



Gran Turismo 4 B-Spec

Back seat drivers rejoice: the new B-Spec Mode in Gran Turismo 4 lets you pit a virtual driver, guided by you, onto the competitive track. Despite the fact that this game is all about driving, you no longer have to be in the A-Spec mode driving seat to play through the game.

B-Spec is the new strategic option that allows players to take on a managerial role. Played over two screens, B-Spec players set the pace for their virtual drivers, deciding on when to time the pit-stop on longer races and when to increase or lower the pace to get to that all important pole position.

B-Spec players can switch between multiple on-track views and a statistic screen that gives information on tyre wear, distances between the cars and the option to increase the race speed to fast forward through the competition. The race screen allows the player to watch the battle unfold from any of the competing cars' point of view, front or rear view, and from the Replay Mode track-side view.

Managers can choose how hard they want to push their virtual drivers on a scale of 1 to 5. At the lower end of the scale, the car is driven more slowly and safely. The top end of the scale has the virtual pilot driving faster and more dangerously. Players can choose to push their drivers as hard or as easy as they like at any point in the race, so if they know that there's a particularly tricky corner coming up, they may want to slide down the scale to ensure their driver gets round the corner without crashing and losing vital seconds.

Additionally, managers are offered an overtake feature, where the in-car driver is instructed to drive harder to overtake. Again this makes the car advance more erratically but it is particularly useful when your car gets stuck behind a vehicle being lapped.

Although your virtual driver is a good driver, he does need to be managed. B-Spec players will need to keep an eye on timing for tactical pit stops, where they will be able to choose the type of tyre to be fitted and just how much petrol will go in as every ounce counts. Modifying and fine tuning vehicles before the race is also now more important than ever to give your driver the winning edge.

GT4 players can choose to play the majority of races in B-Spec mode, gaining the same credit for winning as they would if they were in the driving seat. This is the ideal mode for people who struggle with a certain race or type, or who simply enjoy the pleasures of driving through GT4's glorious environments and prefer the game to do the hard work.

Serious B-Spec players, however, can build up their driver's profile: the more they race in B-Spec, the better their driver becomes. B-Spec players will need to play Gran Turismo 4 in depth on B-Spec in order to bring up their driver's status to a very high level. Managed

drivers are scored in four different categories: overall skill, machine skill, course skill and battle skill.

B-Spec facts:

- Kazunori Yamauchi, creator of Gran Turismo, called B-Spec: "the Gran Turismo you can play while enjoying a cup of Coffee".
- It is often considered that the best training for future race team managers is found by being a rally co-driver, where you will get to see the difference between drivers pushing hard or taking it relatively easy – up close.
- Kazunori Yamauchi and Polyphony Digital have been thinking about B-Spec since before the launch of Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec.

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe Ltd.

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, based in London, is responsible for the distribution, marketing and sales of PS one and PlayStation 2 software and hardware in 102 territories across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Oceania. At the end of September 2004, over 39 million PlayStation units had been shipped across these PAL territories, over 100 million worldwide. Between its European debut on 24 November 2000 and the end of September 2004, over 25 million PlayStation 2 units have been shipped across the PAL territories, over 74 million world-wide, making it one of the most successful consumer electronic products in history.

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About Polyphony Digital Incorporated

Polyphony Digital Inc., based in Tokyo, is known for the design and development of the "Gran Turismo" software series for PlayStation, PS one, PlayStation 2 consoles. "Gran Turismo" is the most successful game franchise over the last ten years, and is known for its benchmark setting game design quality and as the pioneer of car physics simulation technology. As of the end of September 2004, the "Gran Turismo" software franchise has sold over 13 million copies across Europe and over 36 million copies worldwide.