



The 2024 Acura Integra Type S

The luxurious Civic Type R

ABRAR SHAREQUE KHAN

Acura, Honda's luxury division, has recently announced another Type S car. Under the nameplate of the Acura Integra Type S, the automotive world is abuzz with excitement as Acura brings back an iconic model. Previously, the Acura Integra had a Type R variant, which was one of the most iconic Type R models ever produced. Set to be released as a 2024 model, Acura rebooted the Integra last year.

The Acura Integra Type S marks the return of a beloved sports car that captured the hearts of enthusiasts during its initial run. This highly anticipated resurrection promises a fusion of classic design cues, cutting-edge technology, and exhilarating performance. Let's dive into what the Acura Integra Type S has in store for us.

Design

Design-wise, the Acura Integra Type S 2024 stays true to its roots while embracing a modern and aggressive aesthetic. The sleek and aerodynamic body lines pay homage to the base Integra, with a contemporary twist of aggressiveness. The design is aerodynamically improved, with the centre vent cooling down the intercooler and the side vents cooling down the brakes.

The signature Acura grille takes centre stage, flanked by striking LED headlights that provide both excellent visibility and a distinctive visual presence. From the sculpted hood with vents for better cooling and downforce to the flowing wide side profile with massive fender flares, underneath which are 19-inch NSX-inspired wheels wrapped with wide Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tires. The sporty rear end features a diffuser with three exhaust outlets similar to the Civic Type R. Every angle of the Integra exudes a



sense of purpose and athleticism with a touch of luxury.

Performance Under the hood, the 2024 Acura Integra Type S promises a thrilling performance

that enthusiasts have come to expect from the nameplate. It is said to pack a punch with a 2-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine. The engine is the same VTEC engine from the 10th or 11th-gen Civic Type R, but this one is tuned to produce 320 horsepower and 310 lb-ft of torque. Acura's commitment to performance ensures that this powertrain will deliver exhilarating acceleration.

Acura says that for the Type S, they took the chassis of the highest-grade Integra and underwent a complete overhaul just to improve the suspension setup. The 2-litre turbocharged VTEC engine is paired with a six-speed manual transmission that can perform rev-matching, a well-tuned dual-axis front suspension, and big four-piston Brembo brakes. The Integra Type S aims to

Type S is no exception. The centrepiece of the interior is a high-resolution 9-inch touchscreen display that serves as the command centre for the infotainment system. It also gives you access to select driving modes like the Integra; an additional sport+ option is added, which is exclusive to the Type S. You can also go to the individual mode and set engine performance, steering, and suspension feedback to your liking. It offers seamless integration with smartphones, providing access to navigation, entertainment, and communication features.

Additionally, the Type S will come with a 16-speaker sound system from ELS Studio for the ultimate premium audio experience. It will also come equipped with advanced driver-assistance systems, such as adaptive cruise control, lane-keeping assist, and automatic emergency braking, enhancing safety and convenience on the road.

Overall impression

Overall, the Acura Integra Type S aims to deliver a well-rounded driving experience, balancing performance with practicality, depending on the mode you're driving in. With a focus on versatility, the Integra offers ample cargo space, allowing for the transportation of both passengers and their belongings. This flexibility aims to position the Type S as a viable option for both thrilling weekend track days and weekend getaways.

In addition to its exceptional performance and well-appointed interior, the Acura Integra Type S is expected to come with a host of customisation options. Acura is known for recognising the desire for personalisation among its enthusiasts, and various trim levels and optional packages will likely be available. These options will allow buyers to tailor their Type S to their preferences. Pre-orders have already started with a starting price of \$51,995. Compared to its half-sibling, the Civic Type R, it is a bit on the pricier end.

Acura is known for its commitment to technological innovation, and the Integra

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Team from Bangladesh qualifies for World Cup of Pokémon

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

A team from Bangladesh has recently qualified for the World Cup of Pokémon, an international online tournament hosted by Smogon, the largest competitive Pokémon community in the world. This year's World Cup of Pokémon qualifiers featured over 200 players from 17 teams, each representing their countries/continents to claim the final three spots in the main knockout series. Each player faced two opponents each and the top 3 teams with the best overall score advanced to the main stage.



Team Bangladesh scored the highest in the qualifiers, with a score of 12-4 against nations such as the United Kingdom, China, Brazil, Argentina, Greece, and South Korea. Starting on June 4, Team Bangladesh will face 15 other teams from the US, Latin America, Oceania, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, India, and more in the main stages of the tournament.

Remember Pokémon?

Pokémon is currently the highest-grossing media franchise in the world, reporting a total revenue of \$76.4 billion as of May 2021. Their latest Nintendo Switch games, Pokémon Scarlet and Violet, sold over 22 million copies since their release on November 18, 2022.

While most Bangladeshis' first introduction to this franchise of colourful creatures was the Pokémon anime that used to air on Cartoon Network in the mid-2000s, there are still a significant amount of fans both locally and worldwide - amassing a community of like-minded enthusiasts who dabble in everything this vast brand has to offer, including but not limited to the aforementioned anime, video games, trading cards, spinoffs, collaborations, merchandises, and of course, competitive Pokémon battling.

