

= Rare Replay =

Rare Replay is a 2015 compilation of 30 video games from the 30 @-@ year history of developers Rare and its predecessor , Ultimate Play the Game . The emulated games span multiple genres and consoles ? from the ZX Spectrum to the Xbox 360 ? and retain the features and errors of their original releases with minimal edits . The compilation adds cheats to make the older games easier and a Snapshots mode of specific challenges culled from parts of the games . Player progress is rewarded with behind @-@ the @-@ scenes footage and interviews about Rare 's major and unreleased games .

The compilation was one of several ideas Rare considered to celebrate their 30th anniversary . Inspired by fans , upcoming Xbox One backwards compatibility features , and the idea to connect Rare 's past and future , the company sorted through 120 games to choose titles that best represented its oeuvre . They prioritized games with characters and environments original to the company . Rare incorporated six hardware emulators in the package , and worked with its parent company , Microsoft , to use its unannounced Xbox 360 emulation . Rare Replay released worldwide as an Xbox One exclusive on August 4 , 2015 .

Rare Replay 's reviews were generally favorable . Critics appreciated the package 's design and craft and called the release a new pinnacle for compilation releases . They commended its " rewind " and Snapshot features , but criticized technical issues in the Xbox 360 emulation and game installation . Rare 's Nintendo 64 classics , with Blast Corps in particular , were communal favorites among reviewers , while Perfect Dark Zero , Grabbed by the Ghoulies , and the Spectrum games were liked least . Some reviewers were disappointed by the absence of the Donkey Kong Country series and GoldenEye 007 due to inevitable licensing issues , while a few thought the package was fine without them . Critics deemed the archival game content and developer interviews as among the compilation 's best features , but were upset to see the content hidden behind time @-@ consuming in @-@ game challenges . Reviewers noted that Rare 's founders , the Stamper brothers , were conspicuously absent from the interviews . Rare Replay became Rare 's first United Kingdom all @-@ format charts bestseller since Banjo @-@ Kazooie in 1998 .

= = Gameplay = =

Rare Replay is a compilation of 30 games previously developed by Rare and its predecessor , Ultimate Play the Game , over their 30 @-@ year history across platforms from the ZX Spectrum to the Xbox 360 (1983 to 2008) , up until Rare 's Kinect Sports series . The 30 games span multiple genres , including fighting , first @-@ person shooter , simulation , 3D platforming , racing , and skiing . The compilation opens with a musical number featuring Rare characters . Each game has a landing page with a variation on its theme music . While the core gameplay remains unedited , Rare added extra features to the older releases . The player can toggle the visual appearance of scanlines and " rewind " up to ten seconds of gameplay in pre @-@ Nintendo 64 games . The older games can be saved at will and autosave progress upon the player 's exit . Rare also added an infinite lives cheat setting for some older games and fixed a game @-@ breaking bug in Battletoads . The " Snapshots " feature presents small segments of the older games as challenges for the player , such as collecting a set amount of points in a set amount of time in a set scenario , similar in function to the NES Remix series . Some Snapshots are connected sequentially as a playlist .

The ZX Spectrum emulation retains the technical idiosyncrasies of the original hardware . For instance , the game 's graphics speed up or slow down dependent on the number of items for the computer to process on @-@ screen . The Nintendo 64 emulation upgrades the games ' polygon rendering and frame rate . The nine Xbox 360 releases (and re @-@ releases) install directly to the Xbox One dashboard separately from the Rare Replay compilation , and require online activation before they can be played offline . The Xbox 360 games share player saved game and Achievement progress between the consoles via Xbox Live 's cloud sync features . Rare Replay uses the prior Xbox 360 ports of Banjo @-@ Kazooie , Banjo @-@ Tooie , and Perfect Dark rather than emulating their originals . However , Rare chose to emulate the original Conker 's Bad Fur Day rather than

using its Xbox port . Grabbed by the Ghoulies runs natively on the Xbox One , as a port upgraded its display resolution and frame rate . Rare Replay retains the local and online multiplayer modes of the original games , and includes their main downloadable content add-ons . Multiple classic Rare titles , such as the Donkey Kong Country series and GoldenEye 007 , are not included in the compilation due to licensing issues .

