



ULTRAMAN

Ultraman is pretty famous in Japan. He's been the star of several motion pictures in the Far East and the plot of each is remarkably similar. Usually a massive ten-storey high reptilian/robot is causing a bit of aggro to some poor defenceless normal-sized humans. Thankfully, Ultraman's around and he uses his various Ultra-powers to beat the living daylight out of these vindictive creatures.

These wafer-thin plots and the ooh-ahh kung-fu action have been captured perfectly in this Super Famicom cart. The action is displayed in horizontally-scrolling side-on-o-vision, with Ultraman strutting the parallax landscape dishing out Ultra-violence to the massive foes.

Ultraman has four Ultra-powers that come in handy for wearing down the enemies' energy bars. When it comes to finally dispatching them, the mysterious fourth-power (mounted in Ultra-Man's metallic shirt-sleeves) is used to blast them into oblivion.

But there are ten evil monstrosities awaiting our metallic hero.



▲ The mean, strutting Ultraman - in combat!

COMMENT

I'm a big fan of those utterly dire Japanese monster films, and am pleased to see that Ultraman captures all their cheesy crappiness. The sprites are superbly animated, and all the monsters look as though they're made out of rubber - just like the "real" things! The music and effects are perfect for this type of game, with tunes that sound like they're right out of a crappy 60's

JULIAN

movie and hopeless sampled monster noises! However, while the visuals and sonics are great, the gameplay is rather limited. It's very challenging, I'll admit, but Ultraman can't do many fighting moves and therefore some might find the game becomes dull fairly quickly. A two-player mode would have helped prolong its lasting appeal. If you're an ardent beat 'em up fan, Ultraman is worth looking at - while it certainly doesn't make any sort of use of the Super Famicom's fantastic hardware, it nevertheless provides plenty of laughs and challenge for anyone who wants to kick the bottoms of massive rubber monsters!





MAN



RUBBER-SUIT MARAUDERS

Some of the greatest ten-storey warriors in Ultraman's TV show and movie have made their way into this Super Famicom conversion. The graphics and animation on each are excellent. They really do look like men in rubber suits!



BEMULAR



The first meanie is predictably simple. Some fire-breathing causes problems but that's about it.



TELESDON



Head butts, fire-breathing and tail-swinging combine to make Telesdon your first real challenge.

ULTRA-POWER

With the aid of the controller's green button, and Ultraman's capacious laser-spitting cuffs, the monstrous aliens eat various forms of laser-death in this game. However, these weapons require energy, and the energy bar builds up quite slowly during the game. It's also worth remembering that you're going to need full Ultra-power to finish off the baddie at the end of the level.



SHIELD

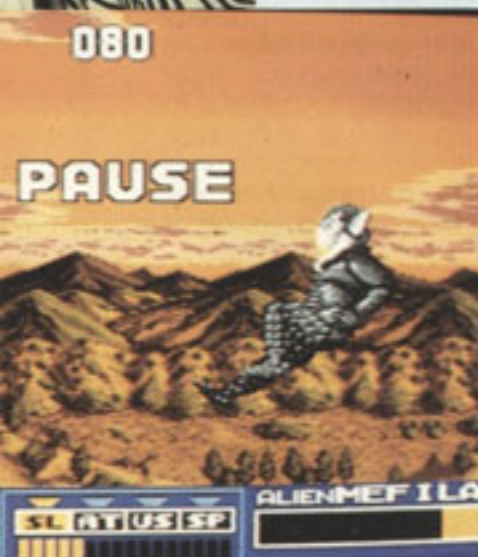


This barrier of pure Ultra-energy absorbs the fire-breathing attacks of the Godzilla-alikes, and reflects the laser attacks of the more lethal foes. It uses energy though, and a quick jump out the way does much the same job.

SL - SLASH



The bog-standard form of laser-attack. This uses little energy and inflicts only small amount of damage. Virtually useless against the majority of Ultraman's foes.



AT ATTACK



These hoop-like energy beams inflict double the damage of the laser, but they use far more energy and doesn't do anything a few good kicks will do just as well.

US ULTRA-S



These razor-sharp laser-blades use up most of Ultraman's precious Ultra-power, and inflict a vast amount of damage. Unfortunately, later foes dodge these with ease.

SP - FINISH



This weapon finishes off Ultra-Man's foes once the FINISH prompt appears at the top of the screen. It uses up all of Ultra-Man's powers, but is essential for progress.



GOMORAH

PAUSE



Yet more tail-swinging fun here with Gomorah, but watch out for his constrictor-like attack which squeezes the life out of Ultraman!



GERONIMON

PAUSE



Earthquake attacks and flying poisonous spines characterise Geronimon's evil line-up of attacks.



Z-TON

PAUSE



This final foe (and Ultraman's lethal nemesis) needs the full-might of your magic, ooh-ah kicks and fists before he eventually falls!

ULTRAMAN:
THE CULT

Ultraman is one of the most popular cult figures in Japan. He has his own weekly TV show and has been the star of countless mega-tacky motion pictures. Comics, books, and all sorts of other Ultra-paraphernalia are available on Far Eastern shores, and he's even had cameo roles in other games (including the abysmal Super Deformer Famicom game released earlier this year). At the time of writing, Ultraman is the top-selling game in Japan!

COMMENT



RICH

Ultraman is quite an entertaining game, but for all the wrong reasons! The graphics, gameplay and sounds are all laughably inadequate for a Super Famicom game, and yet the action is strangely compelling. The graphics are accomplished and very well-animated, and the sound matches the tacky atmosphere, but I get the feeling that more could have been made of the licence. The simple beat 'em up action is entertaining, but when you're shelling out over forty quid for a game, a bit more is needed to warrant purchase. Avid beat 'em up fans may get their money's worth, but I'm going to be sticking with Final Fight for my beat 'em up requirements.



岩本博士、何か
手は無いんですか?!



▲ A bad case of repellent breath.



BY: BANDAI

PRICE: £40.00

RELEASE DATE: IMPORT ONLY
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MED

LIVES: 3

CONTINUES: 0

SKILL LEVELS: 3

RESPONSIVENESS: ULTRA



PRESENTATION 77%

Very tacky on the whole - just like the TV series!

GRAPHICS 81%

Excellent sprites, but pretty uninspiring backdrops.

SOUND 79%

Laughable sound, but it makes the atmosphere that bit more tacky!

PLAYABILITY 79%

Easy to get into and quite addictive...

LASTABILITY 66%

...but there are only ten foes and the basic gameplay doesn't vary much from one to the other.

OVERALL 77%

A thoroughly enjoyable and quite hilarious beat 'em up that doesn't have quite enough variety to be worth its large asking price.