



# BACK

## BY POPULAR DEMAND

With the input of thousands of gamers around the globe, Mega Man Legends 3 is at long last almost a reality.

# It's been a long time coming, but Mega Man Volnutt—the hero of Mega Man 64 and the Mega Man Legends series—is almost ready to make his triumphant return. The last time we saw the blue-clad hero in an action-adventure game was in Mega Man Legends 2 (released in October 2000 for the original PlayStation), in which he overcame great adversity only to find himself trapped on the world of Elysium.

Meanwhile, on Earth (otherwise known as Terra), ancient machines were threatening to reactivate and wreak havoc on an unsuspecting populace, and Mega Man's allies—his female companion Roll and his rival/romantic interest Tron Bonne—were building a rocket ship to bring Mega Man back. Players were warned that he “might be stuck up there a little while more,” but it was hard to imagine that “a little while more” meant more than a decade.

Fast-forward to September 2010, when Capcom announced that Mega Man Legends 3 was in development for the Nintendo 3DS handheld. But this wasn't just going to be any old sequel—it was a sequel that was going to literally be by the fans, for the fans.

“We've entered an age where user-originated content has become prominent in all media and a big part of our lives, as we see exemplified with things like YouTube,” states producer Tatsuya Kitabayashi. “With so much high-quality work being generated via these outlets,

I feel that the line between pro and amateur is more blurred than ever before. This project began with the idea that we could harness some of these great ideas and talent coming out of the community and turn them into an interesting and fun game.”

Through Capcom's online “Devroom,” Mega Man enthusiasts would be able to actually contribute to the game's creation by proposing ideas, providing feedback, and more. It was an unprecedented idea that promised to provide new levels of interaction between game fans and game creators.

“Mega Man Legends is a franchise that possesses a dedicated installment of loving fans,” Kitabayashi proclaims. “I feel that this series has the most passionate fan base out of all of Capcom's titles, which is what we needed for a project like this—where we are creating a game together with all of the fans—to be possible.”

So far the collaboration has been quite fruitful; fans have been able to voice their opinions on the name and appearance of a major new female



character, create new enemies, write dialogue, and more, plus be exposed to the intricacies of game development, such as character modeling and voice recording. Of course, what ultimately matters is how well the game plays—and from the looks of things, fans won't be disappointed.

## SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

After spending some time with an early version of Mega Man Legends 3, we can safely say that development is on the right track. The series hasn't lost a step during its hiatus; veteran Mega Man Legends players will feel right at home as they run, jump, and shoot their way through



He isn't Mega Man, but new playable character Barrett packs plenty of firepower [above] and has mad hoverbike skills [right].





Man's tricks and then some. Barrett can acquire special weapons (such as the Volcanic Leggings, which give him a flaming kick, and the Burst Spreader, which fires off five powerful shots), plus you can

work cut out for him. Thanks to the game's spacious setting—Teomo City on Klicklan Island—and Barrett's ability to ride around on his hoverbike, Mega Man Legends 3 feels

more open than its predecessors. And there's plenty to do, too. At one point you may find yourself running through the city, defending citizens from missile-firing Reaverbots,

colorful cel-shaded environments. Though the default controls have been upgraded for modern times—you move the via the analog Circle Pad and fire your weapon with the R Button, for example—the game still feels like vintage Mega Man Legends.

make him unleash melee attacks (by pressing the A Button) and execute a superfast dash move (by pressing Y) that lets him run straight up walls. Additionally, the inclusion of Barrett as the hero helps introduce newcomers to the series through a pair of fresh eyes.

Naturally, a lot has changed, as well. In the portion of the game we played, Mega Man wasn't even the main character; filling the role of protagonist was a white-jacketed, red-haired, hoverbike-riding youth named Barrett. This deputy leader of the Bright Bats gang might not be Mega Man, but he's got all of Mega

If you're yearning to play as Mega Man, though, don't worry. "Mega Man is still stranded on Elysium and hasn't yet returned home," notes Kitabayashi, "but we do, of course, intend to make him playable along with Barrett for the main game."

