

= Menacer =

The Menacer is a light gun peripheral released by Sega in 1992 for its Sega Genesis and Sega CD video game consoles . It was created in response to Nintendo 's Super Scope and as Sega 's successor to the Master System Light Phaser . The gun is built from three detachable parts ( pistol , shoulder stock , sights ) , and communicates with the television via an infrared sensor . The Menacer was announced at the May 1992 Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago and was released later that year . The gun was bundled with a pack @-@ in six @-@ game cartridge of mostly shooting gallery games . Sega also released a Menacer bundle with the Terminator 2 : The Arcade Game .

Sega producer Mac Senour was responsible for the Menacer project and designed the six @-@ game pack . He originally proposed non @-@ shooting minigames based on existing Sega licenses like Joe Montana , David Robinson , and ToeJam & Earl , but most of the prototypes were abandoned due to high cost in favor of more shooting @-@ type games . Sega did not plan another first @-@ party release for the Menacer outside the included multicart . Compatible games were published through 1995 .

The Menacer is remembered as a critical and commercial flop . Critics found the six @-@ game pack subpar and repetitive , and criticized the peripheral 's lack of games . The ToeJam & Earl spinoff game was held in the highest regard , and reviewers recommended the Menacer @-@ compatible Terminator 2 game . A direct @-@ to @-@ TV light gun that includes the six @-@ game Menacer pack was released in 2005 .

= = Description = =

The gray , white , and red Menacer is a light gun peripheral for the Sega Genesis . The Menacer is built of three separable parts : a pistol , twin sights , and shoulder stock . ( In the peripheral 's branding , these parts were called the Master Module , Binocular Module , and Stabilizer Module , respectively . ) The pistol has a double grip and fires the infrared beam with a trigger on the back grip . There are three buttons on the pistol 's front grip : one pauses the game and the other two provide game @-@ specific functions . Unlike the Super Scope , the Menacer has two infrared transmitters . The optional skeletal shoulder stock and binocular twin sights were designed to improve the aim . Digital Spy reported that the twin sights never worked as intended , and Sega Force wrote that the gun must be recalibrated when adding or removing the sights . Calibration is performed by aiming at a bullseye target to adjust the gun 's sensitivity . The gun was designed to be reassembled to suit the player .

The light gun 's shots are controlled by its aim towards the television . It operates on batteries and works in conjunction with a sensor plugged into the second controller port and placed atop the television display . The sensor counts CRT television scan lines to detect the player 's shots . Sega Force noticed that the controller acts erratically when used under fluorescent lighting . Sega recommended eight feet of distance from the receiver , though the peripheral works between four and 12 feet from the television . Sega Force reported that the controller lasts about 18 hours on new batteries , though Will Smith of The Hawk Eye estimated fewer ( " a matter of hours " ) . The Toronto Star wrote that the Menacer lasts 20 hours as opposed to the Super Scope 's 50 to 140 hours . The Menacer has no power switch : it automatically activates when aimed at the television and turns off after 30 seconds without input . The Super Scope fully drains its batteries when left on . Menacer 's Accu @-@ Sight option puts crosshairs on the screen to eliminate the need to aim manually through the sights . The gun does not have a " turbo " mode for continuous fire , unlike the Super Scope .

= = History = =

The Menacer was produced in response to the Nintendo Super Scope released several months earlier , though Sega intended to support the peripheral as more than a clone . These two peripherals brought arcade light gun game ports to home consoles . The Menacer is the successor

to the Master System 's Light Phaser .

Mac Senour , a producer at Sega , was responsible for the peripheral and its six @-@ game cartridge as the company 's " hardware boy " . He designed the six minigames based on Sega 's previous intellectual property and licenses ? such as ToeJam & Earl ? under the instruction to avoid shooting games . His prototypes included games based on Joe Montana ( Joe Montana Wide Receiver Training Camp ) and David Robinson , but when presented , the company asked for more shooting games and scrapped all license @-@ based games ( besides ToeJam & Earl , whose license was free ) due to their added cost . His " reverse Blockout game " prototype was the only other title carried to the final cartridge . Senour recalled that upon his cubicle presentation to Sega Japan 's president , the executive did not say anything besides " very good " before leaving . Sega did not plan any other first @-@ party releases for the Menacer ? Senour recollected that " they laughed when I proposed more . "

Sega announced the Menacer alongside the Sega CD at the May 1992 Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago and the peripheral was released towards the end of that year . By December 1992 , the Menacer began shipping with Terminator 2 : The Arcade Game as a bundle . Goodby , Silverstein & Partners produced Menacer television advertisements directed by Danny Boyle . Playthings reported that Chicago toy retailers promoted Sega electronics including the Menacer over Nintendo 's during their 1992 Thanksgiving promotions . Sega 's sales exceeded Nintendo 's during the 1992 Christmas season , and gained cultural cachet for the Menacer among other peripherals . Electronic Gaming Monthly reported in March 1993 that the Menacer would not have a new game for six months . Compatible games were published through 1995 .

