



Children of the evolution

CUBE

INFORMATION

R: RACING EVOLUTION

PUBLISHER: EA

DEVELOPER: NAMCO

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGINE: JAPAN

PLAYERS: 1-2

MEMORY: 2 BLOCKS

STATS

- 35 LICENSED CARS
- 12 DIFFERENT TRACKS
- RACING LIFE MODE
- UPGRADEABLE CARS



GINA G!

OKAY... NOT REALLY

Gina is your main opponent in the Racing Life mode. She'll hassle you all the way through, but she turns out to be really nice at the end. What a cop out.



"TWO HOURS IN YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF AT THE WHEEL OF A CALSONIC SKYLINE. THIS IS WHERE THE FUN STARTS!"

R: RACING

STORY TIME: Every chapter of the Racing Life mode is joined to the next by way of FMV cut-scenes such as this one. Pretty isn't she?



⤴ The Rally courses allow for some extreme off-road racing sans the broken limbs.



⤵ It's Monaco's infamous Loews hairpin. Hey! Slow down!

The GC gets its first decent racing simulation!

IF THERE'S

one type of game that GameCube owners could really do with, it's a racing simulation. Why we have had to wait so long for one to appear is beyond us, but every racing fan out there has their hopes pinned on Namco's latest racer. With all that pressure on their backs, how could the team possibly deliver?

There's one thing we must make clear before we go on. When you first start playing *R: Racing Evolution* you will be disappointed. Even the most open-minded of you will shrink a little and maybe even shed a tear. Every member of the **CUBE** team was looking forward to this, and they all left the first session grumbling words like 'disaster,' and others less printable. It's slow, dull and tedious. Don't get too depressed though, because there is a light at the end of this tunnel.

Namco's latest offering has five main gameplay modes: Racing Life, Event Omnibus, Arcade and Time Trial. Racing Life is the mode that defines the game. You play the part of ambulance driver Rena, who just happens to get spotted by a top notch racing coach Stephan Garnier. He takes you under his wing and teaches you the ropes before throwing you into full-on races. Each chapter of the story is linked together with FMV cut-scenes where Rena has little asides, and argues with rivals.

This is all very well, but you have to stick with it. Your first car is the De Tomaso, an extraordinarily slow car. Anyone who has played *Gran Turismo* will remember how that particular series always starts in a similar way, very slow cars that handle like a cow in quicksand. Stick with it however, and about two hours in you'll find yourself at the wheel of a Calsonic Skyline. This, my friends, is where the fun starts!

Another thing that should be made very clear is that this is not *Ridge Racer 6*. Nor is it *Gran Turismo*. This is a simulation, therefore the cars handle and sound just like they should in real life. As far as handling goes think *Gran Turismo 3* and you're pretty much there. You have the option to use ABS brakes, traction control and brake assistance, but it's not much fun to have a computer braking for you. Thankfully you can switch off all the assistance in the options.

The *Ridge Racer* influence comes in the form of little arcade elements. The music for example is pure *Ridge Racer*. Radio chat comes into your ear-piece from your team and from other racers. Take a corner well or spin out and you'll hear the relevant comments.

This is similar to the voiceovers in *Ridge Racer*, but nowhere near as annoying and far more relevant.

⤵ Hold back on the gas unless you want to fail.



LOOKING GOOD IN DRAG

EASY ON THE GAS FELLA!



⤴ The Hotrod is a beast of a car, but we know how to handle it.

The Drag section is a strange addition given that it makes up so little of the game. You basically have to keep the breaks applied until the green light appears, and then hold down the accelerator. Halfway down the straight you get the opportunity to kick in with a Nitro, but winning is all down to getting a perfect start. All that hard work and the race is over in less than ten seconds.

EVOLUTION



Fast, powerful, great looking cars. This section of the game is where it's at.



UP FOR IT?

IT'S BIG

There are 166 different Challenges in the Event Omnibus. However good you are it's going to take you a while to get through them all.



