= Ridge Racer (video game) =

Ridge Racer (??????? , Rijji R?s?) is a 1993 racing video game developed and published by Namco . It was initially released on the Namco System 22 arcade system board , and later ported to the PlayStation console in 1994 . It is the first title in the Ridge Racer series released for arcades and home consoles . The objective is to finish in first place in a series of races . Ridge Racer was among the first racing games to use polygon graphics to its full potential . The PlayStation version supports Namco 's NeGcon controller .

The first home version of Ridge Racer was released in Japan in 1994 as a launch title for the PlayStation ; the versions for North America and Europe were released in 1995 . It was re @-@ released in Japan for the PlayStation The Best range in July 1997 , and for the Greatest Hits and Platinum ranges in North America and PAL regions respectively the same year . The game played a major role in establishing the new system and giving it an early edge over its nearest competitor , the Sega Saturn , and was considered a rival to Sega 's Daytona USA .

Ridge Racer received a highly positive reception . Reviewers praised the graphics , audio , drifting mechanics , and arcade @-@ like gameplay , although some were critical of the lack of strong artificial intelligence and multiplayer mode . The arcade version was followed by a sequel , Ridge Racer 2 , in 1994 , whereas the PlayStation sequel , Ridge Racer Revolution , was released in December 1995 in Japan , and in 1996 in North America and PAL regions . The soundtrack was remixed and released on the Namco Game Sound Express Vol . 11 album .

= = Gameplay = =

In the PlayStation version , a mini @-@ game of Galaxian can be played as the game loads . If won , eight additional cars become available . The cars are varied in their specifications ; some feature a high top speed , others excelling at acceleration or turning , and others being more balanced . Certain cars are named after other Namco games such as Solvalou , Mappy , Bosconian , Nebulasray , and Xevious . Once the game has loaded , all the CD is needed for is to play six music tracks . The disc can be replaced at any time during gameplay , although the game does not update ; regardless of what disc is inserted , there will always be six tracks , corresponding the starting points of the tracks on the game disc .

A course , transmission (automatic or six @-@ speed manual) , car , and song are chosen . The racetrack can be observed from the first @-@ person perspective (or from the third @-@ person perspective for the PlayStation version) . Namco 's NeGcon controller can be used to play . Being an arcade racer , collisions do no damage , and merely slow the player down . There is a time limit , which ends the game if counted down to zero .

A single course is featured , although it consists of four configurations of increasing difficulty ; Novice , Intermediate , Advanced and Time Trial (the latter two are extended) . The player races eleven opponents except in Time Trial , where there is only one . The higher the difficulty , the faster the cars run , with Time Trial being the fastest . Each race consists of three laps (two on the beginner course) . Checkpoints that grant additional time when passed through are present throughout . In the PlayStation version , after every race is won , reversed ones become available , and an additional opponent is encountered in Time Trial ; the 13th Racing " Devil " , the fastest car . On winning , the car is unlocked . In the arcade version , the winning player 's score is saved in action @-@ replay highlights after finishing the game .

The PlayStation version features hidden " mirror " version of the tracks . It becomes a " mirror image " of itself ; left turns become right turns and vice @-@ versa , and the surroundings switch sides of the road .

= = Development and release = =

At JAMMA 's 1992 Amusement Machine Show in Japan , held during 27 ? 19 August 1992 , Namco debuted a racing game called Sim Drive , for the Namco System 22 arcade system board . It was a

sequel to Eunos Roadster Driving Simulator , a Mazda MX @-@ 5 driving simulation arcade game that Namco developed with Mazda and released in 1990 . Its 3D polygon graphics stood out for its use of Gouraud shading and texture mapping . After a location test at the show , where it was previewed by the November 1992 issue of Electronic Gaming Monthly , Sim Drive had a limited Japanese release in December 1992 , but did not get a mass @-@ market release . It served as a prototype for Ridge Racer .

Ridge Racer had a development cycle of eight months . The development team was under pressure to complete it before their rivals , and designer Fumihiro Tanaka commented that " the other company " was in the same position . Ridge Racer was originally planned to be an F1 racing game , but the concept was replaced with one based on a trend among Japanese car enthusiasts at the time . Namco Bandai 's general manager Yozo Sakagami explained that they liked racing on mountain roads and did not want to slow down around corners , so drifted around them instead . The team therefore decided to create a game which lets the player test his driving skills and experience the car 's manipulation at high speeds while mastering drifting .

