhere.

I think it was quite possible.

What did you think about the quiz showing up?

Did you like it any more than the other ones?

I don't know.

It felt very forced in this time around compared to the other ones, for sure.

More forced than Tooie?

Being in the middle of the boss fight?

Nuts and Bolts was kind of forced too with how they splice it in between the sections

of that mission you're doing.

I wish there were more questions.

There was only three questions.

Yeah there's not many.

Well I think if you get them right you move on if I'm correct.

Yeah, I just wish there was more.

Honestly, it was fun.

I liked that it showed up.

It kept, again, it's not a banjo game without a quiz.

It's part of that experience.

So I'm glad that they at least put some effort into it.

It's definitely the easiest quiz of the bunch, just because it's so short and the depth of it wasn't tough.

Where is this?

What is this sound?

Things like that.

But there's a quiz in it, which makes it a real Banjo game.

Would you like to talk about the music briefly and the sounds and all that stuff before we go back and rank the levels here right quick?

Do you have anything grand that you want to declare about the music?

Because I really don't.

I think the soundtrack in this game is good.

These Game Boy era soundtracks have like this... this vibe to them that I mean maybe it is just limited by the hardware itself and what you can do on it, but it really pulled that out of me.

It made me remember some of those older Game Boy scores and what those sounded like on the hardware more than it really made me think about Banjo as a whole or anything like that.

That was kind of my feelings on it.

But the music is totally different for the most part.

They don't lean on the music from the other games, which I think is actually kind of interesting because the other games do that.

I think there are homages to it.

Yeah, there are for sure.

I think it calls back to it.

The only thing I really wrote down about sound was the sound effects, where some of them were deeper than you would expect, but others were spot on.

I found that a little bit interesting.

I don't know if that was the emulation on the pocket.

That's quite possible, but I feel like

it was fairly authentic there,

'cause the rest of it seemed pretty fine.

It was just weird that some sounds from Kazooie

or moves or banjo would sound deeper,

and then a Jinjo would have the perfect pitch of Jinjo.

So, that's interesting.

I think they caught the spirit of it while being limited with the hardware, which again, is kind of the theme of this game.

It's the spirit of Banjo on limited hardware.

I wonder what the mobile game sounds like.

That's a good point.

I didn't think about that.

Maybe they had to come up with a soundtrack that worked on both the Game Boy and Razer phones of the day.

Yeah.

I mean looking at the footage of this, the mobile game is wildly different.

Like shockingly different.

Does it look better or worse than God of War?

Honestly worse.

I think Betrayal.

I think God of War Betrayal looks way better than this.

You can tell from the thumbnail.

God of War Betrayal was only played on the most top tier of Sony phones.

I'm watching this now too and yeah that's quite the different game.

Well it looks like it has to move on a singular axis other than...

It's not isometric in that traditional way.

It's up, down, left, and right.

But man somebody's even like wow.

Some of like the writing in this game looks like it was just like pasted on.

Very strange.

Yeah this game's wild.

I think this is a whole different game honestly.

Maybe we need to play this for our fifth and final episode.

Talk about this version of the game solely.

Um.

That's pretty crazy.

Alright, let's do our due diligence here one last time and rank the levels.

Again we've got Spiral Mountain, Cliff Farm, Bregal Beach, Bad Magic Bayou, Spillers Harbor, Freezing Furnace, and Grunty's Castle.

I say let's not count Grunty's Castle because you know that's just a boss.

I would like to say let's count spiral mountain though because this is a pretty fleshed out level on its own that they put ten jiggies in

And a hundred notes and five hundred notes. Yeah, it's totally a level on its own so I do say we include it with the proper group here so of these six which ones I

To be honest they all are very clumped together for me more so than normal I

I... as far as... do you want to start at the top or the bottom? What do you feel?

Whatever, however, whatever way you are feeling most passionately. Just tell me which ones you're

thinking. I think... I think Bregal Beach is the best level in the game. And this is why.

Because I think the environments are diverse. There's a quarry, the dilapidated castle with the pirate ship, there's the underwater portion.

