The Nintendo GameCube is about to get its due

Before this morning, I knew I was going to buy the Nintendo Switch 2 but I didn't know when. After watching Nintendo's Switch 2 Direct today, in which a purple block traced the GameCube's stylized "G" logo, followed by high-res footage from *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker* and *F-Zero GX* and an announcement that they'll be playable at launch, I realized I'll be doing my damndest to get it on day one. It was the cherry on top of a stellar presentation that made the console's $449.99 price tag way easier to swallow.

GameCube games are coming to the Nintendo Switch Online (NSO) subscription's Classic Game Library feature, which the company is now shortening to "Nintendo Classics." It lets you play games from the NES, SNES, and Sega Genesis. Like the Game Boy and Nintendo 64 game collections, you'll need the NSO Expansion Pack for GameCube games. The existing catalog of playable Classic Game Library games is far from complete, but together (and combined with DLC for contemporary Switch games), they make the Expansion Pack well worth it.

The subscription gets even more enticing on the Switch 2, starting before the console even comes out — Nintendo is prioritizing long-time subscribers (with certain caveats) when it sends out Switch 2 preorder invites. The Expansion Pack will also let you play the Switch 2 editions of *Zelda* games *Breath of the Wild* and *Tears of the Kingdom* (provided you own their respective Switch 1 versions).

But the GameCube games are what I'm most excited about. I'd love for the Wii U's *Wind Waker HD* to get a Switch re-release, but the GameCube version is still one of the most beautiful

games I’ve ever played and looks great in Nintendo’s trailer for it. So does *F-Zero GX*, a game with such well-executed style and tight control that I would pit it against any futuristic racer today. The Switch 2 is also launching with *Soul Calibur II*, a game that featured adult Link as a playable character in his post-*Ocarina of Time* fighting-people-for-sport era.

The company flashed a few other re-releases coming down the line, like *Super Mario Strikers* and *Chibi-Robo!,* in the latter of which you play a tiny, toothbrush-armed robot tasked with cleaning up a very messy house. It’s way more fun than it sounds, and gives me hope for what Nintendo *could* announce. There are some excellent, but more obscure gems that never really leapt beyond the GameCube, like the creepy, Lovecraft-inspired *Eternal Darkness: Sanity’s Requiem* and *Cubivore,* in which you play a small, wild cube trying to bring color back to the world by eating other boxy creatures, winning the chance to mate, die, and be reborn over and over again until you’ve become the fittest survivor of them all.

And all of these will be playable with a forthcoming wireless recreation of the GameCube controller, as they should be. The GameCube wasn’t an abject failure, but it sold nowhere near as well as the Wii or the Switch. There’s no guarantee that the Switch 2 will keep up the sales pace set by its predecessor, but even if it manages half that console’s sales, it could give some games a well-deserved second look.

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