A bonus feature section , " Rare Revealed " , contains over an hour of behind-the-scenes footage focusing on Rare 's major and unreleased games . The player completes in-game challenges to collect stamps , which increase the player 's rank and unlock the bonus features . The player must finish each game to receive all stamps . The compilation automatically grants stamps for prior progress in the package 's Xbox 360 games . Current and former Rare employees , such as Grant Kirkhope , feature in the documentary clips , though studio founders Tim and Chris Stamper do not appear . Rare Revealed unveils gameplay footage from several unreleased games . In the open world adventure game Black Widow , the player controls a spider-like robot equipped with missiles . The spider was expected to be recycled in Kameo 2 . This unreleased sequel to Kameo was designed with a darker tone than the original . Rare also worked on The Fast and the Furriest , a spiritual successor to Diddy Kong Racing with vehicle customization and track alterations . The company 's other planned intellectual properties included the survival game prototype Sundown and the airplane-based Tailwind . The " Rare Revealed " videos include trivia behind some game design decisions such as Blast Corps ' character design , the fate of Banjo-Kazooie 's Stop ' n ' Swop features , and audio overrides built into Killer Instinct . Additional Rare Revealed featurettes not present in Rare Replay have been released since the game 's launch via the company 's official YouTube channel .

= = Development = =

Rare began work on Rare Replay in 2014 as a 30th anniversary celebration . They wanted to do something unique for what they considered a rare milestone in the industry . Rare was also influenced by community requests to bring their classics to Xbox One , and the Microsoft backwards compatibility team 's progress on the feature . The compilation was one of several celebration ideas , but once it was chosen , the " 30 years " theme led to the 30 game limit and US \$ 30 price point . As reflective of the company 's character and celebratory theme , Rare chose a papercraft art style and theatrical stage setting for the compilation . Rare Replay became part of Rare 's plan to simultaneously celebrate its past and introduce its future with a logo redesign , new website , and announcement of their upcoming game , Sea of Thieves . Rare sorted through 120 games in their history and rated each for fitness to select the collection 's final 30 . Rare prioritized titles that featured characters and environments original to the company , which was their explanation for excluding licensed titles . The availability of licensed titles was a secondary factor , as was how fun they considered the game and how well the title aged against its contemporary video games . They wanted a wide and representative sample of " popular games that would hit that nostalgic beat that everyone likes " . Rare chose the Nintendo 64 Conker 's Bad Fur Day over the Xbox version (Conker : Live & Reloaded) because they felt the latter had strayed too far from the original . While Rare Replay 's designers made the final call , other Rare employees and veterans gave input and recollected old game development stories .

Unlike the usual product development cycle , which grows a concept into a final product , most of the development work in Rare Replay was in converging 30 games across six platforms onto one disc . The engineering challenge rested in the quantity of games and platforms being emulated rather than the emulation effort itself . Rare worked in close collaboration with Microsoft as the latter developed the Xbox One 's backwards compatibility features in secret , which Rare ultimately used in Rare Replay . The Microsoft team helped prepare Rare 's nine Xbox 360 games for the release . Their discontinued online services were not restored for the compilation . On Rare Replay 's design , lead designer Paul Collins added that the Snapshot challenges were built to encourage players to sample all of the games , and that the rewind feature was to help all players finish the games without quitting in frustration . The compilation 's opening musical number was a compromise from

the original vision : a musical history of the company 's oeuvre , as told through small musical introductions to each Snapshot . The final opening was intended to evoke players ' memories of Rare properties , and includes several Easter eggs .

