

are a few new pass types like the heel pass, and your back to the goal and spinning to launch the



✖ HORSE RACING SIMULATION

MELBOURNE CUP CHALLENGE

Are you chomping at the bit?

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: TRU BLU ■ DEVELOPER: SIDHE INTERACTIVE ■ WEB: www.melbourncupchallenge.com.au ■ LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK ■ RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

They say horse racing is the sport of kings. Presumably, this makes drag racing the sport of queens. However, that's a debate for another day (and possibly another magazine). At any rate, when we think of horse racing we think of women in big hats, disappearing bookies and tiny little men whose sole job in life is to hang onto the back of a galloping horse for 90 seconds every so often. We don't think of videogames, because horse racing videogames immediately make us think of the G1 Jockey series – the astonishingly boring and inexplicably popular saddle-sim from Japan.

However, that could change very shortly. We were recently given a tug on the reins of *Melbourne Cup Challenge* from New Zealand based *Rugby League*

2 developer Sidhe Interactive. Unlike the distinctively Japanese G1 series, *MCC* boasts plenty of help options and tips to make sure players aren't stuck. Of course it also includes a host of Aussie racetracks and events, making it far easier to relate to than the fruity Jap jockey games. Expect to see Flemington, Royal Randwick, Warwick Farm and more, plus real events like the AJC Derby, AAMI Golden Slipper and, naturally, the Emirates Melbourne Cup.

It'll feature multiple game modes ranging from straightforward racing to stable management, and even a betting party mode where you and seven mates can punt on a series of computer-generated races. It's also going to be the first horse racing simulation with commentary, ably provided by Sky Channel's Matthew Hill.

Melbourne Cup Challenge will join the always-growing number of distinctly Australian things that actually come from New Zealand – like pavlova, ANZAC biscuits, Russell Crowe and half of Crowded House. We'll have a full review in time for the race that stops a nation. -b. Luke Reilly

✖ PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

85%

MELBOURNE CUP CHALLENGE won't send a rocket up most gamers' clackers, but for all you horse racing aficionados – this is the game you've been waiting for.