Mac Senour left Sega in 1993 for Atari , where he received an increase in pay and status . He later worked at Konami and Electronic Arts . In his first days at Atari , Senour was sent to Paris , where he remembered an excess of unsold Menacers in a Virgin Megastore display . His translators told the clerk that Senour was responsible for the Menacer , and when Senour offered to autograph their stock , the clerk replied in slow English that Senour could autograph the items he purchased .

In 2005 , Radica created a Menacer @-@ based direct @-@ to @-@ TV dedicated console with the original six @-@ game cartridge built into a light gun controller as part of their Play TV Legends line of Sega Genesis dedicated consoles . Retro Gamer wrote that Radica 's gun is based on the Sega Saturn light gun 's design and not the Menacer 's .

= = Games = =

Games include the pack @-@ in single @-@ player Menacer 6 @-@ game cartridge , which consists of mostly shooting gallery games :

Ready , Aim , Tomatoes ! is a spin @-@ off of the original ToeJam & Earl where the player ( as ToeJam ) fires tomatoes at ToeJam & Earl series enemies for points as the screen scrolls . The scroll speed increases with game duration . The enemies ? dentists , devils , and cupids ? return fire throughout the ten levels . The game also features power @-@ ups and lock @-@ on targeting , to aide in player accuracy .

In Rockman 's Zone , the screen scrolls through streets of houses as the player shoots criminals and refrains from shooting innocent bystanders , for which the player loses a life . In later levels , the criminals return fire faster .

Space Station Defender is similar to Tomatoes ! with added memory aspects . In each level , players shoot enemy @-@ filled pods as up to eight drop in a memorizable sequence . There are 999 levels , a Power Zone to charge shots , and power @-@ ups including extra shields .

Whack Ball is comparable to Breakout : the player controls a large ball with the Menacer to push a smaller on @-@ screen ball into color @-@ changing bricks that line the wall . One all of the bricks change color , the player moves to the next level . Some bricks are power @-@ ups that change the larger ball 's size or add extra small balls into play . Players who hit flashing bricks are punished . Inadvertently guiding the ball through a hole in the wall ends the game .

In Front Line , the player defends against tanks and airplanes with a machine gun and missiles with unlimited ammo .

In Pest Control , the player 's vision is limited to a small area of the screen around the Accu @-@ Sight crosshairs while looking for cockroaches that attempt to eat an on @-@ screen pizza . Two different power @-@ ups briefly illuminate the screen and clear all bugs onscreen . Later levels feature larger insects that contain bombs and small , fast bugs .

Digital Spy mentioned Body Count , Terminator 2 : The Arcade Game , and Mad Dog McCree as Menacer 's other notable games . Terminator 2 was the first external game to work with the Menacer , the only one confirmed as of December 1992 . Terminator 's programmers , Probe Software , later began work on another Menacer @-@ compatible game . Terminator 2 has a two @-@ player mode that uses one Menacer light gun and one controller . Sega Force reported that Menacer gameplay registered faster than the Genesis controller . Mad Dog McCree , a live action Wild West shoot ' em up for the Sega CD , used either a controller or a choice of several light guns : the Menacer , the Konami Justifier , or the game developer 's own compatible light gun . In the 1994 Body Count , the player defends Earth from an alien invasion . The Irish Times wrote that the game is " ideally suited for the ... Menacer " and is " to be avoided " otherwise . The Menacer is also compatible with Corpse Killer and American Laser Games ' other titles , such as Who Shot Johnny Rock ? The light gun does not work with Konami 's Lethal Enforcers games or Snatcher , which use the Konami Justifier .

= = Reception = =

Matthew Reynolds of Digital Spy wrote that the Menacer was a poorly executed " flop " that is much less likely to be remembered than its Super Scope competitor , even though the latter did not fare much better . Reynolds added that the Menacer was hurt by the poor quality of the pack @-@ in six @-@ game cartridge and a lack of titles in support of the peripheral . Will Smith of The Hawk Eye concurred , calling the peripheral " a commercial and critical flop " . The Menacer 's original reviewers pinned the device 's success on the strength of its developer support , and multiple reviewers cited the Menacer 's lack of good games as the cause for its decline .

