

= F @-@ Zero X =

F @-@ Zero X is a futuristic racing video game for the Nintendo 64 ( N64 ) console . Developed by Nintendo 's EAD division , it was released in Japan , North America , and Europe in 1998 . In 2000 , an expansion pack was exclusively released in Japan providing numerous extra features not in the original game . F @-@ Zero X was ported in 2004 to the iQue Player in China . The game was re @-@ released on the Wii Virtual Console in Japan , Europe and in North America , in 2007 . To honor the 100th Virtual Console release in Europe , it became available on June 15 .

It was a sequel to the original 1990 F @-@ Zero game , and is the first F @-@ Zero installment to have featured 3D graphics . The game has a steep learning curve and its gameplay experience is similar to that of the original F @-@ Zero game . F @-@ Zero X introduced a " death race " mode and a random track generator called the " X Cup " . In the death race , the player 's objective is to annihilate the 29 other racers as speedily as possible , while the X @-@ Cup " creates " a different set of tracks each time played .

Critics generally praised F @-@ Zero X for its fast gameplay , abundance of courses and vehicles , track design , and maintaining a high framerate . However , the game has been widely criticized for its lack of graphical detail .

= = Gameplay = =

F @-@ Zero X is a fast @-@ paced futuristic racing video game where thirty competitors race on high @-@ altitude circuits inside plasma @-@ powered hovercars in an intergalactic Grand Prix . Taking place after the original tournament was discontinued for several years due to the extreme danger of the sport , F @-@ Zero X begins after the Grand Prix is brought back with the rules and regulations revised under the same name as the video game . The tracks in the game include hills , loops , tunnels , corkscrews , and pipes . Players can drift into turns without losing momentum by using the control stick and trigger button . The game introduces 26 new vehicles , and reprises the 4 from the original F @-@ Zero game . Each has its own performance abilities affected by its size and weight , and a grip , boost , and durability trait graded on an A to E ( best to worst ) scale . Before a race , players are able to adjust a vehicle 's balance between maximum acceleration and maximum top speed .

Each machine has an energy meter , which serves two purposes . Firstly , it is a measurement of the machine 's health and is decreased , for example , when the machine hits another racer or the side of the track . The game introduces the ability to attack other racers by either utilizing a side or spin attack . Secondly , it is a boost meter used for manually boosting , usually starting with the second lap of a race . Energy can be replenished by driving over recharge strips , called " Pit Areas " , located at various points around the track . The amount of time spent in these areas is relative to amount of energy regenerated . There are also dash plates around the track that give a speed boost without using up any energy .

= = = Race modes = = =

F @-@ Zero X has five different gameplay modes : GP ( Grand Prix ) Race , Practice , Time Attack , Death Race , and VS Battle . In GP Race , the player races against 29 opponents through 3 laps of each track in a cup . Players get a certain number of points for finishing a track depending on where they placed , and the winner of the cup is the character who receives the most total points . If the player has a " spare machine " ? the equivalent of an extra life ? then falls off a track or runs out of energy , the race can be restarted . Each cup has four selectable difficulty levels : Novice , Standard , Expert , and Master . The higher the difficulty level selected , the tougher the opponents , and less spare machines the player starts with . Furthermore , the three cups initially available are ordered by increasing difficulty ( Jack , Queen and King respectively ) and have 6 tracks each . Eventually , the player can unlock the Joker Cup with its set of 6 tracks , followed by the X Cup . The X Cup is a set of 6 randomly generated tracks every time played . The randomized track elements lack loops and

can be simplistic , but others are intricate .

There is a Practice mode which allows the player to practice any track with opponents . Time Attack lets the player choose a track and complete a 3 @-@ lap race in the shortest time possible . Transparent re @-@ enactments of Time Attack performances , or ghost data , from the player or game developer can be raced against . Up to 3 player @-@ contributed ghosts can be raced against simultaneously , but only one can be saved per track . Death Race has the player annihilating the 29 other racers as speedily as possible on a specialized course . There is no selectable difficulty level , or set amount of laps , but the boost is immediately available . Vs . Battle is the multiplayer mode where 2 to 4 players compete in a 3 @-@ lap race , and slots not in use by players can be operated by the artificial intelligence . A slot machine for those out of the race early will appear if the option is enabled . Players can adversely affect the energy levels of those still competing by matching symbols .

= = Development = =

Initially titled " F @-@ Zero 64 " , Famitsu magazine revealed the project in mid @-@ 1997 . Tadashi Sugiyama and Shigeru Miyamoto served as director and producer , respectively . Taro Bando and Hajime Wakai served as composers . Several key Wave Race 64 programmers including the lead programmer made up the in @-@ house development team . Developed by Nintendo EAD , it is a sequel to the original 1990 F @-@ Zero game , and was the first F @-@ Zero installment to feature 3D graphics . The game made its debut at the Nintendo Space World event on November 20 , 1997 where the public was able to play it for the first time . Soon after , IGN reported F @-@ Zero X consistently ran at 60 frames per second . Consequently , background detail and textures were lacking as well as polygon count on vehicles which lessen more so as they pass the player . They noted that " [ tracks ] hide most of the limited backgrounds with their girth and undulating nature which block out almost everything else . " Fogging effects are used to hide background shortcomings such as where the sky and ground meet .