In the meantime, Barrett has his

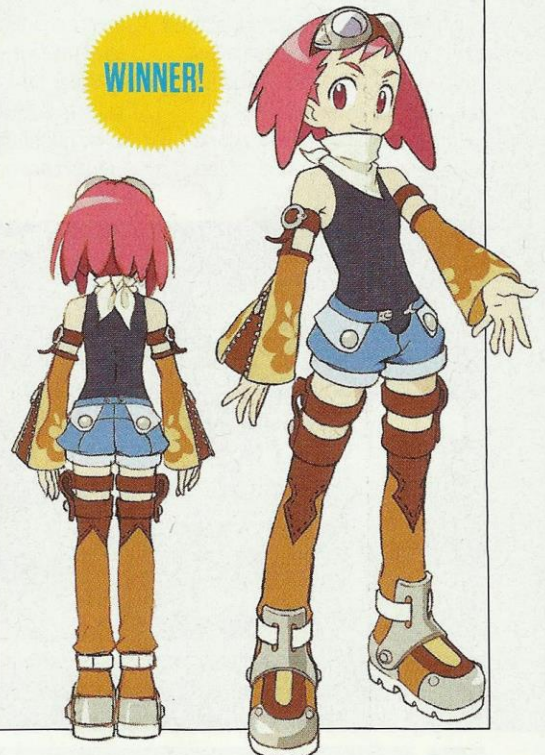
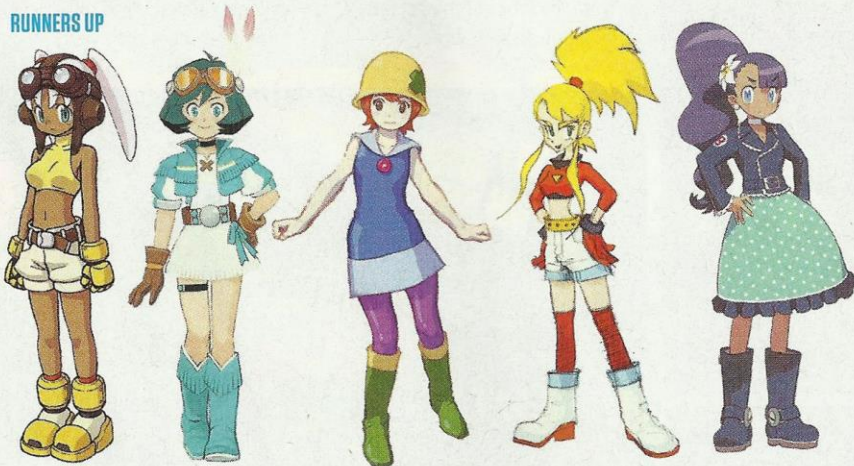


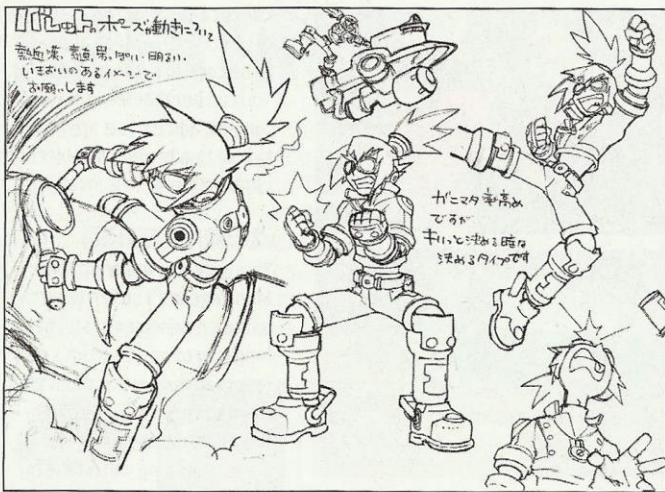
The Bonne mech shown here was designed by a fan, then adapted into a boss by the Capcom staff. This whip-wielding foe is no pushover!