Development for the PlayStation version began in April 1994 . Because of the radical differences , that version essentially had to be done from scratch , and took nearly as long to develop , being completed in November 1994 . The PlayStation port was developed by the same team . Due to technical limitations , the PlayStation port was difficult to program and runs at a lower resolution , lower framerate (30 frames per second for NTSC , 25 for PAL) , and was less detailed . Specialised graphics libraries had to be developed because it was felt the standard ones provided by Sony were too limited . Visual director Yozo Sakagami remarked that the hardest element to port was the experience of driving a car . It was felt that the NeGcon controller would provide a more analogue feel than the standard PlayStation controller . Sakagami was concerned about loading times due to the CD @-@ ROM format ; the team countered this by having all the data loaded into memory by the time the title screen appeared , and having the player play a mini @-@ game of Galaxian while waiting . Sakagami chose Galaxian because he was part of its arcade team , and wanted to honour his former boss . Due to CDs being cheaper to produce , the retail price was cheaper than cartridge games despite an increase in development costs . Ridge Racer sold for under ¥ 6000 (£ 37) in Japan .

During release for arcade system board , Ridge Racer was called by Namco " the most realistic driving game ever " . It featured three @-@ dimensional polygon graphics with texture mapping . The PlayStation version was shown at the 1995 Electronic Entertainment Expo event , and was an innovation in the use of three @-@ dimensional polygons . Ridge Racer was released in Japan on 3 December 1994 , in North America on 9 September 1995 , and in Europe on 29 September as a launch title for the PlayStation .

= = = Music = = =

The soundtrack was produced alongside the game by Shinji Hosoe , with contributions from Nobuyoshi Sano and Ayako Saso , as the development team didn 't have enough time to produce them separately . The team did not initially plan to have music , but ended up producing techno , which Tanaka believed helped players to enjoy a fun feeling while playing . Hiroshi Okubo believed techno would give a feeling of energy , journey , and speed , and commented that the genre was chosen because it embodied the game 's " unrealistic speed and tension " . This was commemorated by the release of Namco Game Sound Express Vol . 11 , which featured remixed versions , on 21 January 1994 in Japan .

= = Reception = =

Ridge Racer received critical acclaim . The graphics and sound in particular were praised . In the April 1994 issue of the UK magazine Computer and Video Games , Paul Rand gave high marks , remarking that it was " far and away the most realistic arcade game ever seen " on reviewing the arcade machine (based on the full @-@ scale unit) . In a review of its Japanese console release ,

GamePro called the PlayStation version " a near carbon copy of the original " and praised the graphics , soundtrack , and the entire game being loaded into the PlayStation 's RAM , eliminating mid @-@ game loading and giving the option of removing the game disc and using the PlayStation as a music CD player during gameplay . Although they criticised the graphical glitches and slowdown , the game was recommended . Next Generation applauded the conversion 's faithful recreation of the arcade version , smooth graphics , and additional cars . Although they noted the lack of variety in the different cars ' performance and the absence of a multiplayer mode as downsides , they found the game overall remarkable and commented that the fact that Ridge Racer was an early game for the PlayStation , and a rushed project at that , made it " an excellent harbinger of what 's to come " . GamePro 's review of the later North American release judged that the game surpassed competitor Daytona USA in graphics , audio , and control responsiveness , and called it " The best racing game to date for home systems " . Commenting on the realism , Game Informer remarked that Ridge Racer " does a better job of capturing the feel of high performance car racing than any existing driving game " .

The two sports reviewers of Electronic Gaming Monthly praised the gameplay and music . Maximum commented that " Ridge Racer isn 't without its bad points - basically , there is only one track and the game lacks the awesome crash sequences of Daytona USA , but everything else in the title is sheer class " . They commented positively on the " feeling of smoothness and speed " , the " distinctly European " dance music , the engine sounds , and the unrealistically exaggerated driving manoeuvres . In 1996 , IGN commented that despite two years of release the game " has definitely stood the test of time " , but complained that " there is no two @-@ player mode " and that " the cars don 't really vary in performance that much " . AllGame 's Shawn Sackenheim praised the game , particularly the graphics and audio , and concluded that it " is a fun title that racing fans will love " . Coming Soon Magazine praised its " ultra fluid and very realistic " graphics , but criticised the game for being too short . The Electric Playground 's Victor Lucas gave top marks , remarking " The experience of playing RR supersedes the thrills generally attributed to playing other racing video games " , and further commented " I really can 't stress enough how deserving of your video game dollars Ridge Racer is " . Edge praised the " dazzling " graphics and " arcade @-@ perfect " music .

