



9. Shooting Gallery and TV Powww!

Bundled at launch in 1976 with the Fairchild Video Entertainment System was the first video game ROM cartridge: the multi-game 'Videocart-1'. Nestled between Noughts and Crosses, Doodle and (DJ voice) "great for parties" Quadra Doodle, was a one-switch game called Shooting Gallery.

Inspired by TV light gun games of the age where you shot a moving white square, Shooting Gallery reduced the controls down to the trigger alone. The instructions read: "Electronic rifle versus dead ducks. Rifle repositions [on the left side] after every shot". The deceased ducks appear on the right-side of the screen, ever looping from top to bottom, and changing position after each hit.

Fairchild boosted one-button accessibility further by offering a range of game variations. You can adjust the speed of the game, and additionally the time you are given to hold back the zombie-duck apocalypse.

In 1978, a voice activated version of Shooting Gallery would find fame in the kids' television show "TV Powww!" syndicated across the USA and beyond. Shouty, violent, laggy and running the risk of public humiliation, for many this was a glimpse into the dark side of on-line gaming to come.



Dependant on the channel, lucky callers would get 15 to 30 seconds to score as high as they could by shouting “Pow” or “Pix” down their telephones. Scoring well was rewarded with better prizes. Versions were adopted across the USA, South America, Italy and Australia.

As a side note, this wasn’t the dawn of televised video gaming. The children’s programme Crack-a-jack in the UK featured regular head to head games of Pong games in 1975. In 1964 West Germany’s Der Goldene Schuss (The Golden Shot) featured a phone in television shooting gallery game, albeit with up, down, left, right human controlled aiming. In late ‘40s USA, the Dialling for Dollars lottery game show transferred from radio to TV. If called and you could recite a special password, you’d win that day’s prize. Cheap filler TV and hugely popular.

Around 1980 Mattel’s Intellivision console took over from rapidly ageing Fairchild Channel F and its chunky duck-shoot, bowling and baseball games. New games with better graphics included Jackpot a space shoot-em-up and US Football. Some of these inspired the release of the 4-in1 cart Sharp Shot in 1982, a mix of four timing-based target games.

With a slight lack of respect for the one-switch genre, these were marketed as for younger children. They also lacked speech control. Kids would have to wait for the likes of the BBC Micro “Micromike” found in UK Special Education settings before they could have fun using any “P” word they liked to play. There are a *lot* of rude words beginning with “P” in English, should you be that way inclined.







Timing skills beneficial. One-switch playable. Emulated in MESS.

No.5638

This package contains one Sharp Shot cartridge, two controller overlays, and playing instructions.

SHARP SHOT cartridge.

FOUR completely different games for 1 or 2 younger children. See how sharp you are - fire a football to a receiver in the end zone... blast flying saucers in deepspace... torpedo fleets of warships... zap bizarre monsters running through a maze!

- 4 great contests for younger children...or anyone who's "trigger happy"!
- Each game is a race against the clock to get your best score-just try to make every shot hit a target!
- The computer keeps score and time countdown for 1 or 2 sharpshooters.

For the highest quality Intellivision performance, we recommend using only Mattel Electronics Intellivision cartridges

Intellivision Intelligent Television

SHARP SHOT

Enclosed cartridge for use with INTELLIVISION Master Component. FOR COLOR TV VIEWING ONLY.

No.5638

BIBLIOGRAPHY and PICTURE CREDITS

9. Shooting Gallery and TV Powww!

TV Powww and TV Pixxx clips from various YouTube channels including Barney's Army:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCw5oXOniGVmkd7Su8_Vnkyg. Sharp Shot box art scan via

<https://www.theoldcomputer.com/game-box-art-covers/index.php?folder=Mattel/Intellivision>

Some information via <http://allincolorforaquarter.blogspot.com/2014/06/the-almost-untold-story-of-tv-powww.html>

SEE: OneSwitch.org.uk/page/100 for the full story

Special Effect

