= British Open Championship Golf =

British Open Championship Golf is a 1997 sports video game developed and published by Looking Glass Technologies . A simulation of The Open Championship , it allows the player to engage in multiple forms of golf , including stroke play and fourball . The player competes at reproductions of the Royal Troon Golf Club and the Old Course at St. Andrews as and against famous golfers of the time . Announcer commentary is provided by actor Michael Bradshaw and Wide World of Sports host Jim McKay .

British Open Championship Golf was the third self @-@ published game released by Looking Glass Technologies . It was directed by Rex Bradford , designer of the early golf title Mean 18 . The team sought to create an accurate simulation of tournament golf play , which they felt was missing in the genre . To achieve this goal , they focused on recreating the atmosphere of a tournament , and included reactive crowds and announcers . The game was placed in competition with popular golf series such as Links and PGA Tour .

The game was a major commercial failure , and Looking Glass ceased its self @-@ publishing operations after its release . Despite this , it was generally well reviewed by critics , who praised Jim McKay 's commentary and the game 's graphics and atmosphere . Criticism was leveled against its lack of multiplayer or course creation functionality , and some reviewers found fault with its brevity .

= = Gameplay = =

British Open Championship Golf is a three @-@ dimensional (3D) video game that simulates golf , a sport in which players attempt to hit a ball into a hole with as few strokes as possible . In particular , the game is based on The Open Championship , the oldest tournament in golf . The player may compete as a pre- or self @-@ created amateur golfer or as one of eight celebrity athletes , including Sandy Lyle , Vijay Singh and Ian Baker @-@ Finch . Three modes of play ? Practice , Match and Tournament ? are available . Practice and Match are non @-@ binding preparatory modes : the former allows the player to practice each hole of a course , and the latter engages the player in a pre @-@ tournament match of stroke play , match play or fourball . In the Tournament mode , the player competes in The Open Championship , which consists of four 18 @-@ hole matches .

Before making a shot , the player may select a club and adjust the general direction of the swing . As with other golf games , a " swing meter " is used to simulate the act of swinging the club . The player clicks three times : first to initiate the backswing , which causes a timing indicator to move along the meter ; second to begin the downswing ; and third to " snap " the shot , which determines accuracy . Changes in the timing of these clicks alter the shot . A red section on the far end of the swing meter represents overswinging , which negatively affects shots . The crowd reacts to the player 's shots , and Tournament mode features announcer commentary that analyzes the match overall ; it can frame the player 's current performance in the light of past shots .

The player may choose one of two courses : the Royal Troon Golf Club and the Old Course at St. Andrews . The player 's caddie provides information about the pitfalls and idiosyncrasies of each course . The game simulates the strong wind and weather typical of the courses ' real @-@ world counterparts , which lie near the seaside . The player may adjust environmental aspects such as weather , wind speed and the wetness of the soil . During a match , the player uses information on the heads @-@ up display to determine such factors as wind speed and direction , the ball 's distance from the flag and the height difference between the ball and the hole .

= = Development = =

Looking Glass Technologies began developing British Open Championship Golf in 1995 . The project was led by Rex Bradford , designer of the influential 1986 golf title Mean 18 . He had also worked on earlier Looking Glass games , such as Terra Nova : Strike Force Centauri . Bradford decided to revisit the golf genre because he felt that other games did not recreate the structure or

capture the atmosphere of golf tournaments ; he complained that golf titles took place on " The Lonely Planet of Golf " . The team sought to fill this perceived void by more accurately simulating the tournament experience , with a particular focus on crowds , commentary , atmosphere and the caddie . Bradford believed that these elements recreated " the television @-@ style ambiance of being in that moment . " Graphically , a focus was placed on buildings and animated objects , in order to make up for the less spectacular nature of links courses . The game 's environments were generated with the same stereophotogrammetry techniques used to create the landscapes in the company 's earlier Flight Unlimited . The team 's reproduction of the Old Course at St. Andrews was the first ever authorized for a video game .

