

Eye on Entertainment

Precious Metals? Nope. Precious Remakes

A Pokemon Game Review

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On March 14th, games stores everywhere were flooded with customers, boys and girls hungry for the latest edition of an ever-so-popular franchise. But what were these fans after? The answer is Pokemon® HeartGold and SoulSilver versions, made for the Nintendo DS system. Nintendo's Pokemon: 'Gold' and 'Silver' versions, released in 2000, continued a trend and finally acquired remakes of their own—the original Pokemon games, Red and Blue versions, were re-made into FireRed and LeafGreen in 2004. Also continuing Nintendo's trend of remaking older Pokemon titles, HeartGold and SoulSilver versions brought numerous enhancements to both their predecessors and the Pokemon franchise as a whole.

The original Gold and Silver versions brought 100 new Pokemon, or Pocket Monsters, to the game for the player to capture and train. HeartGold and SoulSilver, however, between themselves contain many Pokemon from all four generations of Pocket Monsters that exist. The difference between the two titles lies in the availability of different Pokemon to the player. In addition to an increase in the number of Pokemon since the originals, the iconic Pokemon remakes contain a wealth of new content to keep things fresh. There are plenty of new quests for the player, quests both heroic (stopping an evil organization out to enslave Pocket Monsters) and fun (memory games in certain

towns and even an in-game radio!). Despite the added content, nostalgic Pokemon fans will not be disappointed by HeartGold and SoulSilver. Both remakes have stayed true to the popular cities, people, and events that made the original titles fantastically

a certain tool that any Pokemon fan will love: The Pokewalker. Improved from its original design with the release of Japan's original Gold and Silver versions, the Pokewalker acts as a pedometer that rewards the outdoor activities of any Pokemon fan.

The Pokemon fanatic is able to transfer one of his or her Pokemon from their HeartGold or SoulSilver game to the Pokewalker device. Upon attaching the Pokewalker to a belt or stuffing it in your pocket, one is able to acquire a form of points called Watts. These Watts can be used to search for additional Pokemon or even items within the device, transferable back to the HeartGold or SoulSilver games. Both the HeartGold or SoulSilver game cartridges as well as the Pokewalker use an attached infrared device to communicate with one another, technology no other Pokemon title has featured. Interesting and new in-game content includes a three-dimensional view of the 'Johto' and 'Kanto' regions, or the Pokemon World in other words. Also, the player has the ability to show off their favorite Pokemon character; whichever Pocket Monster they have first in their party of six can be seen following them around in the game world.

Both HeartGold and Soulsilver games, given their ingenious new features and their revitalization of a classic Pokemon title, are bound to appeal to both the casual gamer as well as the die-hard Pokemon fan.

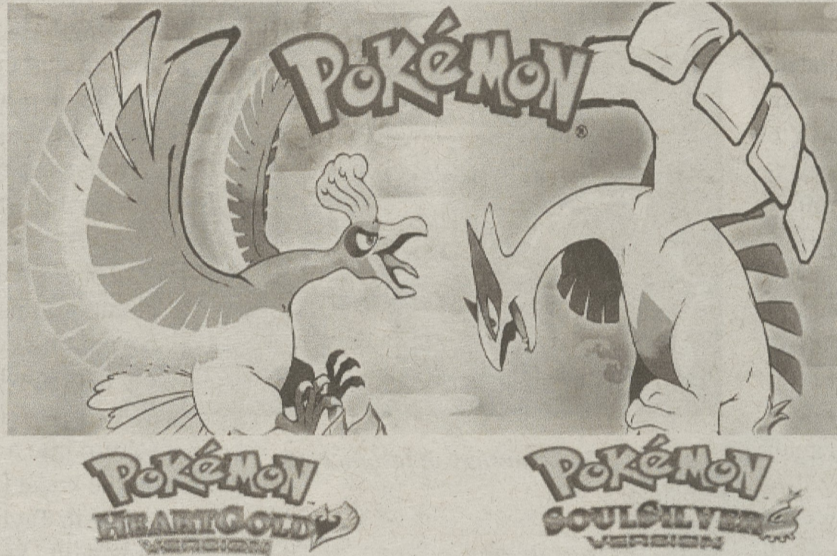


Image courtesy of: gamerant.com

brilliant. What made both new games stand out, however, were the new additions that were never before seen among America's Pokemon fans.

Even at first glance, HeartGold and SoulSilver's gleaming boxes stand out among other games. Both games come boxed with additional hardware,

Black Gives Way to Blue in AC

Alice in Chains Rocks the Borgata

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Over 20 years have passed since the formation of one of grunge's biggest bands. Forming in Seattle, WA in 1987, few would have guessed that Alice in Chains (along with fellow Seattle bands Nirvana, Soundgarden and Pearl Jam) would go on to revolutionize music and voice a new generation. In the near two decades since that revolution known as grunge (which killed the 80's glam party led by bands like Poison, Motley Crue and Winger) the band has seen some changes. Original bassist Mike Starr left the band in 1993 and was replaced by Mike Inez, formally bassist for Ozzy Osbourne. Lead singer Layne Staley's death in 2002, following a six year hiatus in which the band did little collaborating, left fans believing it was finally the end for Alice in Chains. Fortunately, surviving members Jerry Cantrell, Sean Kinney and Inez began playing together once again in 2005. Many singers joined them on stage for benefit concerts and former Pantera frontman Phil Anselmo was rumored to be the new lead singer for the reunited band before Cantrell tapped long time friend William DuVall to take Layne's place. Currently on the road promoting their 2009 release Black Gives

Way to Blue, their first studio album since 1995, they rolled into the Music Box at the Borgata on Friday March 12th to rock the shore.

Taking the stage just after 8 o'clock, a large sheet was raised shielding the stage. With the lights off and the crowd coming to their feet, the band took the stage with their silhouettes imposed on the sheet. They kicked off the show with the lead track of their new album, All Secrets Known. The opening line of the song, "Hope... A new beginning, time to start living - like just before we died," sent to crowd into a frenzy. After pounding out the classics It Ain't Like That and Again, Alice went back to their new album for their #1 hit Check My Brain. After some crowd interaction, the band ripped into 3 classics from their biggest album Dirt: Them Bones, Dam That River and Rain When I Die. Slowing things down just a bit and adding an acoustic guitar, they played their newest hit Your Decision and the classic Got Me Wrong.

After lead guitarist Jerry Cantrell introduced the band mates to the sellout crowd at the Borgata, they began the second half of their set with We Die Young off the band's first CD Facelift.

Fast forwarding to their latest album they blasted the dark single A Looking in View before slowing things down again with Nutshell, off of their Sap EP. Sickman and Junkhead off of Dirt followed, along with Acid Bubble off of Black Gives Way to Blue. The final song off the main set was their ever popular single Would?. The band retook the stage after a 5 minute break to give the frenzied crowd a rocking encore. The opening riffs of Man in the Box erupted the crowd one final time before finally ending the show with Rooster.

The band's energy level was high throughout the show on this night and I wish I could say the same for the crowd. While peaking at some points of the show, the mostly middle aged crowd was a little to sedate for my taste. While crowd participation was low, it didn't take away from the performance. I highly recommend to even the casual fan of Alice in Chains go this them live. Yes Layne is gone and can never be replaced but the chemistry and harmony between Cantrell and DuVall makes the future of Alice seem very bright.