This game has underwater segments

that are actually not too terrible and short.

Then there's the beach stuff and saving the Bregols.

I think Bregal Beach is the most diverse.

It also features, you know, part of the level

is without Kazooie and then you get Kazooie through it.

So I think that's mechanically pretty interesting.

So I think Bregal Beach is the best.

I mean going off of that I was going to say I think Cliff Farm should be near the top as well because it is another level without Kazooie

Which I think is interesting in some ways because the series has never done that before so it's kind of

Interesting to see what things they throw at you

I also think that that level compared to all the others is like I said before the only really unique

Level in this whole game that I can't think of that's from anything else

It's more short. It's compact, but I think the way that they segment everything is a lot better to spoiler alert

I think the worst level in the game is bad magic by you because I don't like how everything is segmented in that level

It feels like in things are in - yeah, it's - it's all - it's very disjointed

Compared to a lot of the other levels in the game

I feel like cliffharming everything kind of feels naturally like you don't ever feel lost. You know where to go

I'm fine with putting briggle at one because I do agree with a lot of things you said on that one

So you want to put cliff farm it - yeah

I say throw bad magic at the dead last you want to put that six. Yeah, is it six? Yes

Yes, because yeah, I do not I mean we can talk about that one a little bit more

I think the haunted house stuff is cool there that they throw that in there

And I think that's because it is tight like that that

Portion of the level makes sense. It has a flow to it. I like that mumbo turn. We haven't talked about this at all

I like that mumbo turns you into a candle

Which is probably one of the more unique things you could turn into in the whole series

I like you turn into a tank and I want an octopus is that which yeah, there's not a mouse

Mouse him

I think that's it. I think there's a tank mouse candle octopus and then you can turn back into a bear

- Yeah.

- So, that's about it.

- It's nice that Banjo, I mean yeah,

he does get transformations.

Mumbo's pad has like a Simon Says thing in the middle

and some fur rugs.

Seems pretty comedic.

Mumbo.

- Yeah.

- It's nice that it's there.

I like the candle and the octopus the most.



- Yeah.

Yeah, I just wish there was a little bit more  
to do with the octopus.

I can't think of anything that you really do with it.

you can just jump higher out of water when you're that and then you can shoot.

I mean you can get in dangerous water.

Yeah.

And you can get in dangerous water too.

Yeah.

But there's not a whole lot to do with it.

I think you can also backtrack with the transformation.

So I wouldn't be surprised.

So like you could go back to Brielle beach and probably swim with unlimited  
air as the octopus or something.

Um, I would put, I think I would put Spiral Mountain third personally, because

I think that that's a pretty solid overworld again, it's larger.

than all of the other ones and it's

a little harder to...maybe not...it is kind of difficult to get around at times

but as far as overworlds go I was actually pretty

impressed by how it keeps you engaged with the little tasks

tasks that they throw around in between going from level to level

and I was more impressed by that

compared to the things in Spillers Harbor and

freezing furnace by comparison.

- Yeah, I agree with you.

I think the cool thing about Spyro Mountain

is the further you got in the game,

the more of it opened up.

It's like an ogre, you know?

Then you got layers, there's onion, like an onion.

- Exactly.

- So the further you got in, the more there was to explore,  
things to discover,

Jinjos, Jiggies, all to pad out

and help you unlock more levels.

I think it was a pretty well designed overworld that was also fairly easy to remember.

Like the farm is right next to the Jiggy temple and then the beach is further up.

And so like you just progressively get further from the temple.

So you always kind of know where you need to go.

So I like Spiral Mountain.

It does a good job of having you move out.

Like I said, the world is very big, but it doesn't inundate you with

information up front. It's like, just go here first, and then we'll go to this world, which is the farm,

and then we're gonna make you go a little bit further out, and then a little bit further out.

It kind of slowly introduces to you just how big this world is, and it obviously gates those things off because you don't have moves to access them. Spillers Harbor and Freezing Furnace. I...

I see Spillers Harbor as five and Freezing Furnace as...

