

= SG @-@ 1000 =

The SG @-@ 1000 ( Japanese : セガマークII , Hepburn : Esu J? Sen ) , also known as the Sega Computer Videogame SG @-@ 1000 , is a cartridge @-@ based home video game console manufactured by Sega and released in Japan , Australia , and other countries . It was Sega 's first entry into the home video game hardware business , and provided the basis for the more successful Master System . Introduced in 1983 , the SG @-@ 1000 was released on the same day that Nintendo released the Family Computer ( Famicom for short ) in Japan . The SG @-@ 1000 was released in several forms , including the SC @-@ 3000 computer and the redesigned SG @-@ 1000 II ( セガマークII , Esu J? Sen Ts? , also known as the SG @-@ 1000 Mark II ) , released in 1984 .

Developed in response to a downturn in arcades in 1982 , the SG @-@ 1000 was created on the advice of Hayao Nakayama , president of Sega Enterprises , Ltd . Shortly after the release , Sega Enterprises was sold to CSK Corporation , which was followed by the release of the SG @-@ 1000 II . Due to the release of the Famicom , and the number of consoles present in the market at the time , the SG @-@ 1000 was not commercially successful .

= = History = =

In the early 1980s , Sega Enterprises , Inc . , then a subsidiary of Gulf and Western , was one of the top five arcade game manufacturers active in the United States , as company revenues rose to \$ 214 million . A downturn in the arcade business starting in 1982 seriously hurt the company , leading Gulf & Western to sell its North American arcade manufacturing organization and the licensing rights for its arcade games to Bally Manufacturing . The company retained Sega 's North American R & D operation , as well as its Japanese subsidiary , Sega Enterprises , Ltd . With its arcade business in decline , Gulf & Western executives turned to Sega Enterprises , Ltd . ' s president , Hayao Nakayama , for advice on how to proceed . Nakayama advocated that the company leverage its hardware expertise gained through years working in the arcade industry to move into the home console market in Japan , which was in its infancy at the time . Nakayama received permission to proceed , leading to the release of Sega 's first home video game system , the SG @-@ 1000 .

The SG @-@ 1000 was first released in Japan on July 15 , 1983 , at JP ¥ 15 @,@ 000 . It was released on the same day as Nintendo launched the Family Computer in Japan . A computer version with a built @-@ in keyboard was released simultaneously by Sega as the SC @-@ 3000 , also known as the Sega Personal Computer SC @-@ 3000 , as well as the upgraded SC @-@ 3000H . The SG @-@ 1000 was released in Australia through John Sands Electronics , and in Italy , Spain , and other countries . An unauthorized clone system known as the Telegames Personal Arcade was produced , and is able to play SG @-@ 1000 and ColecoVision games .

The SG @-@ 1000 's launch did not prove to be successful . Reasons for this include the Famicom 's more advanced hardware , the number of available game consoles at the time from companies including Tomy and Bandai , and the North American video game crash of 1983 . Shortly after launch , Gulf & Western began to divest itself of its non @-@ core businesses after the death of company founder Charles Bluhdorn , so Nakayama and former Sega CEO David Rosen arranged a management buyout of the Japanese subsidiary in 1984 with financial backing from CSK Corporation , a prominent Japanese software company . Nakayama was then installed as CEO of the new Sega Enterprises , Ltd .

Following the buyout , Sega released another console , the SG @-@ 1000 II , on July 31 , 1984 at ¥ 15 @,@ 000 . It featured hardware tweaks from the original model , including detachable controllers and the ability to play Sega Card games . The SG @-@ 1000 II did not sell well , leading to Sega 's decision to continue work on its video game hardware . This would result in the release of the Sega Mark III in Japan in 1985 , which later became the Master System worldwide . The last cartridge released was Portrait of Loretta on February 18 , 1987 . In 2006 , the GameTap subscription gaming service added an emulator of the SG @-@ 1000 , and several playable titles .

= = Technical specifications = =

The SG 1000 is powered by an 8-bit Zilog Z80 central processing unit running at 3.58 MHz for the SG 1000 and SG 1000 II, and at 4 MHz for the SC 3000. Its video processor is a Texas Instruments TMS9928A, capable of displaying up to 16 colors, and its sound processor is a Texas Instruments SN76489. All three chips were used in the ColecoVision. The system includes 8 kbit of random access memory (RAM) and 128 kbit (16KB) of video RAM. The controller is hardwired to the system in the original model, and detachable in the SG 1000 II. Video and audio output are supplied through an RF switch. Power is supplied through a 9V DC connector connected to an AC adapter.

Several peripherals exist for the SG 1000 series. Available at ¥13,800 at its time of release, the SK 1100 keyboard connects through the expansion slot and is compatible with all models. Multiple controllers were created, including the SJ 200 joystick attached to the SG 1000, and the SJ 150 joystick, made for use with the SG 1000 II. A racing wheel known as the SH 400 was made for use with games such as Monaco GP. The C 1000 Card Catcher, sold at ¥1,000, allowing players to play Sega Card titles. Additional accessories existed solely for use with the SC 3000, including the SR 1000 cassette deck, the SP 400 4-color plotter printer, and the SF 7000 expansion device which adds a floppy disk drive and additional memory.

= = Game library = =

The SG 1000's game library comprises 68 standard cartridge releases and 29 Sega Card releases. All games play on each model, although 26 cartridge releases require the keyboard accessory or the SC 3000. All titles are fully compatible with the Mark III and Master System. Titles for the system include Flicky, Congo Bongo, Sega Galaga, and Girl's Garden, the first video game directed by Sonic the Hedgehog creator Yuji Naka. The library included licensed titles, such as Golgo 13. Packaging and game manuals came with both Japanese and English text until 1984, when manuals were switched to Japanese only and the size of the cartridge box was reduced.

Comparisons have been made to the appearance of SG 1000 games to those released for the ColecoVision, and the graphics have been criticized in light of the simultaneous release of the Famicom. Controls have been criticized for lack of responsiveness; writing for Wired, reviewer Chris Kohler says of Flicky, "the jumping control is so terrible that getting back up to the exit is insanely difficult."

= = Reception and legacy = =

The SG 1000 made little impact on the video game industry. Retro Gamer writer Damien McFerran said it was an "abject failure", but called it and the SG 1000 II "the Japanese forefathers of the Master System". Writing for Wired, Chris Kohler criticized the poor response of the controller's joystick and the lack of an RCA output. He said the release timing hurt its success; "[al]though its graphics were of better quality than most consoles on the market, it had the bad luck to be released in the same month as Nintendo's world-changing Famicom, which had killer apps like Donkey Kong and could run circles around Sega's hardware." Of its legacy, Kohler said, "Few have heard of it, even fewer have played it, and the games weren't that great anyway."