

= Diddy Kong Racing =

Diddy Kong Racing is a racing video game developed and published by Rare for the Nintendo 64 . It was first released on 14 November 1997 in Japan , 21 November 1997 in Europe and 24 November 1997 in North America . The game is set in " Timber 's Island " and revolves around Diddy Kong and his friends ' attempt to defeat the intergalactic pig @-@ wizard antagonist , Wizpig , through winning a series of races . The player can take control of any of the featured characters throughout the game . Diddy Kong Racing features five worlds with four racetracks each , and the ability to drive a car , hovercraft , or pilot an aeroplane .

Development of the game began after the release of Killer Instinct 2 , and was intended to be a real @-@ time strategy game known as " Wild Cartoon Kingdom " during early stages . As time progressed , the game shifted from a Walt Disney World @-@ influenced racing game to a unique title named " Pro @-@ Am 64 " , in which Nintendo had no involvement with . Due to the delays of Banjo @-@ Kazooie , Rare felt that they needed a stronger intellectual property to attract a wider audience for a game scheduled to release before Christmas 1997 , thus making the decision to revolve a game around the character of Diddy Kong .

Diddy Kong Racing received positive reviews from critics upon release . The graphics , audio and gameplay were the most praised aspects of the game , however minor criticism was directed at its repetitiveness . The game has sold 4 @.@ 5 million copies since release and stands as the Nintendo 64 's sixth best @-@ selling game . A cancelled sequel , Donkey Kong Racing , was in development for the GameCube , however it was abandoned after Microsoft 's purchase of Rare for £ 375 million in 2002 . An enhanced remake for the Nintendo DS titled Diddy Kong Racing DS was released worldwide in 2007 .

= = Gameplay = =

In Diddy Kong Racing , players can choose one of eight characters , who have access to three different vehicles : car , hovercraft and aeroplane . The car is an all @-@ round vehicle , however it is slowest on surfaces such as sand and water . The hovercraft is designed for both sand and water areas but lacks in acceleration and manoeuvrability . The aeroplane is designed to access aerial areas ; it is good at acceleration and manoeuvring , however it has the slowest speed . Each racetrack has a set of boosters known as " zippers " that temporarily boost the player 's speed , as well as featuring regenerating balloons of various colours that provide power @-@ ups . There are five different types of balloons : red , blue , green , yellow , and rainbow . Red balloons grant missiles to attack racers ahead , blue balloons grant a speed boost , yellow balloons grant shields to protect the player from attacks , green balloons grant deployable traps to delay other racers , and rainbow balloons grant a magnet ability that brings the player closer to the nearest racer . If multiple balloons of the same colour are picked up , the power @-@ up will be upgraded to a more powerful version . A total of two upgrades are available for each balloon . Additionally , racetracks contain non @-@ regenerating bananas that add to speed when they are picked up . A maximum of ten bananas will improve the speed but can also be obtained to prevent other players from gaining speed . If a racer gets hit , two bananas will be deducted .

In " Adventure Mode " , players control the racer of their choice to progress through the story . Players begin on Timber 's Island , which consists of five interconnected worlds ; Dino Domain , Snowflake Mountain , Sherbet Island , Dragon Forest , and Future Fun Land . Each world contains four race tracks , an unlockable battle stage and a race against a boss character . Depending on the race track , players may have a choice of using either a car , hovercraft or aeroplane . Each race track contains boosters to racers that cross them , and balloons of various colours that provide power @-@ ups to racers . If the player defeats Wizpig in Future Fun Land , obtains all amulet pieces and collect all of the gold medals , the player will be able to play in a mode called " Adventure 2 " . In this mode , all of the balloons change colour to platinum and the tracks are inverted from left to right . The game also features four battle modes which consist of two deathmatch maps , a capture @-@ the @-@ flag @-@ style battle and a mode which involves opponents capturing eggs

= = Plot = =

Timber the Tiger 's parents go on holiday and leave their son in charge of the island they live on , leaving him and his friends to organise a race . Their enjoyment is derailed when an evil intergalactic pig @-@ wizard named Wizpig arrives at Timber 's Island and attempts to take it over after having conquered his own planet 's racetracks . He turns the island 's four guardians ( Tricky the Triceratops , Bubbler the Octopus , Bluey the Walrus and Smokey the Dragon ) into his henchmen . The only solution available to the island 's inhabitants is to defeat Wizpig in an elaborate series of races that involve cars , hovercrafts , and aeroplanes . Drumstick the Rooster , the best racer on the island , failed this challenge and was transformed into a frog by Wizpig 's black magic .