Despite positive reviews , the game was criticised by 1UP.com for the arcade style of gameplay . The lack of artificial intelligence has received criticism ? the movement of the computer @-@ controlled cars is restricted to predetermined waypoints . The game was reviewed in 1995 in Dragon No. 221 by Jay & Dee in the " Eye of the Monitor " column , where Dee called it " just another racing game " .

Ridge Racer was awarded Best Driving Game of 1995 by Electronic Gaming Monthly . It was listed as one of the best games of all time by Game Informer in 2001 , Yahoo in 2005 , Electronic Gaming Monthly in 2006 , Guinness World Records in 2008 and 2009 , NowGamer in 2010 , and FHM in 2012 .

= = = Legacy = = =

Ridge Racer has been followed by many sequels and helped establish the position of the PlayStation console . IGN stated that Ridge Racer had been " one of PlayStation 's first big system pushers " and " an excellent port of the arcade version that showed the true potential of Sony 's 32 @-@ bit wonder " . UGO Networks 's Michael Hess and Chris Plante said that it had " set the stage for Gran Turismo by adding an option to choose between automatic and manual transmission " . John Davison of 1UP.com said that Ridge Racer was an " unbelievable demonstration of what the PlayStation could do " .

Ridge Racer is mentioned in the song My Console (1999) from the Italian electronic dance group Eiffel 65 .

= = Other releases = =

The PlayStation version was re @-@ released for The Best , Greatest Hits , and Platinum ranges in

1997 . Ridge Racer received a number of ports and spin @-@ offs :

= = = Ridge Racer Full Scale = = =

 A Full Scale arcade version was released alongside the standard arcade version in 1993 . This version was designed to give the player a more realistic driving experience . Players (a passenger could sit in the car next to the driver) sat inside an adapted red Eunos Roadster , the Japanese right @-@ hand @-@ drive version of the Mazda MX @-@ 5 Miata , and controlled the same car on @-@ screen . The game was played in front of a 10 feet (3 @.@ 0 m) wide , front @-@ projected triple screen (which benefited from dimmed ambient lighting) , with the wheel , gear stick and pedals functioning as the controls . The ignition key was used to start , the speed and RPM gauges were functional , and fans blew wind on the player from inside the air vents . Speakers concealed inside the car provided realistic engine and tyre sounds ; overhead speakers provided surround music . The P.C.B. was located under the bonnet of the car .

= = = Ridge Racer : 3 Screen Edition = = =

 A version with three screens was released in arcades to give a peripheral vision effect . The machine used multiple System 22 arcade boards to drive the additional monitors and was only available in the sit down version .

= = = Pocket Racer = = =

 Pocket Racer (???????? , Poketto R?s?) is a super deformed version with cars resembling Choro @-@ Q models , and aimed towards children . It was released in 1996 in Japan . It was only available in upright cabinet version , and uses Namco System 11 hardware . A similar game is included in Ridge Racer Revolution using the same cars under the name Pretty Racer (also known as buggy mode) , the inspiration for this game .

= = = Ridge Racer Turbo = = =

 R4 : Ridge Racer Type 4 (released on 3 December 1998 in Japan , 1 May 1999 in North America , and on 1 September 1999 in Europe) includes a bonus disc containing a new version of the original Ridge Racer , called Ridge Racer Turbo in North America , Ridge Racer Hi @-@ Spec Demo in Europe , and Ridge Racer Hi Spec Version (????????????????? , Rijji R?s? Hai Supekku B?jon) in Japan . It featured improved graphics , runs at 60 frames per second (50 for PAL) , as opposed to the original 30 , and supports vibration feedback and the Jogcon controller . There is only one opponent (two in time trial boss races) , and the White Angel from Ridge Racer Revolution appears in addition to the 13th Racing as a boss and unlockable car . A Time Attack mode is added , in which the player attempts to beat the time record without any opponent cars . This is distinct from Time Trial , where there are opponent cars .

= = = Mobile versions = = =

 On 31 December 2005 , a version for mobile phones was released . It received mixed reviews . GameSpot 's Jeff Gerstmann gave the game 6 @.@ 1 / 10 . He praised graphics as " somewhat impressive for a mobile game " , but criticised the steering , saying that " it doesn 't take long to master the game . " Levi Buchanan of IGN gave Ridge Racer 6 @.@ 2 / 10 , complaining about the problematic controls and saying that the game without the analogue control " feels really lacking " . In 2005 , a version of Ridge Racer was released for mobile phones under the name Ridge Racer 3D (not to be confused with the later Ridge Racer 3D for the Nintendo 3DS) . On 11 August 2009 , this version was ported to Zeebo .