Competitive Pokémon battling? That's a thing!

Competitive Pokémon battling, to those uninitiated with the concept, involves making teams of 6 Pokémon and battling versus your opponent, with the goal of knocking their Pokémon out before yours are knocked out. There are two versions of competitive Pokémon most popular among fans. The official version, known as VGC (Video Game Championships), is hosted by The Pokémon Company International and Nintendo. Such tournaments are held all over the world in regional events, with winners from each regional being invited to the grand stage - the VGC Championships.

These VGC tournaments are played using the official Nintendo console of the time (DS, 3DS, Switch) and players must raise their own Pokémon in the original Pokémon games (Sun/Moon, Sword/Shield, Scarlet/Violet, etc.). VGC games are played in a Doubles format - you bring a team of 6, but use only 4 per battle in a set of 3 games. In Doubles, two of each player's Pokémon are active in the field at the same time.

Unfortunately, despite the glamour and appeal of international VGC tournaments, such events are hosted internationally and are generally difficult for Bangladeshis to attend. So, what's the alternative?

The online competitive Pokémon community

Fortunately, fan-based online communities exist, that host tournaments from anywhere in the world using a browser-based simulator called Pokémon Showdown. Using Pokémon Showdown, anyone can make a team of 6 from scratch, without the hassle of raising the creatures on your own or even using the main games or the official consoles.

Smogon, the largest of such online communities for competitive Pokémon, promotes and hosts multiple large-scale competitive Pokémon tournaments every year, bringing about 18.5 million users to their website every month. Among their most popular tournaments is the World Cup of Pokémon, which, as mentioned earlier, allows teams to represent their home countries/continents in a battle for the ultimate prize of glory and honour.



The matches of Smogon tournaments are played on Pokémon Showdown, in various Singles, Doubles and fan-made formats, with the Singles format being the most popular and the format of choice in big tournaments such as the World Cup. Smogon's formats are based on tiers, ranking Pokémon on player-based usage and viability, thus expanding upon the more restricted official format and even allowing fan-based rulesets for specific custom formats. This makes Showdown a popular site for competitive battling among enthusiasts, with over 10 million matches played monthly, in over 100 active formats with sub-communities of their own.

Behind the Bangladeshi team

This is the 5th year Bangladesh has attempted to pass the qualifying stage of the World Cup of Pokémon. The team members are part of a Facebook group called 'Bangladeshi Pokémon Battlers', which has been a hub for local Pokémon fans and competitive players since its inception in 2012.

Most of the players in Team Bangladesh have been playing competitive Pokémon for a long time, dabbling in tournaments hosted locally in the Bangladeshi Pokémon Battlers group and even competing with notable success in international tournaments in Smogon. The members of this year's Team Bangladesh are as follows: Soumav Biswas, Mir Muhib Hosain, Shadman Khalid Chowdhury, Shafakat Arifeen, Uzair Uddin Ahmed, Araf Kabbo Milky, Mohammad Kaif Sewak, Sadman Sakib Nipun, A K M Mushfiqur Rahman, Nadid Masrur Kabir, Fahim Shahriar, and Asim Abrar and Albab Maswood Haider as co-captains.

"The result of this year's World Cup achievement did not happen on a whim, but rather as a result of playing for years among our own community in

our Facebook group," says Asim Abrar, who is currently doing his Masters at the Department of Disaster Science and Climate Resilience at Dhaka University. "Most of us have known each other since 2015 and eventually became good friends. That's the beauty of Pokémon. It's not only an online game for us but rather a beloved community consisting of a diverse group of people from all across Bangladesh."

Albab Maswood Haider, a third-year student at BRAC University's Microbiology Department, is a relatively new player who got into Showdown during the pandemic. In that short time, he not only became a captain of the national team, but also a 'global voice' at Smogon - a role that is awarded to users who have done exceptional work for Showdown and the online community. "It was always

a constant struggle trying to explain to people that yes Bangladesh was a real country, and no, it's not a part of India," says Albab. He adds, "After so many attempts, we have finally managed to put Bangladesh's name on the main stage of the World Cup of Pokémon - an achievement that will put more positive recognition on our country's name among international players, while hopefully reaching out to local fans as most don't know about competitive Pokémon or Showdown."

The wonder for all ages

Pokémon, despite being known as a children's franchise to many local fans who still recognise the name, is predominantly played competitively by an older audience. This year's Bangladeshi team consists of SSC graduates, university students to even graduates with full-time jobs. "Almost everyone has a childhood connection to this franchise be it the anime or the video game. We hope our success encourages more people to be involved in their hobbies no matter how silly they might be considered by others," adds Asim. He hopes that parents start becoming more encouraging to their children about playing video games to keep their minds fresh and healthy - though of course, moderation should always be exercised.

To the local players and fans alike, Pokémon knows no age. Playing this game - whether competitively or casually - can provide a welcome source of stress relief, something we all want in the usual chaos of our daily lives. Being involved in a friendly community full of like-minded individuals who just want to relive a fun part of their childhood is something that brings joy and positivity to everyone involved. Sometimes, it helps keep that childhood alive - a piece of happiness we all dearly treasure.