## LEGEND IN THE MAKING: AERO

One of the first Devroom activities was a vote to determine the look for Aero, a new female character and a companion of Barrett's. Nine designs from various creators were proposed, and the one with the most votes was implemented in the game. At one point Aero's name was even up for debate. Originally intended to be named Sephira in North America, the character was renamed Aero (which was always her planned Japanese name) due to fan response.

### RUNNERS UP





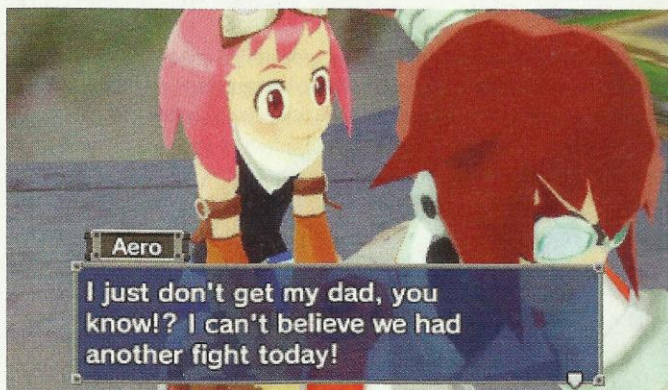
Loads of concept drawings were created to bring Barrett to life.

while at another you could be racing through the streets against the other members of the Bright Bats gang. Other missions include a boss battle against a rival gang leader named Bullbreath, a timed fetch quest to retrieve Tron Bonne's adorable Servbots, and an assignment in which you escort Aero (a female member of the Bright Bats) to various locales around the island.

One of the coolest encounters we experienced was a battle against the local law enforcement. Fed up with the Bright Bats and other hoverbike riders flouting authority, the chief of police (who also happens to be Aero's

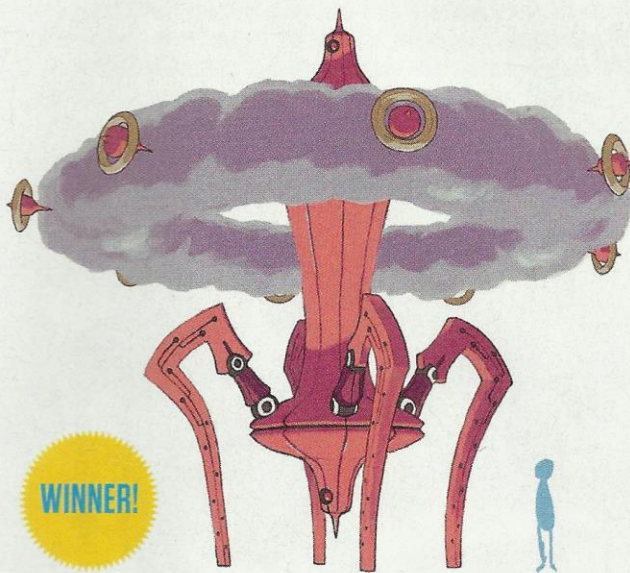
dad) enlists Roll to build a wheeled mech called the Anti-Rider Crusader (or ARC1), to take down Barrett and his friends. As you might expect, the heroes aren't just going to surrender, and the conflict that ensues is an action-packed on-rails shooting sequence in which you must blow out the ARC1's tires, shoot mines out of the sky, destroy cars that the ARC1 throws at you, and blast the ARC1 directly in its cannon as it attempts to release a devastating attack.

