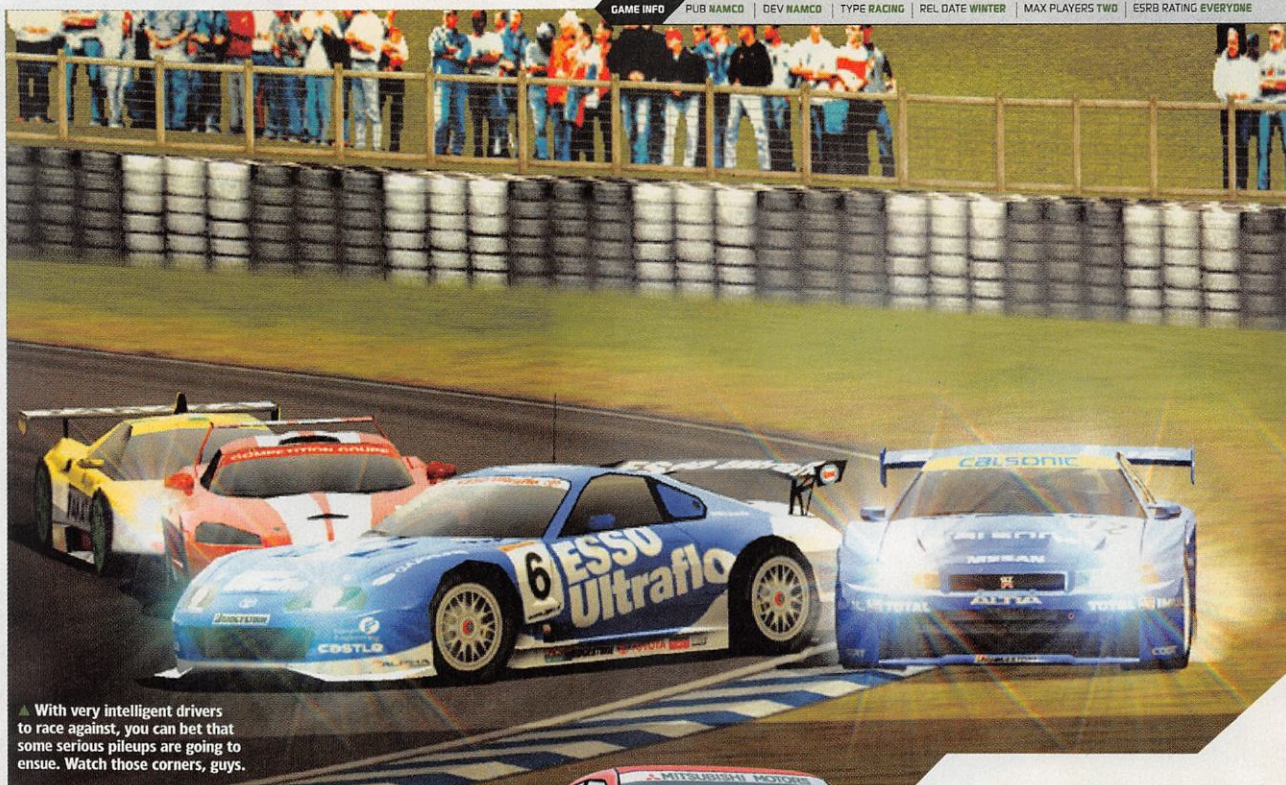


GAME INFO | PUB NAMCO | DEV NAMCO | TYPE RACING | REL. DATE WINTER | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB RATING EVERYONE



▲ With very intelligent drivers to race against, you can bet that some serious pileups are going to ensue. Watch those corners, guys.

R: RACING EVOLUTION

Can Namco outrace Sony's real driving simulator?



Ridge Racer had quite the profound effect on the racing genre, particularly for the home console market. It could be credited as being the first modern racing game with widespread popularity. The finishing touches are now being put on *R: Racing Evolution* a decade after its granddaddy impressed the world.

The game is loosely based on the *Ridge Racer* universe, but don't get your camber kits, bucket seats and coilover suspension ready for straight-up sideways drifting action; *R:*

RE promises to be a different game entirely. Just take a look the most recent cache of screen shots from Namco. This is the first game in the universe to feature fully licensed vehicles. Expect to see monsters like the JGTC-competing Esso Supra, Calsonic Skyline, Takata NSX, Viper, the WRC-worthy Peugeot 206 and the stunning Mitsubishi Evolution VII—and that's just for starters.

Game flow details are still sketchy, but we're positive there's a decent career mode and possibly an arcade-style mode like we saw in *GT3*. We've already shown you the lead character

in our previous cover story, so expect some *Pro Race Driver*-esque elements; also expect fantasy and real-life courses like Monaco. With a playable disc heading into our hands shortly, you can expect even more details in the months to come.

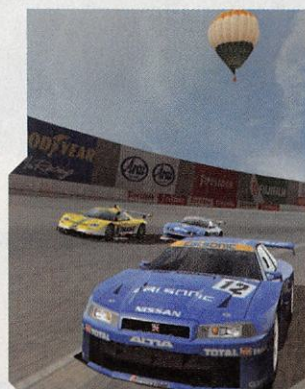
TYRONE RODRIGUEZ/STEPHEN FROST



▲ While not as crazy as some other games, you'll definitely be able to get some air if you hit those bumps right.



▲ The courses will be a mixture of real-life and fantasy tracks. We prefer the fantasy ones, as you don't know what's coming next.



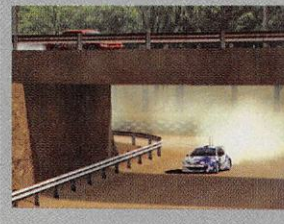
▲ Little touches, like that blimp in the distance, have always been a staple of Namco's racing games.

From Blacktop To Dirt

Along with the large assortment of cars, you'll also be able to race on a decent number of surfaces. From oval tracks to dirt courses, you'll see it all in this game.



▲ The game is looking great. We just hope that there are a fair number of courses to choose from. These look promising, that's for sure.



THE BUZZ

Namco has always been consistent in delivering a top racing experience.