

= Blast Corps =

Blast Corps is a 1997 action video game for the Nintendo 64 in which the player uses vehicles to destroy buildings in the path of a runaway nuclear missile carrier . In the game 's 57 levels , the player solves puzzles by transferring between vehicles to move objects and bridge gaps . It was developed by Rare , published by Nintendo , and released in March 1997 in Japan and North America . A wider release followed at the end of that year .

The game was among Rare 's first for the Nintendo 64 . Its development team ranged between four and seven members , many of whom were recent graduates . The team sought to find gameplay to fit Rare co @-@ founder Chris Stamper 's idea for a building destruction game . The puzzle game mechanics were inspired by those of Donkey Kong (1994) .

Blast Corps was released to universal acclaim and received Metacritic 's second highest Nintendo 64 ratings of 1997 . The game sold one million copies ? lower than the team 's expectations ? and received several editor 's choice awards . Reviewers highly praised its originality , variety , and graphics , but some critiqued its controls and repetition . Reviewers of Rare 's 2015 Rare Replay retrospective compilation noted Blast Corps as a standout title .

= = Gameplay = =

Blast Corps is a single @-@ player action video game . The player controls vehicles to destroy buildings , farms , and other structures in the path of a runaway nuclear missile carrier . The player fails if the carrier collides with an object . The eight demolition vehicles vary in the way they clear structures : the bulldozer rams , the dump truck drifts , the lightweight buggy crashes from higher ground , the tricycle shoots missiles , another truck presses outwards from its sides , and robot mechs tumble and stomp from the land and the air . The player must transfer between vehicles and other machinery to solve puzzles . Objectives include transporting timed explosive crates and bridging gaps . The game 's puzzles increase in difficulty as the player progresses through its 57 levels .

The world is portrayed from a three @-@ quarters overhead view . The player can adjust the game 's viewable perspective with zoom and horizontal panning functions . Pop @-@ up hints will guide the player in the early stages of the game , and other characters audibly encourage the player as each level wears on . The cheery soundtrack increases in tempo as the level 's timer runs low . After completing a level , the player can return to explore without a time limit . By finding secrets and activating lights throughout the level , the player raises their score and final medal ranking . There are also secret levels hidden throughout the game , where the player completes objectives against the clock . The player can compete against a ghost copy of their previous path through a level . There are no settings to change the game 's difficulty , and the game saves to both the game cartridge itself and external storage .

= = Development = =

Blast Corps was among Rare 's first games for the Nintendo 64 and led a run of seven critically acclaimed Rare titles for the console . The game 's production began in early 1996 . The development team consisted of four recent graduates , though it expanded at times to seven concurrent staff . Martin Wakeley became the game 's lead designer . He credited the team 's small size for their easy progression from planning to market . Rare founder Chris Stamper was the impetus for the project . He had wanted to make a game about destroying buildings for years prior to Blast Corps 's development . The team worked to fit his idea to a gameplay concept and devised a " Constantly Moving Object " conceit that would give the levels a time limit . This idea became the nuclear missile carrier .

Retro Gamer credited Wakeley for Blast Corps 's idiosyncratic ideas and humor in light of the game 's serious premise . For instance , the Mario Kart 64 " power slide " drift mechanics inspired that of Blast Corps 's dump truck . Wakeley championed the drift controls against the rest of the team , who

found them aggravating . The game 's lead artist , Ricky Berwick , had developed the vehicle concepts without consideration for their in @-@ game function , and the vehicles were only later retrofitted to the gameplay . One of the robot vehicles was designed without an arm because the developers had run out of computer memory to store the data and liked the look anyway . Wakeley determined the game 's high score " goal medal " objectives , in which players would attempt to better a set completion time on each level . Blast Corps 's Japanese and American quality assurance teams later competed to push the levels to their limits , which resulted in the game 's platinum level objectives . Wakeley described these platinum challenges as " just insane " and said he could only finish four himself .

Wakeley saw Blast Corps as a puzzle game at its core . He was influenced by the 1994 Donkey Kong , in which the player begins each level with all the tools they need to finish but must learn how to use them . Wakeley said this was Blast Corp 's core game mechanic . He was also inspired by the Super Mario 64 demo at the 1995 Space World , which introduced him to the 3D analog stick and spurred him achieve something similar . The team 's technical accomplishments included character and environment models composed completely of polygons and the absence of distance fog to obscure the draw distance .

Nintendo published Blast Corps for their Nintendo 64 . It was originally titled Blast Dozer in its 1995 Sh?shinkai preview , a name it retained for its Japanese release . (The team had considered other titles , including " Heavy Duty Heroes " , " Blast Radius " , and " Power Dozer " .) Blast Corps was first released in Japan on March 21 , 1997 , and in North America three days later . Its European and Australian release followed on December 22 . The game had been in production for just over a year .