As Mega Man Legends fans know, though, a good portion of the adventuring usually takes place underground, and that remains the

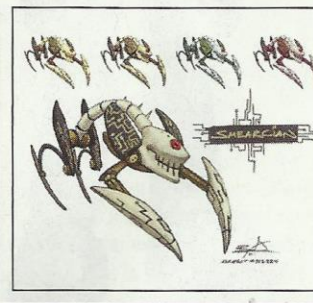
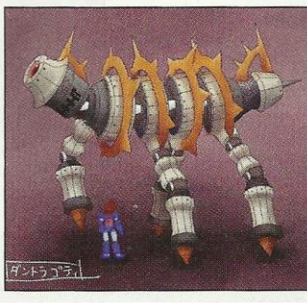
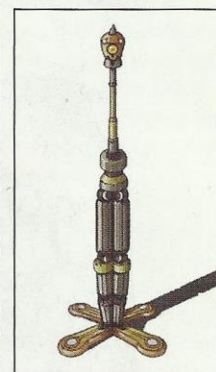
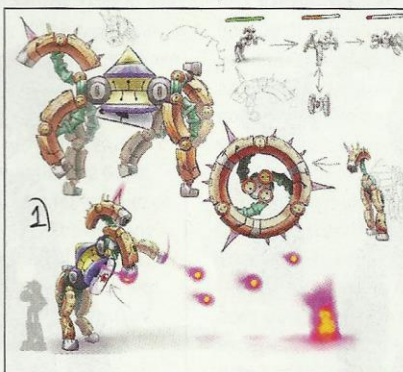
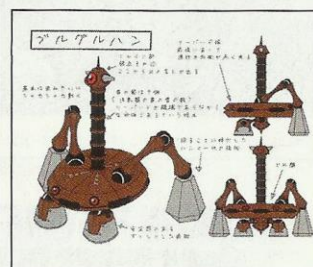
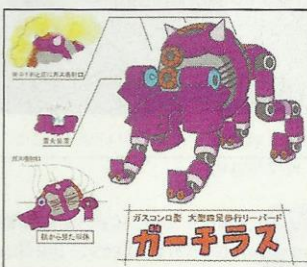


## LEGEND IN THE MAKING: REAVERBOTS

You can't have a Mega Man Legends game without vicious, creepy-looking Reaverbot enemies. Although the game will feature familiar returning Reaverbots, the Devroom tapped the fans to submit their own ideas. The winning entry, a rather large lightning-emitting Reaverbot by the name of Calamity, was chosen from about 400 entries. Many of the runners-up are impressive as well.



### RUNNERS UP



# THE PROTOTYPE VERSION

If you're itching to play Mega Man Legends 3, you'll soon be able to scratch that itch. Though the full game doesn't have a release date, Mega Man Legends 3: Prototype Version (which features most of the content discussed in this article) will be one of the first offerings on the Nintendo eShop. According to producer Tatsuya Kitabayashi, "The Prototype Version is not a demo. It features quite a few original missions as well as a lot of content that won't be in the main game, and I can guarantee that its value well exceeds its price. You can download this game for approximately the price of one smartphone app, so I hope that even those with concerns download it and give it a try."



Lafonica—also known as the fire of all creation—which appears to be central to the game's plot. You can bet that Mega Man, the Bonnes, and Barrett are going to butt heads when an object of ultimate strength is involved.

## CALLING ALL CREATORS

Though we're enjoying Mega Man Legends 3 so far, the game's development still has a long way to go—Capcom's representatives say it's about 25 percent complete—and there are many mysteries left to solve. How long will it take for Mega Man to get back home?

And is it just a coincidence that Barrett's name is a contraction of Barrell Caskett (Roll's grandfather) and that both characters have metal plates covering the left halves of their faces? (Come to think of it, Roll does mention that her grandfather has been missing for a while....) Those questions will be answered in the months to come.

The most exciting part, however, is that many of the decisions will be determined by fans like you. If you want to test the waters of game design and have a hand in creating one of the Nintendo 3DS system's most anticipated games, visit [www.capcom-unity.com/devroom](http://www.capcom-unity.com/devroom) to find out how to join in on the fun.

