



Let's begin by dispelling a few rumours so they don't fester into facts. Operation Wolf isn't a veterinary surgeon simulator. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the average canine. Operation Wolf is actually the codename for an undercover assault on enemy territory. That's right, it's plenty of gun-ho, "ONE! TWO! THREE! FOUR! I LOVE THE MARINE CORP!"

Strap on those khaki pants and listen up! The mission is simple. You are assigned to Operation Wolf, (or Operation Certain Death as it is otherwise known) and must accomplish six tasks if you are to save the POWs being held by the enemy. On all six stages he is likely to come up against fearsome resistance, with the opposing forces deploying tanks, helicopters, boats and foot soldiers to break him down.

As well as decimating the opposition, you pick up rounds of ammunition, grenades and energy capsules that restore life. If you feel like shooting roaming animals you may also be rewarded with ammo or life. But on no account shoot fleeing civilians or members of the Red Cross... it wastes ammunition! If by some miracle of fate Operation Wolf is carried out without any hitches and the POWs are returned safely to friendly territory, you are rewarded with your own padded cell, a yearly subscription to "Soldier of Fortune", and a Rottweiler named after your favorite boxer! OK MARINE, LOCK AND LOAD!



AMMO INFO

At the start of every mission a certain number of magazines and grenades are bestowed upon you. However, with all the mass death that ensues, it soon becomes clear that this ammo supply isn't going to last. Fortunately, there is plenty of ammunition to pick up along the way. As well as machine gun magazines and grenades, there are sticks of dynamite that blow up on the spot when fired at, and energy capsules that restore vitality. Shooting some of the animals caught in the crossfire rewards you with a pick-up too!



▲ A helicopter destroyed with your rocket launcher.

▲ Shoot the dynamite on the right.

▲ Kill the enemy and grab the magazine.



OPERATION WOLF



▲ Enemies prepare to eat lead.



▲ Ooops! Sorry!



▲ Our hero is tortured by Kylie records!



▲ Red Cross stretcher bearers need a stretcher!



▲ Watch out for hostile boat attacks in the jungle.

PAD OR GUN

In Operation Wolf players have the option of either using the joypad or a light gun. The arcade used a light gun and there is no doubt that it is more suitable for this kind of shoot 'em up. The joypad works quite well but it makes for slower aiming. The light gun gives a more realistic feel to the game, but you are also more likely to get carried away with blasting everything in sight, so watch those ammunition levels.



▲ Wolfie enjoys a knees up in celebration.

COMMENT



ROB

I am a big fan of the Operation Wolf coin-op and found it very therapeutic, venting my aggression on hundreds of unsuspecting sprites. It is exactly this quality that the NES conversion of this game has lost. Rather than freeing anger, it leaves you feeling more psychopathic than when you started! The action is very slow, with sprites nonchalantly strolling to their death. The graphics, while not completely disastrous, certainly do little to enhance the fast and furious theme of the game. The lack of attention to detail on the backdrops leaves them looking drab and the stuttering animation makes the whole scene look like an outing of cardboard cut-outs! Using the light gun is certainly preferable to the joypad, which proves fidgety and frustrating, but because the game is visually disappointing, things get very tedious all too quickly. I was hoping that at least the sound effects might save some face, but I'm afraid the machine gun sounds like a baby's rattle, and the explosions are reminiscent of someone munching a bag of crisps! One of the few things in this game's favour is the level of challenge. If you succeed in completing the whole operation, it is possible to slow down the speed of your aim, which makes things a bit tougher. But to sum up, this NES version of Operation Wolf left me hunting for the old coin-op, on which to take out some newly acquired frustration.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

To successfully carry out Operation Wolf, the player has to make his way through six stages. In each stage an important task needs completing in order to rescue the POWs. The first mission involves cutting off communications at an enemy base to prevent them calling for help. The second takes the player through a jungle where enemy boats fire from the river. From the jungle to the village where the third mission takes place. There are more civilians around here so accurate shooting is essential. The fourth assignment takes the player to the ammo dump. Cutting off the enemy's supply of fire power is the priority here. From the ammo dump, the player makes his way to the prison camp where freeing the POWs is accomplished. But things aren't over yet. Once free, the player has to get the POWs out of enemy territory. The sixth and final mission takes place at the airport. When the POWs are up and away, mission impossible has been made possible!



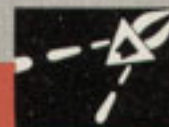
▲ Tut. Tut. Tut. A lot of wasted ammunition here.

MISSION REPORT

At the bottom of the screen are the player's stats. It tells him how much ammunition he has left, and how much damage he has sustained. It also provides information on how many enemy soldiers and vehicles need destroying on that particular mission. Keeping a watchful eye on the stats is important because it helps the player to decide whether they should hunt for ammunition and energy or just blast away!



BY: TAITO
PRICE: £TBA
RELEASE DATE: AUGUST
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 1
CONTINUES: 1
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: OK



COMMENT



RICH

Unlike Rob, I though the coin-op version of Operation Wolf was a complete bore with dull gameplay and nothing to keep you coming back for more. On the bright side,

Operation Wolf did have cool graphics and sound. This Nintendo conversion plays quite like the coin-op, but doesn't have anywhere near the graphical quality of the original. The gameplay is very dull indeed. Just point your sight and shoot. That's it. What's more, it's impossible to dodge enemy fire or shoot all of the soldiers on-screen. This makes your doom completely unavoidable - something that really puts me off a game. Shooting fans who own a zapper gun might like to get hold of this. However, I can think of loads of games more deserving of your hard-earned cash.



▲ All six stages of Operation Rather Stupid.



▲ It's a long and hazardous road to victory.

DEATH COUNT

When a mission comes to an end, whether it is successfully completed or not, the player is presented with some information regarding their performance. It tells how many shots were fired, and how many were successful hits. Players should then assess how much ammo they're wasting, with a view to greater accuracy and efficiency next time.

PRESENTATION 57%

Some macho shots of guns and knives open the proceedings. A speed of aim option and continue facility are available.

GRAPHICS 52%

Naff sprites that move like they've got drastic body twitches. Uninspiring backdrops.

SOUND 45%

Sound effects are more reminiscent of popcorn consumption than a war zone!

PLAYABILITY 50%

The light gun makes things more fun. Using the joystick is awkward and frustrating.

LASTABILITY 54%

While there is quite a high level of challenge, there is a very low level of incentive.

OVERALL 53%

Fans of the coin-op should not be deceived. This is a poorly put together conversion which lacks all of the coin-op's virtues.