F @-@ Zero X features remixed music from its predecessor . Due to compression , the game features monaural music tracks , but ambient effects are generated with stereo sound effects .

= = Release = =

Two soundtracks were released featuring music from this game onto CD . The F @-@ Zero X Original Soundtrack was released on September 18 , 1998 . The F @-@ Zero X Guitar Arrange Edition , which was released on January 27 , 1999 , contains ten guitar arranged musical tracks from the game . The game was released in Japan on July 14 , 1998 , but its North American release suffered from a three @-@ month delay due to Nintendo 's policy of spacing the release of first @-@ party games out evenly . It was eventually released on October 26 , followed by Europe on November 6 . It was released on the Wii Virtual Console in 2007 , and as the 100th Virtual Console game in Europe .

= = Critical reception = =

Overall , critical reception of F @-@ Zero X was positive ; the game has an aggregate average of 86 @. 93 % based on 15 reviews at Game Rankings , and a metascore of 85 at Metacritic . Critics generally praised F @-@ Zero X for its fast gameplay , abundance of courses and vehicles , keeping a high framerate with up to thirty racers on screen at the same time , and track design . However , the game has been widely criticized for its lack of graphical detail . Peer Schneider of IGN described the gameplay as " god @-@ like " , " hair @-@ splitting " speed ; and he considered the game to rival its predecessor Wave Race 64 with its " perfectly fine @-@ tuned controls and a fresh approach to racing " . The title received the Game of the Month award for November 1998 from Electronic Gaming Monthly . An editor stated " the graphics may be simple , but they 're smooth and the action is fast " .

Allgame called F @-@ Zero X as " certainly not up to Nintendo 's usual standards " in terms of detail and texture quality . GameSpot also criticized the game 's graphical detail , calling the low polygon count on the vehicles " particularly uninspiring " and saying that the " track detail is also very limited , giving the track a spartan feel to it " . Although the optimizations are strict , critics exalted the game for managing a steady rate of 60 frames per second , which some thought made up for the lack of graphical detail with little room for improvement . The Electric Playground found the framerate to give " the game a major boost in the feel department " making it " seem like your vehicle is bursting through the sound barrier " . According to GameSpot , F @-@ Zero X became the first racing game to run at 60 frames per second with up to 30 vehicles on screen at the same time , but in order to keep the frame rate , polygon counts on the vehicles , textures and track detail are sacrificed .

In regard to the music , EGM considered it " really good with some excellent remixes of the old F @-@ Zero tunes " , while CVG called the music dreadful . The Electric Playground thought it goes hand @-@ in @-@ hand to the simulation of speed in the game , but the reviewer commented " I wouldn 't in a million years buy music like this to listen to " . In GameSpot 's retrospective review , they gave it a 6 @. @ 5 / 10 calling it " the black sheep of the series " when compared with the other F @-@ Zero games in " visual style and technical flair " . IGN described F @-@ Zero X as an exceptional update to the original game that " only suffers under its generic look " . Peer Schneider believed that unlike the first game , F @-@ Zero X " is not about showing off graphics or sound capabilities -- it 's all about gameplay " .

Nintendo sold 383 @, @ 642 units of F @-@ Zero X in North America and 97 @, @ 684 units in Japan . In its first week of sale in Japan , 56 @, @ 457 copies were sold , but only about one fifth of that in the following week reportedly due to the Nintendo 64 having had a small dedicated fanbase there .

= = Expansion Kit = =

F @-@ Zero X Expansion Kit , released in Japan on April 21 , 2000 , is the first expansion disk for the 64DD , Nintendo 's disk drive peripheral for the Nintendo 64 . F @-@ Zero X was programmed with " 64DD hooks " , which allow it to detect whether the 64DD is connected and compatible expansion software is loaded . This allows the cartridge @-@ based game to be compatible with expansion disks such as track editors or course updates ; however , none of these were utilized outside Japan due to the 64DD 's commercial failure . Expansion Kit will only operate in conjunction with the cartridge of the original game . However , all of F @-@ Zero X 's regular features are accessible in addition to twelve new tracks , a car editor and a track creator . As the Expansion Kit benefits from a larger amount of storage on disk when compared to the original cartridge version , it includes new soundtracks in stereophonic sound as well as the entire collection of monaural audio tracks from the original game .

In addition to the two new cups , it is also possible to create custom cups . The disk can save up to a hundred tracks and up to three ghost racers per course . IGN singled out the track creator as the F @-@ Zero X Expansion Kit 's strongest feature since it is virtually the same tool the designers of F @-@ Zero X used for themselves to create the original circuits . The Car Editor offers a variety of options when creating a vehicle . Using a set of pre @-@ existing parts , the player must balance their creations ' settings and performance abilities before the machine is finished and named . The Track Editor is a detailed track creator that allows the player to design their own racing circuits . Using a cursor , the player can determine the basic layout of the track and also add points to it to create track elements such as curves and hills . Furthermore , numerous different properties like half pipes and cylinders , as well as numerous road surfaces , such as slip zones , can be added . The player can test the creation at any time and run practice laps .