PRICEY: You can look at the Advan Kondo as soon as you switch the game on, but unless you have a million credits, you'll come away disappointed.



GIVE US A TUNE

GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY

We were under the impression that this game would allow you to tinker with your cars, but it turns out there aren't that many options after all. Once you have bought a car you can take it into the Garage and upgrade it. This 'upgrading' is limited to two main options: Tuning and Lightweight. Tuning just generally upgrades the car, giving it higher HP and the like. Lightweight Kits bring the overall weight of the car down, thus giving it better acceleration and a higher top speed.

Before you race you can also alter specific properties of the car such as down-force, traction, gear ratio and several others.



The EXP Speed 8 goes like the clappers and sounds great.

CONTINUED

Other racers taunt you when you screw up, and curse you when you get in their slipstream. The best addition has to be the Tension Meter. Get within four or five car lengths of another racer and a bar will appear above their vehicle. As you continue to hassle them the bar will fill up, and you'll hear the driver getting more and more stressed out. Eventually they'll fold under the pressure and completely spin out. There is nothing more satisfying than purposefully holding back just so you can wind up another driver. If you're trying to mess up someone's score in a championship, making them spin out is a great way to do it.

While Racing Life should be your first port of call, the Event Omnibus is where the meat of the game lies. Split into three sections (Event, Showroom and Garage), this is where you'll open up the other 80% of the game. Event Omnibus allows you to take part in 166 different challenges. These range from one-race events, to grudge matches, to six-race championships. Each event costs money to enter (you will have earned plenty of

dosh from Racing Life), but the rewards for winning (some great cars and even more money) are more than worth it. The Showroom is the place where you can buy the really special cars. These are the cars that you can't win however hard you try. The daddy of them all is the Advan Kondo S101, an awesome machine that can be yours for the bargain price of 999,000 credits (cringe). Every car that you buy can be tuned up in the Garage. Options include Step 1, 2 and 3 Tuning, and Lightweight Stage 1, 2 and 3. This is, however, the limit of the game's tuning options. When it comes to tweaking your car this is no *Gran Turismo*, though you should note that you can set up your car before every race using the dozen or so sliders in the tuning menu.

As far as courses go, there are 12 in all, and these tie in with the three styles of racing on offer: GT, Rally and Drag. Naturally there are different styles of car to take advantage of these tracks, and for once the cars do actually act differently depending on what surface they're on. The Rally section is particularly good. Once again though we'd say that when you first come across

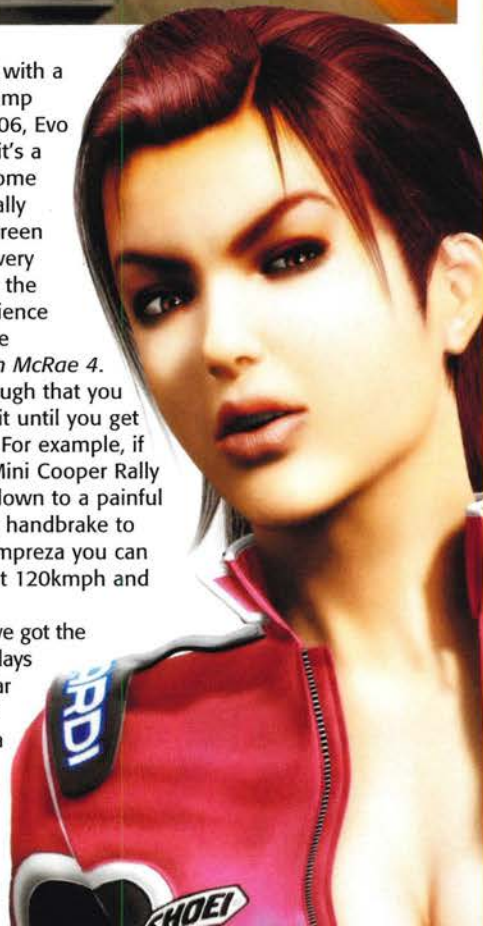
"THERE'S NOTHING MORE SATISFYING THAN HOLDING BACK SO YOU CAN WIND UP ANOTHER DRIVER"