Looking Glass officially announced British Open Championship Golf on July 18 , 1996 . Coinciding with this news , the company launched a website to cover The Open Championship of 1996 ; it detailed both current events and the history of the tournament and its courses . According to Bradford , the company was " hoping to make a splash " with the game , which was placed in competition with popular series such as Links and PGA Tour . He noted the quality of these titles , and stated that , had the team not been trying to innovate , they would not have attempted to compete in the genre . Looking Glass revealed in November 1996 that Jim McKay , host of the Wide World of Sports , would provide color commentary for the game . Actor Michael Bradshaw was hired as the play @-@ by @-@ play announcer . The pair recorded more than 5 @,@ 000 lines of dialogue in total . In January 1997 , Looking Glass and Eidos Interactive announced a four @-@ year partnership . As a result , British Open Championship Golf was distributed and marketed in North America and published in Europe by Eidos . However , like Flight Unlimited and Terra Nova , the game was self @-@ published in North America by Looking Glass . In March 1997 , near the end of the game 's development , part of the team moved to Thief : The Dark Project ; this included Mark Lizotte , who became that game 's lead artist . British Open Championship Golf was released on April 30 , 1997 . That May , Looking Glass collaborated with golf website GolfWeb to host a " Virtual British Open " tournament . Players competed in the game to win a trip to The Open Championship in Scotland , complete with " air fare , hotel accommodations and spending money . "

= = Reception = =

British Open Championship Golf was a commercial failure . Following its release , Looking Glass ceased self @-@ publishing operations and closed a division of the company , laying off a group of employees that included Warren Spector . Writing for Maximum PC , T. Liam McDonald called the game " a costly bomb that bled the company . " Looking Glass employee Tim Stellmach later characterized it as " a disaster " . However , it was generally well received by critics . A reviewer for Next Generation Magazine hailed it as " one of the best golf games in years " , praising the atmosphere and calling the graphics " among the best ... around . " The writer cited the game 's lack of a course editor as its main downside , and summarized , " If you are looking for a golf simulation , this one delivers . " PC Magazine 's Shane Mooney cited it as the best of eight golf titles reviewed in the magazine 's September 1997 issue ? a group that included Jack Nicklaus 4 , Links LS 1998 and PGA Tour Pro . He highlighted its " outstanding graphics " and detailed course reproductions , and noted that it " [immerses] players in a realistic tournament atmosphere . " The writer considered the inclusion of only two courses to be the game 's " one major drawback " .

Jeff Guinn of the Fort Worth Star @-@ Telegram called its graphics " exceptional " , and considered the game to be " far from the traditional aim / swing links pseudo @-@ challenge . " However , he found the game extremely difficult , thanks to its faithful reproductions of the challenging Old Course and Royal Troon . As a result , he considered the game to be ultimately " too much of a good thing . " A writer for the Telegraph @-@ Herald praised its courses , and stated that its gameplay was a " state @-@ of @-@ the @-@ art simulation " . The reviewer believed that the tournament atmosphere had been " re @-@ created faithfully . " Gary Whitta of PC Gamer US praised the game 's graphics and atmosphere . While he liked its gameplay , he noted that it lacked the genre refinements seen in Links LS , a decision he believed would appeal to genre novices but not to

veterans . He disliked Michael Bradshaw 's commentary , but praised Jim McKay 's for " adding much to the overall feel . " Ending his review , Whitta summarized it as " one of the most user @-@ friendly , accessible , atmospheric and attractive golf games out there " .

 Peter Smith of Computer Games Magazine found the game 's swinging mechanics challenging , and noted that " making a dead @-@ on accurate shot much more difficult than in any of the other golf games out there . " He found the mechanics of the putting green to be badly designed , which he cited as " an incredibly serious flaw that takes British Open Championship Golf out of contention for the gold cup . " Ultimately , he recommended Links LS and Jack Nicklaus 4 over the game , but suggested that future installments or patches might fix the issues . Computer Gaming World 's Scott A. May wrote that " the game is solid , but ... somewhat unspectacular " compared to Jack Nicklaus 4 and Links LS . He stated that the links courses gave the game " a somewhat desolate look and feel " , and that , " Historic or not , the scenery is downright dull " . The reviewer considered Jim McKay 's commentary and the simulated physics to be the game 's high points , and he believed that , " More so than any other golf sim , the reactive crowd and interactive caddie are ... totally integrated into play . " He summarized the game as " a very good simulation " that was somewhat deflated by its lack of multiplayer , course editing and match replays .