

Number 4. - Legend of the Mystical Ninja (Series)

Written by Deekman & Kikineko

Tuesday, 17 March 2009 20:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 17 March 2009 21:29



Started in 1986 in the arcade as Mr. Goemon, The Legend of the Mystical Ninja is today one of Konami's longest running and highest rated game series. By continuing to receive positive reception from gamers and critics alike, it's no wonder Mr. Goemon has received more than 25 sequels, remakes, spin offs and even a pachinko release.

The series stars Goemon, a short-tempered resident of Edo who time and time again embarks on different adventures to save Japan. He introduced one of the most interesting weapons for a ninja to wield; a pipe that can be upgraded by collecting lucky cat statues.

Goemon is joined by many characters, most frequently his partner and best friend Ebisumaru, who is a chubby ninja with a love for food, alcohol and women of all kinds.

Goemon and Ebisumaru are not alone on their adventures. The series frequents several playable support characters who each offer different skills and game play styles: - Yae, the only female playable character, wields a katana and can turn into a mermaid.

- Sasuke, a battery operated ninja, is tiny compared to the other characters but packs a punch with his twin kunai and explosive skills.

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- Impact, a giant clockwork robot modeled after Goemon, swoops in to save the day with a flashy theme song.

This platformer meets RPG meets adventure game has many unique qualities. With characters that can throw the money you collect as a sub-weapon, villains who's idea of world domination is to transform Japan into a giant stage and an anime series who's main villain is named "Seppukumar" (a character who frequently tries to kill oneself), this game series rarely takes ninjaing seriously.

If you haven't given this series a shot there's no time like the present - or feudal Japan - to start. Gameplay types range from side scrolling action to 3D platforming with giant robot battles and hilarious mini games in between. You will fall in love with the characters instantly and as the story unveils to be more ridiculous then you could have imagined it will quickly become one of your favourite game series as well.

And now the best way to end every article; A big splashy musical number!

[youtube:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O65MjYN0ZTk>]