大まで入力して待機してください
ブレーキを離すとスタートします



it you're going to hate it with a passion, but once you jump behind the wheel of a 206, Evo VII or Impreza Rally Car it's a totally different game. Some areas of the track are really bumpy and the entire screen tilts left and right with every little bump. It's probably the most realistic rally experience we've had aside from the dedicated titles like *Colin McRae 4*. We can't emphasise enough that you really have to stick with it until you get the more powerful cars. For example, if you take a hairpin in a Mini Cooper Rally Car you'll have to slow down to a painful speed and apply a bit of handbrake to get around it. With the Impreza you can scream into the corner at 120kmph and glide round perfectly.

By now you should have got the message that the game plays really well once you get far enough into it, so we can put that aspect aside for a while. The last game to be developed in this way was *Soul Calibur II*.



TAKE ME TO YOUR DEALER

THE CARS YOU'LL BE DREAMING ABOUT

The cars in the game are divided into eight main categories: GT1, GT2, GT3, LM Racecars, Rally1, Rally2, Drag and Classic. Here are the best cars in each category for you to drool over:

COLLECTION
コレクション | カーコレクション | GTクラス1

BMWのラインナップ中、最もBMWらしくも最もスポーティなモデルが「M3」である。その歴史はレースと共有すると驚くかもしれないだろう。初代は当時グループAレースのホモロゲーション取扱いで開発され、オーパーフェンダーや大型のエアロパーツといった出で立ちにより、世界的大ヒットを記録した。その初代に因襲することなく登場した最新のM3は、1.8インチのワイドタイヤを履かせたオーパーフェンダーに身を包み、

このページ | キャンセル

GT1: BMW MCLAREN F1
The car that was featured on the disc this month. What a beauty!

MACHINE
イベントオムニバス | カーショップ | GTクラス2

最高速: 300km/h
加速: 0-100 1.997 sec
ハンドリング: 100000
ブレーキ: 100000

4WD 405000 RP
1997 cc
280 ps 40.3 kgm
1230 kg

ラリーの歴史が長い三菱から生み出されたラリーウェポン。ラリーモデルをベースにロードレース仕様に変更した競速マシン。
2576121RP

決定 | キャンセル

GT2: MITSUBISHI LANCER EVOLUTION VIII RS
The Lancer Evo is always a safe bet, even if it is a little chunky.

MACHINE
イベントオムニバス | チューンショップ | ラリクラス1

最高速: 300km/h
加速: 0-100 2.000 sec
ハンドリング: 100000
ブレーキ: 100000

300 ps 55.3 kgm
309 ps 57.0 kgm
1230 kg
1190 kg

価格: 2576121RP

チューンしたいマシンを選択して下さい。

決定 | キャンセル

GT3: INTEGRA TYPE A
The GT3 cars are a little slow, but you wouldn't say no would you?

MACHINE
イベントオムニバス | カーショップ | プロトタイプクラス

最高速: 300km/h
加速: 0-100 2.000 sec
ハンドリング: 100000
ブレーキ: 100000

MR 998000 RP
3997 cc
440 ps 53.0 kgm
900 kg

KONDO Racingが2003年度のル・マンで使用した純日本製マシン。優れた実力性能によって、非常に扱いやすい一台。
2576121RP

決定 | キャンセル

LM RACECARS: ADVAN KONDO S101
The crème de la crème of the cars on offer. An absolute dream to drive and look at.

MACHINE
アーケード | マシン | ラリクラス1

最高速: 300km/h
加速: 0-100 2.000 sec
ハンドリング: 100000
ブレーキ: 100000

4WD RALLY CAR
1994 cc
300 ps 48.0 kgm
1230 kg

水平対向エンジンと4WDの組み合わせというスバル独特のメカニズムを持つ一台。様々な過渡で安定した運動性能を発揮する。

決定 | キャンセル

RALLY1: SUBARU IMPREZA WRX STi RALLY CAR
Screams around dusty and tarmac corners like there's no tomorrow.