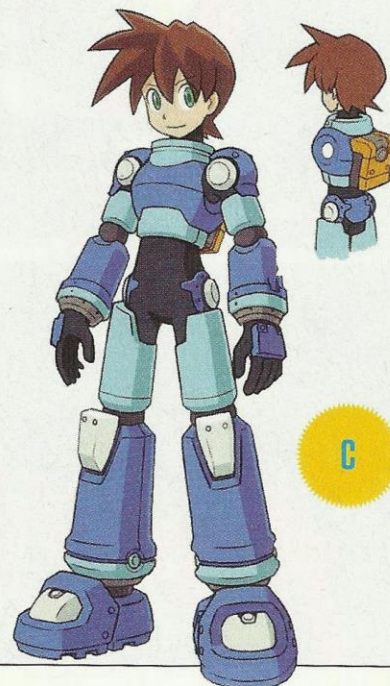
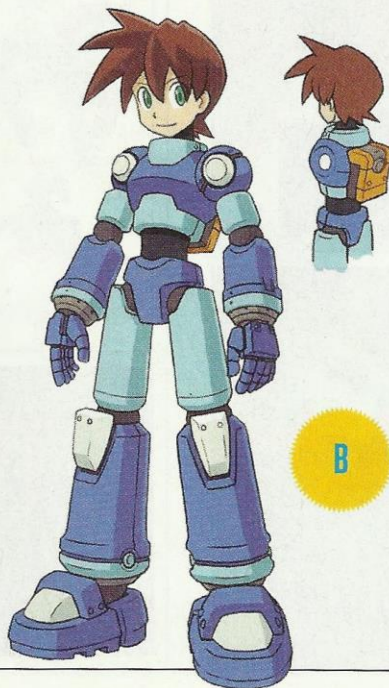
case this time out. You'll have numerous opportunities to venture into mysterious ruins beneath the island's surface, where you'll battle armies of Reaverbots and have the chance to find valuable refractors (which Roll desperately needs to complete the rocket and rescue Mega Man). Within the ruins you'll also square off against the Bonne family's amphibious mech. Armed with a whip, powerful projectiles, and electrical attacks (which can be especially dangerous when you're ankle-deep in water), this mech is one of the elements specifically designed by the fans. Additionally, while exploring underground you'll learn about a powerful artifact called the Klicke

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## LEGEND IN THE MAKING: MEGA MAN'S DESIGN

Even Mega Man Volnutt's appearance is open to Devroom debate. The three design options don't offer radical changes to the character (in fact, version A is how Mega Man looked in Mega Man Legends 2), but they each present something different. As of press time, a final design decision hadn't been reached.



# TALES FROM THE DEVROOM

Without a doubt, one of the most compelling aspects of Mega Man Legends 3 is the unprecedented amount of input that fans can have on the game through Capcom's online Devroom. The forum allows for collaborative game development on a scale that's never been previously attempted, but the rewards could be great for professional game makers and Mega Man fans alike. To learn more about the Devroom's inner workings, we spoke to Mega Man Legends 3 producer Tatsuya Kitabayashi, Capcom community manager Joveth Gonzalez, and Devroom community liaison Greg Moore.



TATSUYA  
KITABAYASHI



JOVETH  
GONZALEZ



GREG  
MOORE

**NINTENDO POWER** Are you happy with the response the fans have given to the Devroom opportunities so far?

**JOVETH GONZALEZ** It has been an incredible experience to watch this community get excited about each opportunity that we have given them to be creatively involved in the game. The fact that each event creates ongoing, meaningful dialogues between fans and the developers is a testament to the success of the goals of this project. This is truly a unique experience in gaming and I could not be happier with what we've set out to do.

**How concerned is management about showing an unfinished game to the public so early in development?**

**TATSUYA KITABAYASHI** Showing people the game in its unfinished state is the fundamental stance of this project, so we aren't really concerned about it. On the contrary, by having fans take part in the project this early in its production, we're aiming to draw a clear distinction from past projects where basic designs have been recruited from users to make them feel like they had some involvement in games that were already nearly complete.