Writing for the Chicago Tribune on the 1992 Consumer Electronics Show , Dennis Lynch saw the Super Scope and Menacer as a continuation of a Nintendo ? Sega arms race and wrote that the peripheral 's " Uzi attachment " was " just what every kid needs " . The Atlanta Journal @-@ Constitution 's Andy Pargh said the Menacer was " definitely a winner " in comparison to the Super Scope . Toronto Star 's William Burrill wrote that the " Great Zapper War " would be decided by the strength of the light guns ' supporting games . Multiple reviewers ultimately recommended that players wait for more games to be released before purchasing the Menacer . William Burrill of the Toronto Star said not to bother unless the player " absolutely love [ s ] target shooter games " . Mean Machines called the Menacer " an expensive novelty " until it had more games . The Herald Sun wrote in August 1993 that the Menacer looked to be " an expensive , limited @-@ use fad " .

GamePro considered the gun " well @-@ designed " and " fairly good @-@ looking " , though they wrote that the gun 's options buttons were inconvenient and that the Menacer 's lengthy recalibrations before play sessions without Accu @-@ Sight were tedious . Mean Machines wrote that the gun 's shades of gray clashed with the glossy black console . Several reviewers called the binocular scope addition unhelpful . Paul Mellerick of Mega found the manual sights an eyestrain and the gun " deadly accurate " as long as players used the Accu @-@ Sight mode . Still , as of January 1993 , Mega felt that the Menacer 's future success was doubtless . Jaz of Mean Machines had low expectations for the Menacer , which he compared to the shortcomings of previous light guns : high price , short @-@ lived novelty , and dearth of games . Gus of Mean Machines wrote that " Sega hasn 't learned the lessons " from the Super Scope 's " fairly naff " release in the magazine 's January 1993 Menacer review , calling the light gun a " samey @-@ looking , samey @-@ playing piece of hardware , with some redundant add @-@ ons " with mediocre launch titles . He added that the Menacer was less tiring to use than the Super Scope , praised the Menacer 's infrared , and criticized the gun 's lack of available software .

Multiple reviewers found the pack @-@ in six @-@ game cartridge games subpar and repetitive . Mean Machines 's Gus wrote that the games were all too simple and easy . Of the pack , reviewers

held Ready , Aim , Tomatoes ! in the highest regard . Ray Barnholt of 1UP.com wrote that the Menacer 's games were " duller " than its competitor Super Scope 's already dull games , but Tomatoes ! gave Sega 's cartridge " some pittance of value " . Mega rated the ToeJam & Earl spin @-@ off at 62 % , calling it " fun and strange " though " rather repetitive " . Sega Force thought the game 's graphics were the pack 's best , and its audio to be of high quality , though the magazine also considered the game repetitive . GamePro thought the game 's colors were oversaturated .

As for the other six @-@ pack titles , Mega called Rockman 's Zone " not a very inspiring game " for its slow pacing and " bland " graphics . Reviewers compared the game to Hogan 's Alley and Empire City : 1931 . Mega called Space Station Defender 's concept " incredibly daft " . GamePro criticized Space Station Defender 's " washed @-@ out and ugly " graphics and " obnoxious " audio . The magazine thought poorly of most of the cartridge 's audio . Mega found Whack Ball easy and did not expect players to maintain interest in it for longer than an hour . Sega Visions compared Whack Ball to Arkanoid . Mega wrote that Front Line was programmed poorly with " the appearance of having never met up with a game tester " , calling it " truly awful " . Electronic Gaming Monthly and GamePro compared the game to Operation Wolf . Sega Force rated Front Line lowest within the six @-@ pack , with a score of 22 % . The magazine wrote that the bug game , Pest Control , would make players bored after ten minutes , and Mega said the game was not worth loading even once , giving it their lowest rating of the bunch : 12 % . Sega Force wrote in February that the games were only fun for an hour and that the peripheral 's success would depend on its future games , adding , " Without that [ developer ] support , it will die as surely as all other attempts at light guns have done . " The magazine ultimately recommended against purchase until more games were released .

Sega Force 's Paul Wooding considered Terminator 2 a " must " for Menacer owners , adding that it far surpassed the quality of the six @-@ pack games . The magazine added that the gun registered shots faster than the controller , was more accurate , and worked well from a distance . Neil West of Mega wrote the Menacer works well with Terminator 2 in his review of the game . The Hawk Eye 's Will Smith wrote in 2010 that the six @-@ game pack and Terminator 2 were the only Menacer games readily accessible . Ken Horowitz of Sega @-@ 16 wrote that none of the Menacer @-@ compatible titles were exceptional , though Terminator and Body Count were standouts . He added that the Menacer 's small library made collecting easier . Edward Fox of The Centre for Computing History has said that the museum 's Menacer is his favorite piece in the collection when used with the Aura Interactor haptic suit .