MACHINE
イベントオムニバス | カーショップ | フライベーククラス

最高速: 100km/h
加速: 0-100 1.565 sec
ハンドリング: 100000
ブレーキ: 100000

RR 250000 RP
1565 cc
138 ps 17.2 kgm
980 kg

コンパクトで軽量。そして低重心という素性のよさで多くの勝利を手にしてきた伝説の名車。シンプルでいて美しいRR。
2576121RP

決定 | キャンセル

RALLY2: ALPINE A110 RALLY CAR
It may be retro, but it still rockets around the corners.

MACHINE
イベントオムニバス | チューンショップ | ドラッグクラス

最高速: 300km/h
加速: 0-100 2.000 sec
ハンドリング: 100000
ブレーキ: 100000

860 ps 135.0 kgm
895 ps 138.1 kgm
1900 kg
1840 kg

価格: 2576121RP

チューンしたいマシンを選択して下さい。

決定 | キャンセル

DRAG: CHARGER R/T DRAG CAR
The hotrod of the bunch, this one looks and sounds the part.

MACHINE
イベントオムニバス | チューンショップ | フライベーククラス

最高速: 100km/h
加速: 0-100 1.565 sec
ハンドリング: 100000
ブレーキ: 100000

110 ps 10.5 kgm
110 ps 17.1 kgm
745 kg
725 kg

価格: 2576121RP

チューンしたいマシンを選択して下さい。

決定 | キャンセル

CLASSIC: GIULIA GT JUNIOR
We're not really into our classic cars, but this is the best of them.



RALLY GOOD SHOW

TEARING DOWN THE STRAIGHT

Naturally you'll want to know about all the tracks on offer, so here's a quick rundown of all 12:

SUZUKA A (GT)

This famous Japanese course is made up of a really long straight and plenty of winding corners. You can cut the corners but it's faster to stick to the road.

SUZUKA B (GT)

This is the A track with a significant extension and a few hairpins. The S-bend at the end can totally be cut across with a powerful car.

TWIN RING MOTEGI SUPER SPEEDWAY (GT)

A simple oval track where slipstreaming is the only way to catch a decent opponent.

PHILIP ISLAND CIRCUIT (GT)

A wide open circuit dealing in long easy bends and a few right angles. A pleasure to drive along.

YOKOHAMA MINATO MIRAI CIRCUIT (GT)

Less famous than Suzuka but still well-known. A nice long straight and some narrow, tight corners in the built-up inner city.

MONACO CIRCUIT (GT)

The best GT circuit in the game. Every racing fan knows this circuit inside out and it's always a good measure of a game. *R: Racing Evolution* passes with flying colours.

GREEN FIELD CIRCUIT (GT)

Open, flat and very green. This is probably the most boring GT circuit on offer.

RALLY ARENA SS CIRCUIT (RALLY)

This circuit is made up of two tracks running side by side, so that the cars can compete on times without bumping into each other.

WATER BRIDGE CIRCUIT (RALLY)

A wicked little A to B circuit that takes you through a forest before winding up the mountain and through a little village.

WINDMILL HILL CIRCUIT (RALLY)

The best rally track in the game. It's a bumpy track and there are several areas where you can fall off the track and have to take an alternative path.

SURFSIDE CIRCUIT (DRAG)

A simple straight track. It's lit up very nicely, and there are lots of people cheering, but there's really nothing much to say about it.

DRAG CIRCUIT 2 (DRAG)

Another straight track in a different setting. It could be set underwater though to be honest. It's just A to B, so who cares?



Third on the final lap... it's not looking too promising, and Gina will be a nightmare if she wins this.

The Drag modes look very nice, but they're a bit shallow. A to B in the quickest time... very boring.



DON'T CHEAT: The Time Trial mode doesn't allow you to cut corners: you have to stick to the track, rather like the License Tests in *Gran Turismo*.