I think I'm fine with that because Spillers Harbor has the most annoying jiggy in the game

Which is the one we talked about before which is that timed one. I also think Spillers Harbor

Like I mentioned with bad magic by you is just there's too many

Different things going on. There's a huge pool of water in the middle of the level

But then you can go north and there's a bunch of random

Houses and things like that and then but if you go off to the side

There's another beach area and a sand castle and yeah the other thing with this one, too

and maybe this is kind of cool or kind of not, but you mentioned how you can transform into some of the other creatures that Mumbo can turn you into. This level requires for a couple of the jiggies that you do that, like you have to go turn into a mouse and then you can go to the sand castle, which is kind of cool but also like I like it when these games only make you turn into the creature that is confined to that certain level if that makes any sense because I feel like they do some more interesting things with it and And that's not to say that this level doesn't, because there's a whole sequence with the octopus where you're swimming down the river thing.

River, yeah, the sewer pipe, yeah.

Yeah.

So they do things with that and this, but also, I don't know.

I don't, there's something in my brain that's broken with the idea of like, "I'm gonna transform into this thing I learned three levels ago and then go do other tasks that involve that."

It just, yeah, it feels too disjointed and Freezing Furnace, I think the ice part of it feels disjointed, but the fire lava volcano industry part is pretty, is fairly straightforward.

Yeah, I like the grunty industries part of it.

The icy stuff, not so much.

But also it's the last level in the game and you only need 50 or 60, I forget, whatever, jiggies.

I think 50.

To fight.

And so it's one that at least I felt fine not finishing all the way.

So I would just, I just made sure I had enough jiggies to go do the fight.

So that helped alleviate the pressure of it feeling disjointed.

Yeah.

So that makes our official list then.

Number one, Bregal Beach, two, Cliff Farm, three, Spiral Mountain, four, Freezing Furnace,

five, Spillers Harbor, six, Bad Magic Bayou.

Turns out the bad level is the bad one.

The bad one, yeah.

I'll give it to Rare, though.

They have good names for all of their levels.

All these levels that we've been naming and ranking throughout all of these games have all largely been pretty good.

nuts and bolts notwithstanding because there's some ones that happen.

I mean I like Terrarium of Terror, I think that's a really good name.

That one's okay, except the "terror" part of it I'm not really sure what they're...

I don't know, that level's weird.

It's a good name but I don't know how it applies to the level.

Yeah, that's kind of everything about Grunty's Revenge I think we wanted to talk about here unless you had anything else.

With this being our final episode of the season we are going to have kind of a full wrap-up discussion for the series as a whole, but did you want to say anything else about Grunty's Revenge here?

Apparently there are two versions of the mobile game as well.

I didn't know how deep this mobile game rabbit hole went.

We should have researched way more about the mobile game.

We should have just played the mobile game.

It's the, there's Banjo-Kazooie Grunty's Revenge Mobile, which is like a way cut down version of the game both in size of worlds and like there's no minigames but then there's also

Banjo Kazooie Grunty's Revenge missions which is a mobile port of the eight minigames originating

from the game so they like double dipped there but it's there are only 500 notes 28 jiggies

15 gingos and 10 moves the best thing about me watching this mobile footage over here

is that every time Banjo in this video picks up a note, the game like freezes for about half a second and then it continues from there. That, to be fair, that could be the emulator that is being used in the footage. It could, but I could also 1000% see it just being the, I mean- Apparently there's like no Mumbo transformations in the game. Like the entire lava section of freezing furnace is just gone. This sounds wild. And it was... so this says this was developed by Sabiko? But then like another... but another page, Grunty's Missions at least says it was developed by Rare. That is wild, man. I'm... my mind is being blown by the the depth of this so maybe we'll do a surprise bonus episode where we just play this game this version of the game possibly spoiler alert we really won't okay so let's uh as I said this is the end of season three of our banjo season here at chapter select if you've listened all these episodes thank you so much we appreciate it but before we go let's do what we normally do here when wrap-up season just talk about all these games as a whole this whole franchise and Banjo Kazooie's legacy and things like that I mean I guess yeah keep it simple move out of the gate what do you think is this franchises lasting legacy at the moment it's so strange because it's clearly beloved I mean yeah but I

- When we're recording this is, you know,  
we're here in June now of 2022.