== Reception ==

The game received " universal acclaim " , according to video game review aggregator Metacritic , and " unanimous critical success " , according to Retro Gamer . Reviewers highly praised the novelty and variety of Blast Corps 's gameplay . Peer Schneider (IGN) , in particular , lauded the game 's originality in an industry hesitant to take risks .

Reviewers struggled to master the game 's controls . Schneider (IGN) overcame his initial concerns to appreciate the complexity of the controls and the differences between the vehicles . He considered the locked camera view restrictive when compared to the unrestricted 3D camera in the game 's contemporaries . Schneider thought the game should have been longer , with fewer bonus levels and more main missions , though he did appreciate the pacing , design , and difficulty of the included levels . EGM similarly found the bonus stages mediocre . One of their reviewers went further and thought the whole game was repetitive , as did Computer and Video Games . The latter , though , praised Blast Corps 's level design and difficulty progression . Crispin of Electronic Gaming Monthly (EGM) wrote that the game 's best feature was its " palpable sense of suspense " as the carrier advanced on resistant buildings .

Critics praised the game 's graphics and sound . Schneider (IGN) found the game unpretentious in comparison to video game trends of photorealistic rendering and cartoonish art . He likened the slick vehicle animations and metallic elements to Micro Machines and Rare 's R.C. Pro @-@ Am . He felt that Blast Corps 's explosions were not as robust as those in Turok : Dinosaur Hunter . Schneider praised the game 's texture maps , which made the night scenes and houses look realistic , and the canyons breathtaking . He also liked the detail in the vehicles ' skid marks and gradual building disintegration . He wrote that the game 's 3D programming was errorless , and was particularly pleased about the game 's lack of fog , usually used to cover developer limitations . EGM echoed Schneider 's praise of the deep landscapes , which the magazine called " incredible " . Scott McCall (AllGame) praised the game 's realistic polygonal models and technical prowess , and Steve Polak (The Weekend Australian) wrote that Blast Corps showcased the console 's graphics capabilities . Schneider (IGN) described the soundtrack as between " 70s pop , disaster movie score , and Country Bear Jamboree " . He praised the range of engine , tire screeching , and crashing sound effects . Reviewers disliked the country music tracks with jaw harp , though IGN thought it was a

matter of taste .

IGN wrote that Blast Corps exemplified qualities of enjoyable Nintendo Entertainment System and arcade games , while EGM considered the game unlike all others . Retro Gamer wrote that the game 's combination of puzzles and continuous destruction made the game so unique as to defy genre classification . The magazine described the gameplay concept of returning to explore without a time limit as " a stroke of genius " . Retro Gamer thought of Blast Corps as a 3D successor to " nail @-@ biting reaction games " such as Loco @-@ Motion . Computer and Video Games agreed with a reader that Blast Corps was part of a " Destroy " subgenre including games like Desert Strike , Return Fire , and Body Harvest , and Matt Fox of The Video Games Guide put the game in a lineage with Highway Encounter and Lunar Jetman . Schneider (IGN) said Blast Corps was on par with the quality of Shigeru Miyamoto games and an excellent display of Rare 's potential .

Blast Corps sold one million copies , which was fewer than Rare had expected . The game was most successful in Japan . Metacritic ranked the title among the top ten games released in 1997 . It remained Metacritic 's highest ranked 1997 Nintendo 64 game after GoldenEye 007 . Blast Corps was selected as Electronic Gaming Monthly 's May 1997 Game of the Month and an IGN Editors ' Choice . Four of six Nintendo Power reviewers recommended the game . Nintendo Power 's 1997 staff survey listed Blast Corps in the bottom half of the magazine 's top 100 games of all time .

= = Legacy = =

Wakeley , the game 's designer , considered making a sequel as an action combat game , but thought the concepts behind Blast Corps had been fully exhausted . After praising the game in a 2010 Rare retrospective feature , Retro Gamer 's writers craved a sequel . The magazine said the title was proof of the company 's inventiveness . Steve Ellis , who was a programmer at Rare , thought Blast Corps to be among the company 's most underrated games , and though its physics were now dated , he continued to find the game fun enough to revisit regularly . Blast Corps is included in Rare Replay , a compilation of 30 Rare titles , released on the Xbox One on August 4 , 2015 . The release 's bonus features included behind @-@ the @-@ scenes interviews with Blast Corps 's developers . Blast Corps was a standout favorite among Rare Replay reviewers .

Rare 's Blast Corps began a run of seven highly lauded and respected Nintendo 64 games , including GoldenEye 007 , Banjo @-@ Kazooie , Perfect Dark , and Jet Force Gemini . Retro Gamer wrote that Rare had doubled the number of classic Nintendo 64 games and was an important alliance for Nintendo . Microsoft acquired Rare in 2002 for a record price of \$ 377 million . The industry had changed , Blast Corps designer Martin Wakeley reflected a decade after the game 's 1997 release . In 2009 , Wakeley said , a studio would rarely entrust the scope of a project like Blast Corps to a team of four recent graduates .