I will say, however, that we were quite nervous for a while surrounding our initial announcement of this project at September's New York Comic Con last year, as we didn't even have any screenshots to show people. We really didn't have anything prepared yet when we made that announcement. [Laughs]

**JG** From our perspective, early on we weren't quite sure how transparent the team wanted to be so we approached everything from a very cautious standpoint: Will PR be OK with this? Is marketing going to be mad with this reveal? Finally, as the project evolved and we saw the earnestness in the development team and how important this transparency was to the basic tenet of the project, we were able to put away our concerns and just allow the team to have this ongoing, completely open discussion with the fans.

**What's surprised you the most about fan suggestions/interactions in the Devroom so far?**

**JG** For me, it's been a pleasant surprise to see how personally invested these Devroom members have become. Allowing them to constantly engage in conversations with our development team and to be able to sit in and participate in the decision-making process has led to this deep connection to the title. This has led to various grassroots, community-driven campaigns to help ensure that Mega Man Legends 3: Prototype Version is a success. The organic nature of this support is beyond humbling to experience, and I only hope that it continues to grow.

**What kind of unexpected difficulties have there been?**

**JG** As with anything of this scope, the amount of daily coordination between our North American office and our Japanese offices is intense. We have weekly Devroom-specific video conference calls with Japan in which we all sit down and hammer out the next week's schedule and more. Early on, before we were lucky enough to have Greg onboard, it was just me on the community side of MML3 and I was overwhelmed with the amount of information that was coming out of Japan. Late nights became the norm for me. Thankfully, we got Greg onboard and now he's able to manage the flow of information by using his amazing translation skills.

**Has there been much of a difference in responses between fans from Japan and fans from the West?**

**GREG MOORE** I'd say Legends fans are fairly in tune with one another when it comes to what they love about this franchise and what they want from it, and the results of the polls we've held in both Devrooms have suggested as much. The American Devroom does seem more geared towards facilitating lots of open discussion with its mighty forum section, though Japan is certainly not lacking for participation in our monthly Devroom events.

**What percentage of the game would you say is being determined by fans as opposed to being decided upon by the Capcom staff?**

**TK** I can't really give a concrete number here. This is a very fluid process that hasn't been fully set in stone yet. If fans feel that fan-made content is sparse, we'll add more. That's the kind of feedback we want you to post in the Devroom!

**Is there any aspect that you would say is off limits to being determined by the fans?**

**TK** When all is said and done, nobody really wants to play through a game where they already know everything that happens in the plot, so I don't think we'll be having the fans decide on the game's story.

**What other aspects of the game will fans be creating or voting on in the coming months?**

**GM** Without going into too much detail and getting myself into a lot of trouble, I can tell you that we're likely to see many more chances to contribute in ways both big and small, including the chance to design some things you might have always wanted to for a Mega Man game. We're also likely to see some reprises of the more-popular events we've done thus far.

**Finally, why should gamers join in and participate in the Mega Man Legends 3 Devroom?**

**GM** Gamers should take part in the Devroom because it shows and explains a lot of aspects of game creation that they may have always wondered about. Also, because the Devroom exemplifies a new type of community-centric game development, where gamers have an unprecedented amount of input into how this game turns out.

**JG** This is something incredibly special that has never been done before for console games. The ability to influence aspects of a game on a regular basis and to feel as invested as the game developers themselves is something that is rarely experienced. Gamers should definitely take the time to check out the Devroom and what we have to offer so that when they eventually get to play the game, they can say, "Yeah, I helped make that" and maybe even see themselves in the game credits. This is truly a game by the fans and for the fans.

**TK** In the Devroom, we're showing people what goes on behind the scenes of game development, and I think it has a lot of interesting, helpful content for anyone who's ever wondered how games are created or who hopes to make games in the future. So I hope those people come check it out!