Microsoft just had their big E3 summer showcase,  
but like going into it,  
there were rumors of Banjo and Kazooie will return here.

It was trending the day of the showcase.

And people love these characters in this world  
and some of these games.

No Banjo game showed up at that summer showcase, which probably also led to part of its trending.

But I can't really, there are few series I can think of, maybe not few, maybe if I sat

down and I came up with a list.

But it is definitely one of those series that has few games.

Like the game to appreciation and love ratio is like very low game count but super high fan base and appreciation. And I think that is probably its legacy in the sense that this kind of paved the way for character-based 3D platformers, which was huge, obviously in the N64, but also going into the PS2 and GameCube era and things like that. And now

Now we're sort of getting the renaissance of that with indies in Yooka-Laylee, A Hat in Time, like these types of, the influence of this type of game is still ongoing, yet

there hasn't been a quote unquote proper Banjo-Kazooie game since 2000, 22 years. And so I think

that's kind of shocking. And the other shocking thing I just want to say again is that I'm surprised at how much Nuts and Bolts actually is kind of a banjo game. When you really think about it, it's just weird with this... It should have been a different game, but it

does have that banjo spirit. It's just muddled by a really great creation system. It's three different types of games at once and it muddies those waters. But I am surprised at how not as terrible Nuts and Bolts was. So it's good. I think for me the more surprising revelation

here as we've played all of these is that Tooie was bad in my opinion. Like Tooie put Tooie finally playing through Tooie changed my perspective of this franchise like in the moment we're recording this E3 things just happened not really E3 things but whatever summer games junk just happened Xbox just had its 2022 briefing the other day and before it happened, like the day before there was rumors and reports circling that, uh, "Oh,

there's gonna be a Banjo-Kazooie game revealed this year." And I feel like we hear this every year in some capacity, but this year it seemed like it was actually, uh, like possible, and it was maybe going to happen. And usually when I see those types of reports every year,

I get super excited, and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, maybe this is the year it's finally

happening, they're saving Banjo-Kazooie!" This year when I saw it though, I was like,

Hmm, yeah, I don't know man.

Because I think playing through all of these games just made me realize that I don't know how you bring this back.

And currently I think that's the big, I don't want to say it's Banjo's legacy, but where we're at currently in time, one of the lasting

things that surrounds Banjo-Kazooie at this point in time is when is there going to be a new game? Because it's been roughly 15 years since the last one.

And...

Having played through all of these now, I don't know what a Banjo-Kazooie game in 2022 looks like.

We- you and I talked about it the other day.

I feel like the thing that makes the most sense is to just, like, remake the original game, and then go from there and maybe try to do something new afterwards, but...

Like, even with Yooka-Laylee, which came out a couple years ago,

that was a really faithful Banjo-Kazooie game in a lot of ways, and people kind of trashed it in some ways.

They're like, "No, this isn't good. This isn't like Banjo-Kazooie at all. This isn't what we like."

And that game did have problems that, like, again, it kind of had some of the "Tooie" problems where it was a little too big and kind of cumbersome at times.

Some of those levels just are not good in that game.

But outside of it, other than that, I thought it was pretty faithful, but people were pretty lukewarm in response to it.

So I think the legacy of this is yes, this is one of the forefathers of character-based platforming franchises.

For sure. This series sparked the craze of those in the early 2000s and late 90s.

The original Banjo-Kazooie I stand by is a better game than Super Mario 64. For my money, I think it is really one of the best platformers ever made.

And so, by that accord, I think that it definitely deserves its status as one of the platformers, one of the titans of the genre or what not.