Timber recruits a team of eight racers : Diddy Kong , the first recruit ; Conker the Squirrel and Banjo the Bear , recruited by Diddy ; Krunch the Kremling , Diddy 's enemy who follows after him ; and Tiptup the Turtle , T.T. the Stopwatch , Pipsy the Mouse , and Bumper the Badger , inhabitants of Timber 's island . Aided by Taj , an Indian elephant genie residing on the island , they eventually complete all of Wizpig 's challenges and confront Wizpig himself to a race and defeat him . Shortly afterwards , Drumstick is turned back into a rooster , and Wizpig leaves for his home planet , Future Fun Land . Fearing that Wizpig would again attempt to invade Timber 's Island , the islanders travel to Future Fun Land for a second challenge . When Wizpig loses the second race , the rocket he rides on malfunctions and launches him to the moon . However , an additional cutscene reveals Wizpig 's spaceship flying through the sky , unscathed .

= = Development = =

Development of the game began after the release of Killer Instinct 2 for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System , in which a team was split into making Killer Instinct Gold for the Nintendo 64 and a new racing game for that console . At its first stage of development , Diddy Kong Racing was conceived as a real @-@ time strategy game with a caveman / time @-@ travel theme worked on by a team of four Rare members ; Chris Stamper , Lee Musgrave , Rob Harrison and Lee Schuneman . During later stages of development , the game became influenced by Walt Disney World and soon evolved into an adventure game called Wild Cartoon Kingdom , in which Nintendo had no involvement with . In June 1997 , the game was altered to Pro Am 64 , an unrelated follow @-@ up to the NES racing game R.C. Pro @-@ Am . According to Schuneman , the Pro Am 64 project featured three @-@ wheeled trikes in contrast to radio @-@ controlled cars .

Due to Banjo @-@ Kazooie being delayed until the summer of 1998 , the team was adamant for a release of an AAA video game in time for Christmas 1997 . Rare felt that Pro Am 64 did not have a strong enough intellectual property to capture the attention of consumers , and thus changed the licence to feature Diddy Kong . According to Musgrave , the decision to choose Diddy Kong rather than Donkey Kong was based on their own choice , a decision which Nintendo " enjoyed " . Once the intellectual property was changed , the team were left to adapt the visual aesthetics of the game and packaging before it could be released . Musgrave stated that the ultimate goal of the game was to make it " run as fast " as Mario Kart 64 , which proved difficult during development as the latter game utilised sprites of characters whereas Diddy Kong Racing used fully 3D models . Musgrave later attributed the success of the overall project due to the " small team " of 14 people who worked on it . In an October 2012 interview , Musgrave stated that Timber the Tiger would have been the main character of Pro Am 64 had the intellectual property for Diddy Kong Racing not been conceived . At least two of the characters who featured in Diddy Kong Racing , Banjo the Bear and Conker the Squirrel , went on to feature in their own series , the Banjo @-@ Kazooie series and Conker series , respectively .

= = = Soundtrack = = =

The music for the game was composed by David Wise . The soundtrack was first released in Japan on 1 April 1998 , with 42 tracks , a German version of the album was released in Europe with the same number of tracks . For its United States release only 16 tracks were featured . The disc itself was specially shaped in the form of Diddy Kong 's head , which was unplayable in certain CD players .

= = Reception = =

The game received positive reviews from critics upon release . The Nintendo 64 version holds an aggregate score of 88 % at both GameRankings and Metacritic , whereas the Nintendo DS remake received a score of 66 % at GameRankings and a score of 63 at Metacritic , based on 39 reviews . Diddy Kong Racing sold approximately 4 @. @ 5 million copies worldwide ; which included 3 @. @ 78 million copies sold in the United States and PAL regions , and 653 @, @ 928 copies in Japan . It also stands as the Nintendo 64 's sixth best @- @ selling game .

