

Retro Reviews



Alf

For the Sega Master System

Alf is everyone's favorite cat from Melmac, well he's not really a cat, but he does love to eat them. Alf was a great character from the 80's. He had it all, a family to support him, his own trading cards, toys, and even a video game. He was sarcastic and troublesome, but really funny. Biggest problem with Alf was he was ugly, just like his video game.

The goal of the game In Alf, for the Sega Master System, was to help him find parts to repair his space ship. The game

was developed by Nexa, and is considered, by many, to be one of the worst Master System games. A few minutes playing the game and you can see why. But there are some good points that need mentioning. First and most importantly, it is the only console game to feature ALF. So if you love the wisecracking nature of Alf, you'll probably like this game. Secondly, the music could have been a lot worse than it actually is. Some of the songs, you may even find yourself humming now and then.

Now the bad, Alf has horrible gameplay. There's not much to do other than jump. Detection is also off. For example, on the street scene, you can be hit by the car, even if not in its line of sight. Graphics for the Master System are typically better than the NES but you would never know it looking at this game. Alf looks like a big brown pile of mush. No colors to bring out his true look.

Overall, despite being a generally poor game, many video game collectors, and Alf fans, are looking for it. So, if you spot this game in the wild, pick it up. The price on this title may just keep going up. The current value for the game, complete with original box and manual is \$19.



by Hevin H

VGT Rating



VectrexMad! AutoFire Dongle

For the Vectrex



VectrexMad!, our resident VGT reporter for all things Vectrex has stepped in to the world of homebrew hardware production. He has produced a small batch of AutoFire dongles for the Vectrex which gives the player super human shooting powers. The inline dongle sits between the Vectrex console and the controller plug, and with the fire button pressed down achieves a constant firing. In August we caught up with VectrexMad! to find out more. Below is an edited version of our interview. Read the complete interview at VideoGameTrader.com

VGT: Hello VectrexMad! Why did you suddenly produce these AutoFire dongles for the Vectrex, isn't writing Vectrex articles for VGT enough to fill your spare time?

VectrexMad!: It's all because some months prior to the release of the AutoFire dongle, my finger had started to hurt. Whether this has been caused by playing too many video games or using the mouse button too much at work I don't know, but my finger was really becoming swollen and I couldn't enjoy playing Vectrex games anymore. I therefore produced a small prototype circuit that emulated multiple pressing of the fire button with a single button press on the controller. It works really well. Then I thought, hey it's fairly likely that in the demographic of Vectrex owners there are likely to be other people like me who could also benefit from the AutoFire dongle. And it is true, immediately after the launch of the AutoFire dongle, I received a number of emails from people who said they didn't play the Vectrex anymore because of repetitive strain injury.

VGT: Ignoring the commendable finger saving benefits, one might argue that the Auto Fire dongle is just a cheating aid to proceed further in games.

VectrexMad: Well for me, a side effect of the AutoFire dongle is that it brings back new interest in old games. Now, with the AutoFire dongle, getting to later game levels is possible much earlier on. My girlfriend has jokingly said to me that I've have made a cheating device and that I should keep quiet about it. Perhaps, owning or not an AutoFire dongle does signify the end of fairness in the competitions which homebrewers occasionally hold when they release their new games. My thoughts are that Vectrex fans are a decent bunch so I don't think there will be any foul play involved to win a competition. Anyway, a video is always required for proof of reaching a particular game level and it would be pretty obvious if an auto fire circuit was in use.

VGT: How are you finding homebrewing, will you be releasing anything else in the future?

VectrexMad!: Yes, I am enjoying the experience. It's nice to be able to say you made a product which is being purchased by more than one person. I'm also getting a lot of positive emails from other Vectrex users. My next Vectrex project is a game, it's currently 60% finished, but time permitting I want to release before January next year. It will be a game of the type never seen before on the Vectrex, so I don't want to say too much more just yet J

VGT: Thanks for your time and we wish your finger good health...