

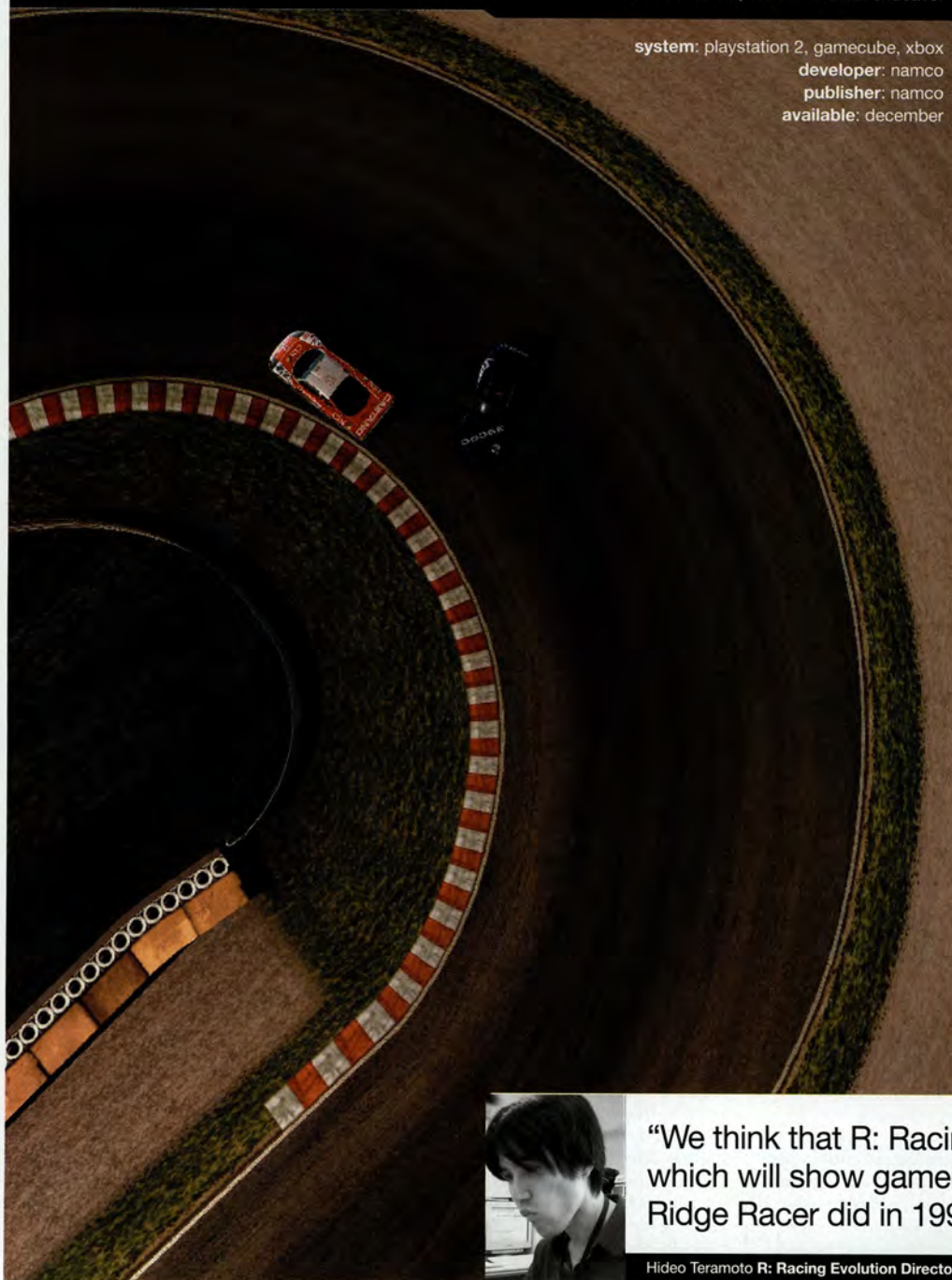
R

Racing Evolution



Big changes are in store for this entry in the Ridge Racer legacy. We spoke with R: Racing Evolution's director, Hideo Teramoto, about his latest endeavor

system: playstation 2, gamecube, xbox
 developer: namco
 publisher: namco
 available: december



Interview

Hideo Teramoto R: Racing Evolution Director

Previous Credits: R4, Ridge Racer V and Klonoa

interview by michael hobbs

play: What makes R: Racing Evolution different from R4 and Ridge Racer V?

