

= Chocobo Racing =

Chocobo Racing , known in Japan as Chocobo Racing : Genkai e no R?do ( ????????? ? ??????? ? , lit . " Chocobo Racing : Road to the Spirit World " ) is a racing game for the PlayStation game console . The game was developed by Square Co . , creators of the Final Fantasy series of video games . The game was first released in Japan in March 1999 . North American and European releases followed that year .

As a formulaic kart racer , Chocobo Racing is often compared to Mario Kart and Crash Team Racing . The game 's star and namesake is the Chocobo , the mascot of the Final Fantasy series . Other figures from the game series , such as Mog the Mooglee , the Black Mage , and Cid , fill out the all @-@ Final Fantasy cast . Most of the game 's soundtrack is composed using tunes from previous Final Fantasy titles .

The game was later released in Japan alongside Chocobo Stallion and Dice de Chocobo as part of the Chocobo Collection . On December 20 , 2001 , the game was re @-@ released individually as part of the PSone Books series . The game received generally average reviews , citing its low quality in several aspects of gameplay .

= = Gameplay = =

In Chocobo Racing , the player controls Final Fantasy @-@ inspired characters , most of whom race in go @-@ karts . Other characters fly , drive scooters , ride magic carpets , or even run . Players have five different racing modes to choose from : Story Mode , Versus Mode , Grand Prix , Relay Race , and Time Attack . In the Story Mode , players are guided through the story of Chocobo Racing , which is narrated by Cid , in the form of an onscreen version of a pop @-@ up book . Players who complete the Story Mode are given the chance to customize their own racer ; completing the Story Mode also unlocks secret character racers . In the Versus Mode , two players can race each other on a horizontally split screen , where one player races viewing the top half of the screen and the other player races viewing the bottom half . In Grand Prix ( GP ) Mode , the player races computer @-@ controlled opponents in four selected tracks of his or her choice . In Relay Race Mode , the player chooses three racers to compete in a relay match . In Time Attack Mode , the player can select any stage and try to beat the fastest time record set there . There are ten track options : Cid 's Test Track , Mooglee Forest , The Ancient Gate , Mythril Mines , The Black Manor , Floating Gardens , Gingerbread Land , Vulcan @-@ O Valley , Fantasia , and F.F.VIII Circuit .

While racing , the player can accelerate , brake , reverse , activate Magic Stones , or use a " special ability " using the game controller 's analog stick and buttons . An additional move is the skid , which is executed by simultaneously braking and accelerating into a turn ; as the game 's cornering technique , the skid can be used to take sharp turns quickly . If the player skids too sharply , however , a spin out will occur . Before the start of any race , the player 's character receives a speed boost if the player accelerates at the correct time during the countdown .

In the world of Chocobo Racing , Magic Stones are scattered throughout each course , and can be picked up by the player by driving through them . Magic Stones can also be stolen from opponent players by bumping into another player . The player can then activate the Magic Stone for some special effect . Activating a Haste Stone , for example , gives the character a short speed boost . In some Magic Stones , the power of the stone increases if more than one of the same stone is picked up by the player . Each stone is represented by a corresponding symbol on the racetrack , while stones marked with question marks represent random Magic Stones , which grant the player either a Haste Stone , Fire Stone , Ice Stone , Thunder Stone , Minimize Stone , Reflect Stone , Doom Stone , or Ultima Stone .

Special abilities are another important aspect of Chocobo Racing . Before each race , the player is prompted to assign a special ability to the selected character . During a race , the player can only activate the chosen special ability when the meter in the upper left @-@ hand corner of the screen is full . After using the special ability , the player must wait for the meter to recharge to use it again .

= = Plot = =

= = = Setting = = =

Chocobo Racing borrows themes and elements from Final Fantasy I to Final Fantasy VI . The Story Mode is narrated by Cid and includes nine chapters in a pop @-@ up book fashion with FMVs . To progress , the player needs to defeat the chapter 's respective challenger . Before each chapter begins , the player is given the option of viewing the story or skipping to the race except when playing the Story Mode for the first time .

= = = Characters = = =

The cast of Chocobo Racing is drawn from recurring creatures and characters from the Chocobo 's Dungeon and Final Fantasy series . Eight characters -- Chocobo , Mog , Golem , Goblin , Black Magician , White Mage , Chubby Chocobo , and Behemoth ? are immediately available , and additional , secret characters such as Cactuar , Bahamut , Cloud , Aya , and Squall may be unlocked after completing Story Mode .

= = = Story = = =

Chapter one , titled " Gadgets a go @-@ go , " begins with the inventor Cid presenting Chocobo with a pair of " Jet @-@ Blades " and offers Chocobo a chance to take a test @-@ run with them on the racetrack behind his lab . After the race , Mog the Moogle drops in and asks Cid about the progress of the racing machine he 'd commissioned . Cid promises to bring the machine by tomorrow , but later confides to Chocobo he 'd forgotten it . The next day , after presenting the doubtful Mog with his scooter , Chocobo and Mog race . After Chocobo wins , Mog confronts Cid over his vehicle 's poor performance , but Cid replies that Chocobo won because of the differences in their abilities ( i.e. , Chocobo 's " Dash " ) . He explains that the secret of Chocobo 's " Dash " ability is the Blue Crystal on his leg @-@ ring . Mog mulls over his inferior " Flap " ability and decides he wants a Blue Crystal as well , so Cid recommends that the two go on an adventure to find out the secret of the Blue Crystal .