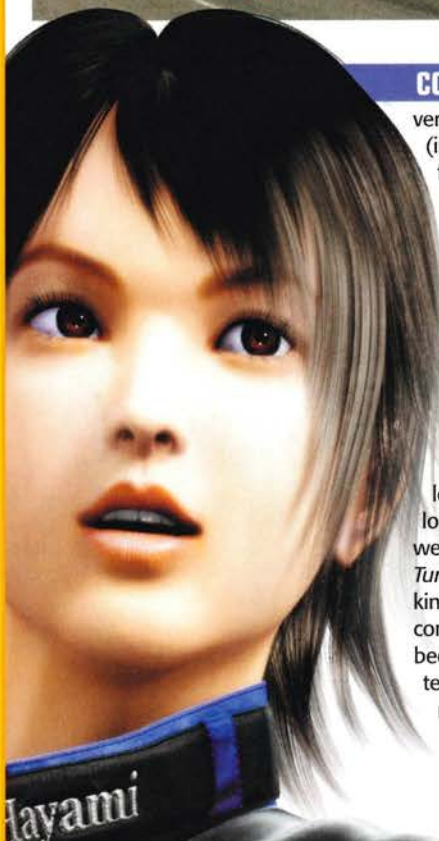


The game transforms when you open up the more powerful cars.



CONTINUED

You may also remember that the GC version of that game was slightly improved (in terms of texture, colour and framerate) over the PS2 version, so this should be the case with *R: Racing Evolution*. Strangely though it isn't. Having played all three versions of the game we can tell that they're all identical. The only difference comes with the control devices, and the GC pad is perfect for it. Accelerate and brake with perfect analogue precision using the shoulder buttons, and steer with the smooth analogue stick. As far as graphics are concerned, despite looking identical to the PS2 version it still looks fantastic. Not as good as *Burnout 2* we'll grant you, but easily as good as *Gran Turismo 3*. Having no other games of this kind to choose from, we certainly won't be complaining all that much. It would have been nice to have some smoother textures, some anti-aliasing and some more vibrant colours, but there are plenty of effects to keep you happy.



SWITCH!

TURN IT OFF

The standard option in the game switches on all of the driving assistance aids like traction control and ABS, but it's not much of an experience that way. Turn it off now!