But yeah, I also don't know how they bring it back at this point in time and that was the thing I was going to

throw to you next is, do you think we'll see Banjo come back and if so

how do they do that or approach it or like  
should it come back at this point? Like have your opinions changed on that? Like  
because before we did this season I know you and I were  
very gung-ho about hoping that Microsoft would bring it back and now I'm  
less convinced unless they do it right but I don't know what that looks like.  
I think it can come back  
and I say that because it's been done for some  
character platform or franchises specifically I think of Sly Cooper.  
Sly 4 Thieves in Time truly is a great successor  
to the original Sly trilogy. Super  
capture the spirit made by completely different development team.  
look at Crash 4. I know you don't like the Crash Bandicoot games, but Crash 4 is praised  
for being in the vein of that original trilogy, which is really hard to do 20 years later.  
And it can be done. The other thing is, I feel like 3D character action platformer type games  
are kind of not just making a comeback in the indie scene, I was kind of thinking about it more.  
look at Astro Bot, not only Rescue Mission in VR,  
but the packing game on PS5.  
- Yeah.  
- That's a fantastic little game.  
It feels great, literally in the hands,  
but it's a rock solid character platformer  
with fun moments and beautiful graphics.  
It can-- - And I think,  
I think a lot of that too,  
sorry to chime in with Astro Bot specifically,  
I think that's because that game has more narrow focus.  
Obviously so much so that the game itself is very short,



But I think it shows that if you keep things a little tight  
and don't allow them to become so blown up like  
Tooie is or like Yooka-Laylee is,  
I think people will, would love a concise six to seven hour  
Banjo-Kazooie game that's got maybe seven to eight worlds  
in it or something like that, that you can not beat  
in an afternoon and just collect every, like,  
that's what people want I think.

- It would need to just be in the vein of Banjo-Kazooie.

Like, 'cause the first game.

It just needs, and I'm not,

A remake would be a good starting place  
just to be fresh with it and look even better.

But it's gotta be in that vein of, frankly,  
Banjo-Kazooie and Super Mario Odyssey.

Now, Super Mario Odyssey is massive  
because it has a ton of worlds, 900 moons to collect,  
which doesn't feel overwhelming when you go back.

And when I think about that,  
that quantity doesn't seem insane.

I don't want the 30 hour Banjo-Kazooie game that's Odyssey.

I want the shorter one, but the vein of design.

You know, there are some worlds in Odyssey  
that are super small and tight.

I think that sort of approach for Banjo would feel great  
and can be done.

Other platformers are popping up in my head,

Super Lucky's Tale, which was VR and normal 3D.

There is space for this,

and Banjo and Kazooie paved the way for these types of games.

And I think that having it come back into this space

and understanding what makes it good,

would, it can be successful that way.

The question is who would make that?

Is it Rare again?

Rare could do it.

- Rare doesn't want to do it.

- I don't think they do.

They're on Sea of Thieves, Everwild.

- The whole studio is just different.

Like that's why Playtonic went off and was like,

"We're gonna make Yooka-Laylee

because we're the people that made Banjo, so we would like to keep making this type of game.

Rare is different now.

And even if there are people there that have been with the company for life or whatever,

they are... they're just in a different era.

So yeah, another studio would need to come along.

Heck, maybe even Playtonic would get the license and do it or something like that. I don't know.

The thing is, Banjo is such a beloved franchise that,

like we're talking about, like, which developer would do it? I don't know.

There is 1000% developers out there that are fully capable of taking this on and would jump at the opportunity to work with Microsoft in a second party fashion to create a new Banjo game.

And if the right pitch came along, I have to believe that Microsoft would greenlight such a project because they know that people want to do it.

Or they know that people want a new game, but I just think they don't want to expend a lot of resources towards it, especially with one of their own internal studios.

I'm sure Phil doesn't want to go to Rare and be like "Hey, we need you to make a new Banjo game" or something like that.

And that's not even how they operate anyway, because again, it seems like most of the studios just kind of pitch what they want to make,

and Xbox is like "Okay, sure, make that game then."