The two head out to discover the secret behind the Blue Crystal , meeting ( and racing ) many along the way . When they reach Mysidia , the village of mages , a White Mage there notices that all the companions have Magicite , which the companions had previously referred to as " Blue Crystals . " The companions want to know the legend behind the Magicite shards ; the White Mage agrees to tell them on the condition that they race her in the Floating Gardens , with the story as the winner 's prize . Upon winning , she tells them of the legend : " There are Magicite Shards scattered all over the world . It used to be one large Magicite Crystal ... But people kept fighting each other over it . So the founder of Mysidia , the great magician Ming @-@ Wu , broke the Crystal into eight pieces . He then scattered the shards to the four winds . He did so to assure later restoration of the Magicite Crystal ... when all eight pieces are brought together again . "

After this discovery , the companions continue to search for other racers in possession of the crystal shards . Upon defeating Behemoth in a race , the monster joins their ranks , bringing the party 's number to eight . The companions then notice that their Magicite shards begin to glow , and Mog discovers that he possessed Magicite all along . The convergence of all eight shards of the Magicite crystal fulfills Ming @-@ Wu 's prophecy , and the gate to Fantasia , the Land of the Espers , opens . When the companions arrive in Fantasia , they are greeted by Bahamut , King of the Espers . Bahamut decides to test their worth with a final trial , and welcomes their attempts to defeat him in a race . After the race , Bahamut acknowledges the powers of the group . He goes on to rhetorically ask if the companions knew why Ming @-@ Wu broke up the Magicite , and explains the legend once more . Bahamut is pleased with the companions , noting that humans , moogles , chocobos ,

and monsters all came together in goodwill . In celebration , he decides to leave the portal between the world and Fantasia open , declaring that " Fantasia shall exist in harmony with your world from this day on . "

Upon completion of the Story Mode , players are assigned a number of points determined by their performance , with a maximum of one hundred . Using those points , the player is given the option of creating a racer with customized color and performance . The point value is distributed among five parameters : Max Speed , Acceleration , Grip , Drift , and A.G.S. , which determines how fast the racer 's ability gauge charges . A maximum of twenty points can be assigned to each of the five racing parameters . Customized racers can be used in all of the game 's modes except for the Story Mode , and only the main characters and Bahamut are open to customization .

= = Development = =

The first demonstration of Chocobo Racing was at the Fall Tokyo Game Show ' 98 ; it was then unclear if there would be a North American release . IGN editors noted its striking similarities to Mario Kart . In the release of Chocobo 's Dungeon 2 , a bonus CD included a video clip of the game . Originally slated to be released in late September / October , the release date was moved to August 1999 because " It was done early , and is now ready to go " .

On September 30 , 1999 , Square announced a " Chocobo Racing Grand Prix " contest . The contest was sponsored by Square Electronic Arts L.L.C. ( Square EA ) and ran from September 30 , 1999 to December 8 , 1999 . The contest 's title was a misnomer , because participants entered by playing through the game 's Story Mode ( rather than Grand Prix Mode ) and sending in their scores ( either through taking a photograph of the score screen or saving the score to a memory card and sending it ) .

Contest entries were divided into five age groups : seven years old and younger , eight to eleven years old , twelve to fifteen years old , sixteen to eighteen years old , and nineteen years old and older . Square EA then determined the three highest scores per week in each age group . The three participants with the highest scores of the week in their respective age group received a Chocobo Piggy Bank .

At the end of the contest , Square EA determined the three highest scorers overall in each age group . Each participant with the highest score in the contest overall in his or her respective age group received one free copy of each Square title released in the calendar year 2000 for the PlayStation game console ( SaGa Frontier 2 , Front Mission 3 , Vagrant Story , Legend of Mana , Threads of Fate , Chrono Cross , Parasite Eve 2 , and Final Fantasy IX ) and a Chocobo Watch . Each second @-@ highest scoring participant received a free copy of Chocobo 's Dungeon 2 and a Chocobo Watch . Each third highest scoring participant received a Chocobo Watch .

= = = Music = = =

Chocobo Racing Original Soundtrack is a soundtrack album produced by Square . It was released exclusively in Japan on March 25 , 1999 by DigiCube , and sold roughly 35 @, @ 000 units . The soundtrack bears the catalog number SSCX @-@ 10030 and spans a duration of 57 : 17 . Almost all of the tracks are arrangements of music Nobuo Uematsu composed for Final Fantasy games , arranged by Kenji Ito . The only exception is the song played during the final song , " Treasure Chest In The Heart " , which is a vocal track orchestrated by Shir? Hamaguchi and performed by Hiromi Ohta . In the English version of the game , it is performed by Vicki Bell .

= = Reception = =

Chocobo Racing sold 300 @, @ 000 units in Japan . Doug Perry of IGN said the game was an attempt by Square to " cash in " on the popular kart racer genre created by Nintendo 's successful Mario Kart . Other reviewers agreed , calling it ? a tired rehash ? due to its colorful but unpolished graphics , crude track designs , and poor controls .

1UP.com 's Final Fantasy Retro Roundup stated that it was a " decent game " ruined by the necessity of steering with a D-pad , and was rated " Not Worth It " . Many similarities were noted with Mario Kart such as similar course themes and the need to " power slide " . It was also called too easy , with story mode lasting only two hours and there being limited replay value except for the unlocking of secret characters and courses . Other critiques included a lack of a battle mode and limited customization . The music was thought to be average , though the last song of the story mode was " strikingly beautiful " .

= = Cancelled sequel = =

At Nintendo 's E3 2010 press conference on June 15 , 2010 , a new Chocobo Racing title , tentatively titled Codename : Chocobo Racing 3D , was announced for the Nintendo 3DS handheld system . However , on October 10 , 2013 , Takashi Tokita , director of the original Chocobo Racing , confirmed that the project had been cancelled , noting that had he been part of its development process , he " would have made sure that it came out . "