

## Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000 – Sega Dreamcast

**Developed by:** Acclaim Sports (<http://www.acclaimsports.com>)

**Published by:** Acclaim Sports (<http://www.acclaimsports.com>)

**Reviewed by:** Tim Maxwell

**Official Site:** <http://www.mcgrathsupercross.com>

**Genre:** Racing

**Number of Players:** One or Two

**ESRB:** Everyone

**Overall Rating:** 4

**Graphics:** 3/10

**Sound:** 5/10

**Documentation:** 5/10

**Getting Started:** 4/10

**Gameplay:** 3/10

**Value:** 3/10

**The Good Press:** High-quality cutscenes; lots of real bikers to control.

**The Bad Press:** Boring and simplistic gameplay; touchy control; jerky animation and camera work; obnoxious sound.

**Supports:** VMU, Jump Pack

**Overview:** *Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000* is about as much fun as a face-plant in the mud.

### Tips:

Don't bother with that pesky brake button. It'll only slow you down.

Maximize speed when hitting a jump by pulling back on the controller immediately before the jump, and pushing forward as you descend.

As a diehard sports gaming fan, I can tell you first-hand that the biggest disappointment a gamer can face occurs when you spend a hard-earned \$50 for the latest and greatest title in a series, only to realize that you're playing nothing more than a cheap rehash of the previous edition. What's worse is when the sequel is released on a much more powerful system, yet displays all the same graphical and aural characteristics (and inadequacies) of its predecessor. Combine all of these deficiencies with the fact that the original game sucked to begin with, and you've got a game that simply had no business being released. That pretty much sums up my opinions of *Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000*.

The game starts off promising enough—boasting an attractive, user-friendly interface and an impressive array of play modes to choose from. The most notable is the series mode, where the main purpose is to finish first in as many races as possible. As you continue to win races, a new series of progressively more difficult tracks is opened up to you (so says the manual, more on that later). Other modes of play include the standard exhibition and time trial modes, as well as freestyle, which tests your aerial prowess on a specially designed stunt course. In between races, players have the ability to tweak their bike's suspension, tires, and horsepower in preparation for the next race. There's also a fairly decent track editor to toy around with, and creating your own racer is also an option. All of the different settings and play modes combine to make *Supercross 2000* a great looking game on paper, but when you eventually hit the track, things go downhill in a hurry.

Let's begin with the physics engine, or, should I say, the complete lack thereof. Apparently the designers failed physics in high school because there's absolutely nothing realistic about *Supercross 2000's* engine. Bikers can navigate and accelerate perfectly through even the sharpest turns at insane speeds, and the treacherous bumps and jumps littered all over the track don't seem to affect steering ability in the least. Should you happen to react late and cut a corner a little too wide, there are invisible barriers on the track edges to keep you from going astray. To top things off, crashing head-on into a wall will almost never as much as jar the rider, much less throw him off his bike—the only way this happens is if you get tangled up with another rider, or foolishly attempt a stunt during a race.

If you thought the physics engine was bad, wait until you catch a glimpse of the AI. *Supercross 2000* features a bunch of recognizable world-class racers. With a field of such talented riders, you'd think that you'd really have to bring your A-game to win a race. Sadly, this is far from the case, and even the most unskilled players will demolish the field almost every time out. To illustrate this point, in one of my first races, I came across an area in the track where it was difficult to tell which way to go. I ended up going the wrong way for a good five seconds until I finally got back on track, yet still won the race rather handily. I hoped that future races or higher difficulty settings would provide more of a challenge, but no such luck. As such, the game turns out to be laughably easy and unexciting.

In terms of gameplay, I like to compare *Supercross 2000* to *World Series Baseball 2K1*. Both were extremely promising titles, but turned out to be major disappointments in the gameplay department. *WSB2K1*'s only saving grace was its incredible graphics, which was enough to convince many gamers to purchase it. No such luck for *Supercross 2000*. Truth be told, the graphics really aren't that bad—it's the animation that sends it to an early shower. The game slows down considerably when multiple vehicles are onscreen, and you can basically forget about a playable two-player split-screen game. Animation this choppy on a system of the Dreamcast's capabilities is simply inexcusable and further magnifies the many flaws that Acclaim let slip through the cracks in order to get this game out the door.

If you're looking for a redeeming quality of *Supercross 2000*, the audio just might qualify. For this to happen though, you have to be a diehard Offspring fan and love the sound of weed-whackers. Offspring music blares at every conceivable moment—during the opening cinematic, while you're racing, at the menu screens, even while creating a track. I personally don't listen to Offspring, so to me, it got annoying real quick. Same goes for the motorcycle engines, which sounded more like weed-whackers or a swarm of angry bees than engines. The stadium announcer isn't all that bad, but his commentary is often inaccurate and hard to hear.

*Supercross 2000* is one of those games that just doesn't have any business being part of the Dreamcast library. I can see it surviving as a first-generation PSX or N64 title, but I still wouldn't encourage anyone to buy or even rent it. The graphics and sound are nowhere near DC standards, the frame rate is terrible, and the game is just no fun to play. If you're desperately searching for a good motorcycle racing title, dust off the old Genesis and plug in *Road Rash*. At least you'll have some fun with that.