Rare Replay was announced during the Microsoft press conference at the June 2015 Electronic Entertainment Expo . The reveal was leaked in the hours prior to the show . The compilation was released as an Xbox One exclusive worldwide on August 4 , 2015 . There are no plans for a Windows 10 release or downloadable content additions . While Rare 's founders , the Stamper brothers , were not interviewed in the bonus features , Tim Stamper appeared in a Develop interview set to coincide with the compilation 's release . Rare also added a tie @-@ in wherein Rare Replay owners unlocked the Battletoads character Rash as a playable character in the 2013 fighting game Killer Instinct during a limited test period .

= = Reception = =

Rare Replay received " generally favorable " reviews , according to review aggregator Metacritic . It reached the top of the United Kingdom all @-@ format games sales charts ? the first Xbox One exclusive to do so and Rare 's first since Banjo @-@ Kazooie in 1998 . Rare Replay was also the first top @-@ ranked budget title since Wii Fit Plus (2009) before it fell to sixth place the next week . Rare Replay was the sixth best selling game in North America for August 2015 . The compilation had earlier been Amazon.com 's most preordered game of the 2015 Electronic Entertainment Expo . Reviewers liked its value proposition and low price .

Reviewers noted the quality and craft that went into the compilation 's design . Jaz Rignall (USgamer) was impressed by the compilation 's presentation and balance between frills and efficiency , and Dan Whitehead (Eurogamer) felt that the theatrical theme fit Rare 's character . Reviewers considered Rare Replay a high @-@ water mark for video game compilations . Stephen Totilo (Kotaku) called it the best since Valve 's The Orange Box . Chris Plante (The Verge) praised Rare Replay as a viable response to retrogame copyright infringement , with its slight hardware improvements and added touches . Alternatively , Jeremy Parish (USgamer) judged the Criterion Collection @-@ style presentation of the contemporaneous Mega Man Legacy Collection (2015) to provide a more authentic appreciation of its original material . Ars Technica wrote that the compilation 's target audience ? gamers who experienced the originals in their heyday ? would likely not be affected by a critical review of the included games . He felt that the compilation 's variety offered players at least eight new and exciting games apiece regardless of their feelings towards Rare . Many of the compilation 's games already had long @-@ established legacies .

Communal favorites of the package included Blast Corps , Banjo @-@ Kazooie : Nuts & Bolts , the Viva Piñata games , and the Nintendo 64 classics (especially Banjo @-@ Kazooie , Conker , and Perfect Dark) . Least favorites included Perfect Dark Zero , Grabbed by the Ghoulies , Snake Rattle & Roll , and the early Spectrum games , which reviewers felt had aged the worst . However , Sam Machkovech of Ars Technica felt that the seven Spectrum games showed a more experimental and unrefined side of the company that tested the bounds of game design . He called the selections " incredibly forward @-@ thinking " but too confusing to control and heavily focused on repeated quests and item collection .

Critics were disappointed at the exclusion of Donkey Kong Country , GoldenEye 007 , and Diddy Kong Racing , which they considered among the company 's best games , but an inevitable absence due to licensing issues . Other reviewers were not as disappointed , and felt that the package was fine without them . The Kotaku reviewer found that the package 's omission of Nintendo franchises and Kinect Sports hurt its overall continuity , such as understanding how Conker was a response to the " cutesy " Nintendo characters of its predecessors . The reviewer discerned that Rare Replay was , in part , " image rehabilitation for a studio that had stopped making classic games many years ago " , and hoped that the package was a sign of commitment to more " deep and daring games " in Rare 's future . Ars Technica 's critic lamented that GoldenEye was yet to receive any remaster or rerelease while Donkey Kong Country was rereleased on Nintendo 's Virtual Console . He was impressed by Microsoft 's ability to license from publishers including Tradewest , Nintendo , Milton

Bradley , and Electronic Arts , but noted that Rare 's Super Nintendo @-@ era games were unrepresented and was upset to see Rare 's " Mario Kart clones " and It 's Mr. Pants ! left out . Eurogamer 's reviewer considered the compilation a feat in an era where consoles were receiving endless re @-@ releases . He was surprised to see Rare 's style remain consistent over time , and compared the company 's legacy to that of Cosgrove Hall . Philip Kollar (Polygon) said that the selections represented Rare 's full gamut . Kyle Hilliard (Game Informer) wrote that the compilation had two pleasant surprises for every dud .