The graphics and gameplay were the most praised aspects of the game . Scott McCall of AllGame asserted that Rare proved it was " the only developer " who offered no distance fog in their games . However , McCall acknowledged its only shortcoming was its " excessive " amount of clipping , although he admitted it was not " unbearable " . Jeff Gerstmann of GameSpot stated that the game was a " pleasure to look at " and praised the detail of the tracks . Doug Perry of IGN heralded the visuals as the most " spectacular of its kind " , and praised Rare 's ability to master dynamic animation through enabling polygons to span larger surfaces without loss of framerate . Furthermore , Perry stated that the game 's technical achievements were enough to leave " even the most critical Japanese gamer [ to ] look upon with smiling eyes " . In a retrospective review , Andrew Donaldson of Nintendo Life stated that the game was visually " incredibly vibrant " and " captivating " for a game of the early Nintendo 64 era .

McCall praised the wide range of audio in the game , including its voice acting and soundtrack ; he heralded the music as " interesting " and " fitting " to its race tracks , also considering it superior to that of Mario Kart 64 . Although Gerstmann considered the gameplay to be similar to Mario Kart 64 and at times " repetitive " , he praised the game 's range of transportation and dynamics , which included utilising hovercrafts on water @- @ based tracks and flying an aeroplane . Perry felt that the vocals of characters in the game were " heartwarming " and " comical " , while also stating that the music in each environment was " charming " and " dynamic " . Donaldson criticised game 's presentation as too " cutesy " , especially in terms of the characters ' voices . However , he praised the " upbeat " and " catchy " soundtrack , saying that each track had its own unique tune to suit the distinct environment .

Diddy Kong Racing won the Console Racing Game of the Year at the Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences in 1998 , beating Mario Kart 64 , Moto Racer and NASCAR 98 .

= = Legacy = =

= = = Sequels = = =

After the release of Diddy Kong Racing , Rare began development on a sequel named Donkey Kong Racing for the GameCube , which featured Donkey Kong as the titular character . A pre @- @ rendered CGI video of the game was shown at E3 2001 , which displayed a parody of a scene from Star Wars : Return of the Jedi . According to Lee Musgrave , the game featured a unique mechanic which involved riding on animals rather than driving vehicles , in which the player could switch between different types of animals mid @- @ race ; larger animals could destroy obstacles whereas smaller ones allowed more manoeuvrability . Development of Donkey Kong Racing was cancelled when Nintendo turned down the opportunity to purchase its remaining 51 percent stake in Rare , and was eventually bought out by Microsoft for £ 375 million in 2002 .

After the cancellation of Donkey Kong Racing , Rare created a prototype for the GameCube which

expanded into an adventure game similar to the original setup of Diddy Kong Racing . Musgrave stated that the concept was " built from scratch " and featured a limited multiplayer version at one point . The unnamed concept was in development over 18 months and evolved from being an animal @-@ orientated racing game to an open world game with Tamagotchi @-@ style features , in which nurturing animals was a " key mechanic " . During this time , the original concept for Donkey Kong Racing was reworked into Sabreman Stampede , which was eventually cancelled .

Aside from Donkey Kong Racing , another sequel to Diddy Kong Racing named Diddy Kong Pilot was planned for release on the Game Boy Advance . Originally announced alongside Donkey Kong Racing at E3 2001 , the game eventually became Banjo @-@ Pilot after Microsoft 's acquisition of Rare . At the time of its announcement , the game featured the ability to play using a tilt function as well as a D @-@ pad , and contained at least five available tracks .

= = = Remake = = =

Diddy Kong Racing was remade for the Nintendo DS as Diddy Kong Racing DS . Developed and published by Rare , it was released on 5 February 2007 in North America , and on 20 April 2007 in Europe . This version received enhanced visuals and framerate in addition to a touchscreen function . The DS version also features new modes which allows the player to create their own racetracks , customise their characters through recording voices and an online multiplayer function . The game was met with mixed reviews upon release , with critics asserting that the new additions were " gimmicky " and the touchscreen controls felt " horribly sensitive " .