Yeah, I guess the one last thing I want to say in regards to any potential revivals,

if any future developers that are going to make a Banjo-Kazooie game are listening to this for some reason and are wanting to know what real fans want,

For the love of all that is holy, even in a potential remake of the first game, just use the character model that is in Smash.

Or something very similar to that.

Because that character model is great.

It is different, but it is-

And it's a million times better than Nuts and Bolts.

Yes. It is different, but it is true to what the characters are.

And it like my fear is that if they remake this game or something they're like they're gonna be like let's

Put 4k textures on everything and make banjo have real hair that flows in the wind. No

Nothing like that use the cartoon

Character models and make them look cartoony and stylized and again the smash character model is perfect

I don't want to see real hair on banjo's face

That's not something I want it's like when it's like when Nintendo's like our technology is getting so good

You can see the strands of hair on Mario's mustache. I'm like no one wants to see that he's a cartoon character

Yeah, it'd be like if they mean Mickey Mouse like all hairy and they're like he's a real mouse he's got hair all over him

It's like no one wants to see this

So yeah, I

The I think the last thing to really put a cap on the legacy before we wrap up here is the the smash reveal if you watch that smash reveal at the Nintendo Store in New York the hootin hollerin the jumping up and down if you watch it in the e3 press room in 2019 while sitting next to me you would have heard some sounds come from my mouth and that I think is what's so cool about Banjo and Kazooie is that it's still so beloved even 20 plus years later it's that's remarkable and I think that's I think that's why we did yeah he's in I think that's what's so special about it you know the duo is the reason yeah for sure for people though still be clamoring every summer around June saying "Xbox please make this the year you bring back Banjo!" and that we haven't had a core Banjo game in 15 years I think really speaks to how much people do like this series. Would people buy it?

I don't know but it's surely something that would uh it's surely something that people would play

and be excited about. Again, Double Fine is owned now if you want to give it to an internal studio.

There you go. Double Fine Banjo. Do it, somebody. Do it.

Um, that would be honestly, if Rare's not gonna make it, that would be my dream dev to make it.

But you know how much I like Double Fine.

I don't know if I would want, like, Tim Schafer's team making it, but if, like, a smaller team within that studio was like,

"Hey, we're gonna make this Banjo game now." They totally could. They did fine with Psychonauts. That game's great.

That's Banjo Kazooie. We've played all the Banjo games.

I hope you played them along with us or at the very least you enjoyed our conversations about these games.

Uh...

Yeah, that's season three of Chapter Select. Thank you so much for joining us this time around.

We will be back in the fall of 2022 with season four,

which we are about to enter production on here in the coming months.

We've got that all planned out now. Max and I just finalized.

Max and I have finalized to give you a peek behind the curtain not say too much

But we have now finalized plans for seasons four five and six so uh

We have things coming at you

Then we know what they're going to direction

Yeah, we know we know we know where the show is heading and we're excited about it, and we hope you are too

The only thing I will say about season four is that it will be a little bit different so

It's gonna be good prepare accordingly

It will be very it'll still be a show where we talk about come on the show and talk about a certain certain things every

Week, but what those things will be who knows maybe we're gonna talk about every book in series of unfortunate events novel

And we're gonna read them back and forth

That would be quite the middle at the air sats elevator. That's a good book and

to keep up with what season 4 and then season 5 and season 6 are

are. You can follow the show on Twitter @ChapterSelect. You could also go to

ChapterSelect.com. That's where everything is kept up to date. You could

follow Logan on Twitter @MoreMan12. You can find his writing over at ComicBook.com.

You can follow myself on Twitter @MaxRoberts143 and my writing over at

MaxFrequency.net. Thank you so much for listening to this Season 3e and we look

forward to the future of the show and sharing that with you very soon. Until next time, adios!

Chapter Select is a max frequency production. This episode was research produced and edited by me,

Max Roberts. Season 3 is hosted by Logan Moore and myself. Season 3 is all about Banjo-Kazooie.

For more on this season, go to [chapterselect.com/season3](http://chapterselect.com/season3). Follow the show @ChapterSelect and check out previous seasons at [chapterselect.com](http://chapterselect.com).

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