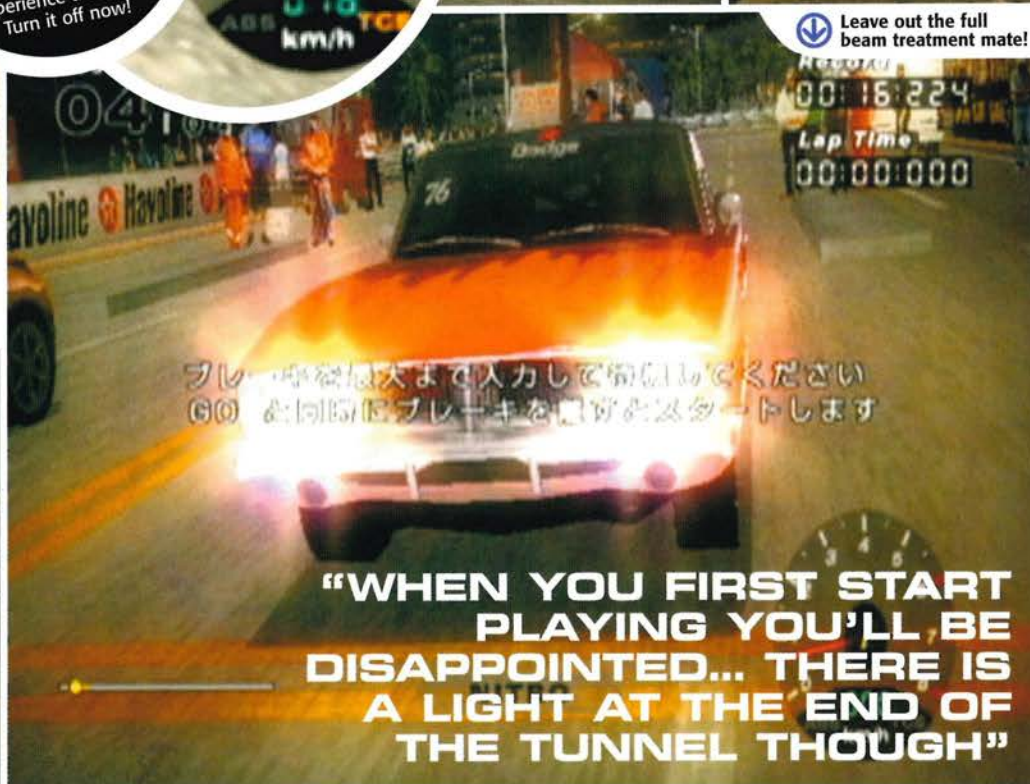


⤴ The power of the Subaru Impreza will have you in a ditch on the first corner. Slowly, slowly, catchy monkey, innit?

⤵ The Drag racing is all about starting well and using the Nitro burst at the right time. Tactics, see?



⤵ Leave out the full beam treatment mate!



“WHEN YOU FIRST START PLAYING YOU’LL BE DISAPPOINTED... THERE IS A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL THOUGH”



The different lighting effects shimmer pleasingly off the tarmac, giving an almost blinding effect in some areas. The reflection mapping on the cars is nice as well, right down to the point that you can see the colour of the banners reflected on the paintwork. Saying that, it isn't overdone: it's just right.

Our only real complaints come from four different areas. Firstly, where are the weather conditions? We know cars wouldn't race in extreme conditions, but it would be nice to have some rain to go with the sunny and overcast effects. Secondly, there need to be more cars and more tracks. If *Gran Turismo* didn't exist we might not have brought this up, but it does. There are enough to keep you happy, but we would have loved some more rally tracks. Thirdly, the game is too easy. Maybe we're just too good at racing games, but we didn't have any problems at any point in the game. How about a difficulty level where you lose even if you screw up one corner? Last on our little list is the network option. Surely in this day

and age there should be an online and LAN option, especially from Namco. It's been working closely with Nintendo for some time now: LAN should have been in there from the start.

Given that this is the only real option as far as GC racing sims go, *R: Racing Evolution* comes highly recommended. Namco's offering is the best you're going to get for some time, and aside from a few niggles we've enjoyed it immensely. Get the game, play through *Racing Life*, and buy the Advan Kondo S101. Then set up a ten lap race at Monaco and play games with your opponents. Maybe give them a one-lap head-start, then challenge yourself to catch them up and make every single one of them completely lose it. If you manage all that, try to flip your car. It's difficult, but you can do it if you know how, and it makes one hell of a replay. Sorry, we've really been playing this a bit too much haven't we? What can we say: we like it lots.

CHANDRA

CUBE VERDICT

R: RACING EVOLUTION

⊗ RACING SIM WITH AN ARCADE EDGE



VISUALS

As good as *Gran Turismo 3*, but not as good as they could have been.



AUDIO

Impressive in-race radio chatter and fitting *Ridge Racer*-esque tunes.



GAMEPLAY

The cars handle just as they should, but the early cars handle terribly.



LIFESPAN

It'll take a while to do all Challenges, and it should be more difficult.



ORIGINALITY

The little *Ridge Racer* elements give it an edge above the competition.

ALTERNATIVE

The sequel to the GBA version... and you can tell. What a load of rubbish.



GT CUBE

Reviewed: Issue 22

CUBE Rating: 4.9

2ND OPINION

HIGH REV: It starts off very slowly, but as you get further in things heat up and it gets much more interesting. Still, it's no *Gran Turismo*...

GARY

FINAL SCORE

8.4

THE FINEST RACING SIMULATION THE GAMECUBE HAS TO OFFER... AND PROBABLY EVER WILL.