= GT Advance Championship Racing =

GT Advance Championship Racing (known as Advance GTA in Japan) is a racing game developed by MTO and published by THQ . It was a launch title for the Game Boy Advance , and was released in Japan on March 21 , 2001 , in North America on June 11 , 2001 , and in Europe on June 22 , 2001 . The game 's sequel , GT Advance 2 : Rally Racing , was released on June 30 , 2002 in North America .

GT Advance features forty @-@ five Japanese cars and places the player in races on thirty @-@ two tracks . Due to positive reaction to the game in Japan , THQ purchased publishing rights for the North American and European releases to the game after a reported bidding war , and added in a controversial password save system into the game to cut costs .

The game was received with mostly positive reviews from critics that praised the game for its fun gameplay , but THQ was criticized by most reviewers for adding passwords to the game when the Japanese version had battery @-@ backed saves .

= = Gameplay = =

GT Advance Championship Racing is a customizable experience , including 48 cars from 8 car manufacturers , and 32 courses . Some of the cars featured in the game are exclusively found in Asia , such as the Nissan Cube . The courses vary between paved and dirt roads , requiring the player to adapt their driving to meet the conditions of the course they 're driving on .

The game 's championship mode features four levels of play , three cups of varying levels , and an unlockable " kart racing mode " . Upgrades earned through gameplay can be added to the player 's car , and in some cases , they can change the physical appearance of the vehicle . The game contains multiplayer support , allowing two people to play against each other using a Game Link Cable .

Controls are simple , with the A and B buttons controlling the player 's gas and brakes respectively . The R and L buttons shift the car up or down a gear in manual control , and the D @-@ Pad controls the car 's steering . The game requires the player to master the powerslide technique to skid around corners and to reduce their lap time .

= = = Graphics = = =

The roads in the game are painted on a flat plane , which allows the game to progress at a smooth rate , but makes it harder for the player to see upcoming turns in the road . The problem can be remedied by playing through a track multiple times to gain familiarity with the turns in a course . The cars are rendered through sprite frames , giving the impression of 3D graphics in the game .

= = = Save system = = =

The Japanese version of the game , Advance GTA , had save support . However , THQ pulled the battery RAM out of the North American and European releases of the game , and utilized passwords to save data instead . The system forces players of the North American and European releases to enter a sixteen digit code consisting of upper and lowercase letters , numbers , and symbols into the game to retrieve their data . Many critics blamed THQ for what was perceived to be a cost @-@ cutting measure . It was the only major change from the Japanese version of the game .

= = Development = =

MTO began development on GT Advance Championship Racing about a year before the release of the game in Japan . The game was first announced on August 18 , 2000 , under the name of Pocket GT Advance . With the exception of a new password save system , tweaking was kept to a minimum for the North American version of the game . The choice was made in the Japanese version to use

mostly English in the game so it would be playable outside Japan .

The Japanese version of the game , Advance GTA , was praised by critics and the anticipation for the North American and European releases of the game grew . A reported bidding war between United States publishing companies to release the game in the US began after the positive feedback from the Japanese version . It was reported a month afterwards that THQ had gained the publishing rights for the game 's North American and European releases .

= = Reception = =

GT Advance Championship Racing garnered praise from critics for its overall gameplay , but the inclusion of a password save system by THQ into the North American and European releases of the game was heavily criticized . IGN 's Craig Harris praised the high quality graphics engine and the entertaining powerslide system , but observed that with regards to the password system , " ... some players (myself included) just might throw their hands up in disgust with what THQ has done to the game . " GameSpot observed that , " GT Advance is , at its core , a very robust and graphically impressive racing game . " Despite praising the gameplay , however , GameSpot recommended that players buy a Japanese import version of the game instead , since it was in English and included a battery save feature . Eurogamer wrote that even though GT Advance was hampered by passwords , " ... you should definitely own GT Advance one way or another , as current gripe excepted ; it 's a sterling example of handheld racing done properly . "

Responding to criticisms of the password save system , THQ later re @-@ instated the battery save feature into the two sequels of the game , GT Advance 2 : Rally Racing , and GT Advance 3 : Pro Concept Racing .