Reviewers felt that the archival game content and developer interviews were among Rare Replay 's best features . Some were frustrated that the features were locked behind time @-@ consuming in @-@ game challenges . Machkovech (Ars Technica) found himself stuck not even halfway through the stamp card progress after finishing the easiest achievements . This made the unreleased game footage particularly hard to access . Totilo (Kotaku) similarly became uninterested in finishing the stamp collection . He called the stamps the package 's " sickest joke " in consideration of Rare 's reputation for collectible @-@ heavy games . Some reviewers found the developer content more important than individual games . Polygon 's reviewer called the compilation " an essential piece of gaming history " , while Kotaku 's critic noted that the features lacked a straightforward history of the company and hid Rare 's significant , former ties with Nintendo . Whitehead (Eurogamer) wondered why Mire Mare and other early games were ignored in the bonus content . Machkovech (Ars Technica) found Rare Replay to be as much a " memorial " as an anthology since Rare had become " a shadow of its former self " . He noted how the compilation ends around the time when Rare 's founding Stamper brothers left the company . Reviewers felt that the Stamper brothers were a conspicuous absence from the compilation and Jaz Rignall figured that the compilation 's stamps feature was a reference to the brothers .

Reviewers praised the feature by which players could " rewind " time and reattempt difficult sections of ZX Spectrum and Nintendo Entertainment System games , which were known for their difficulty , especially in the notoriously challenging Battletoads . Kotaku figured that Rare added cheats to make the esoteric and " crushingly tough " Spectrum games tolerable , and the Ars Technica review wished that this " rewind " feature had been extended to the Nintendo 64 titles . Critics liked the Snapshot challenges and Polygon reported that they were crucial for learning basic game mechanics , though less accessible than those of NES Remix . Reviewers complained that the Spectrum game controls were difficult to decipher . The Ars Technica reviewer thought that the compilation did a poor job of explaining each game 's controls , and wondered why Rare did not include introductory or how @-@ to videos . Instead , he turned to YouTube videos and external FAQs before playing each game . Eurogamer and Ars Technica disagreed on the virtues of having the Spectrum emulator replicate the graphical glitches of the original console . Jaz Rignall of USgamer appreciated the added option to save game progress at any time for the Spectrum classics , and wrote that the collection will remind players how difficult games used to be .

Rare Replay 's Nintendo 64 emulation pleased critics . Ars Technica wrote that the polygonal upgrades compensated for the " blurry " and " pixelated " source material , though the Nintendo 64 multiplayer modes lacked the frame rate upgrades that their single @-@ player modes received . Kotaku noted that the Xbox One had more Nintendo 64 re @-@ releases than Nintendo 's Wii U Virtual Console . Its reviewer found the in @-@ game Xbox One button prompts to be " delightful anachronisms " . Ars Technica 's reviewer commended Rare 's choice to the Nintendo 64 version of Conker 's Bad Fur Day over its updated yet censored Xbox re @-@ release . Initial reviews found Jet Force Gemini unplayable without dual thumbstick controls , which were later added . While Machkovech (Ars Technica) considered Rare 's Microsoft games to the weakest of the lot , Whitehead (Eurogamer) found them even more enjoyable in the context of Rare Replay . Reviewers noted frame rate and technical issues in the Xbox 360 emulation and did not like its separation from the rest of the compilation . Kollar (Polygon) called the Xbox 360 game installation process needlessly complex , and Marty Sliva (IGN) did not like how the Xbox 360 startup sequence interrupted the compilation 's cohesion . He added that the emulated Xbox 360 experience was subpar compared to the unemulated experience .