Hideo Teramoto: R: Racing Evolution is a game with completely different styles from the Ridge Racer series. It features real cars and real courses and also has a newly designed behavior program based on a realistic simulator. However, it inherited the cool feelings which the Ridge Racer series has been investigating. Let's think of it as an entirely new game with the philosophy of Ridge Racer.

Is the inclusion of the Racing Life mode a new idea, or was this something you had been thinking about adding in the last two games?

In R: Racing Evolution, we wanted to feature the human battle in a realistic racing game. As you know, there was a story mode in R4 also, but this time an idea of the story mode was created specifically for R: Racing Evolution.

Which is the more difficult task: modeling licensed cars or creating original designs?

This is a tough question. Licensed cars have their difficulty, and original designs have their own difficulty as well. You can't simply compare them. The challenging part of the licensed cars in R: Racing Evolution is that they have their histories and cultures. Namco's visual staff spent a lot of time understanding those. It wasn't an easy job, but as a result we believe we made great modelings.

One of my favorite aspects of Ridge Racer is its beautiful drifting physics. It wasn't necessarily realistic, but it was very addictive. Does R: Racing Evolution continue this arcade-style tradition?

The physics of R: Racing Evolution were a completely new design, so it is not quite as the Ridge Racer arcade style. It is different, but we are sure that it will be addictive too. Please see it for yourself and enjoy.

What is your overriding philosophy on what makes a game identifiable as Ridge Racer?

The level of reality that the players can feel with their minds and senses; not the reality only based on physics calculation and numbers. It is always our philosophy to explore the comfort like in music rather than boring preciseness.

Ridge Racer features some of the best track layouts of any racing series. How do you go about designing courses that are not only attractive but incredibly satisfying to race around?

We were being careful with not only layouts but also viewing design. At a design stage, we ran courses thousands of times and adjusted them thousands of times. Being picky and detailed without compromise is the secret to make the best layouts.

I would rather have one perfected track than 10 boring ones. How do you balance the workload between creating a variety of tracks and perfecting each of them from a racing point of view?

At first we decided the various themes for each track, then we spent a lot of time investigating the driving comfort. For R: Racing Evolution, both the balance of the tracks and perfecting them are equally important and not to

"We think that R: Racing Evolution will become a game which will show gamers a new vision just like the first Ridge Racer did in 1993."

Hideo Teramoto R: Racing Evolution Director

between them. That is the philosophy of R.

The Ridge Racer games have always had a great look and feel and a great sense of style in the menus and interface. Who worked on this aspect of R: Racing Evolution, and what was the overriding theme?

The same artist who did MotoGP worked on this. The style will be different from Ridge Racer series, so please wait and see how great this is.

Would you compare the look of R: Racing Evolution to any previous Ridge Racer, or is it a completely fresh visual approach?

The look of R: Racing Evolution has been created with the awareness of other Namco titles such as MotoGP, the Ace Combat series, and so forth. In a good way, the artists in the same company are competing with each other and trying to make better products than everyone else. As a result, several unique visual approaches were created for R.

Has it been a burden trying to create a game that can run well across all three platforms? Which system represented the greatest challenges?

We have experienced a different kind of difficulty in the multi-platform development from ordinary single-platform development. We have our goals and visions, and in order to accomplish them we had different challenges for each of the three platforms.

How far has this game advanced graphically since Ridge Racer V? Would you say the greatest gains have come from the ability to add more polygons to the image, or from new ways of manipulating textures and



A Ridge Racer game with licensed cars. Rest assured however that the gameplay experience will be vastly different from Gran Turismo. It will no doubt retain the soul of Ridge Racer.



simulating lighting?

It has been three and a half years since the release of Ridge Racer V in 2000. From every aspect, it has evolved. In order to provide the best visual game, we used a lot of new ideas from the theory of CG.

How interested are you in pleasing fans of the series? Are you more interested in challenging yourself or in trying to create a game based on a guess of what the user wants?

We are very interested in pleasing the fans. What we did from the beginning was to start thinking of all the great components and features of other games in the genre, and use that as a starting point. It is our goal that not only the fans of the Ridge Racer series will enjoy this game, but also the fans of all the current racing games.

Finally, would you like to say anything to Ridge Racer fans eagerly awaiting R: Racing Evolution?

We have been feeling lately that the realistic racing game genre needs to be spiced up a bit. We believe that there are still many possibilities in the realistic racing genre, and we have seriously researched these new possibilities. We think that R: Racing Evolution will become a game which will show gamers a new vision just like the first Ridge Racer did in 1993. Please enjoy our new racing game.