

Playtest Insights & Questionnaire Results

Second Round of Playtests

Build: 'Prototype_17_03_15'

Build Available at:

https://github.com/UoSGamesGroups/second-semester-s2-level-4-5-group-9/tree/master/Standalones/Prototype_17_03_15

Build Description:

Build from near the end of sprint 6, doesn't yet have a win condition or the block mechanic implemented, But is mostly functional and serves well as a test with just the catch mechanic.



Playtest Conclusion on page 9.

Playtest One

Demographic:

Late twenties males, second year games design student

Playtest:

For this playtest we decided to play first to 10 goals, the match had lots of occasions where the disk would get stuck in loop that neither of us could catch.

Date: 19/03/2017

Notes: This playtest was done with the build before the waves were slowed down.

Questionnaire

Name: Matt

- **What were your overall thoughts on the game?**

theme appears cohesive as a whole.

very fast gameplay

background waves were distracting, needs to be slower.

- **What were your thoughts on the gameplay?**

keyboard controls were a bit awkward, too clustered

- **How easy did you find learning the basic of the game?**

Really easy

- **How clear was the objective of the game?**

Simple and clear to understand

- **How would you describe this game to someone who has never played it before?**

Advanced pong

- **Now that you've played the game is there any information you have now that would have been useful before starting?**

How long can you hold the puck?

- **Was there anything you didn't like about the game?**

Puck getting stuck in predictable loops and being difficult to grab.

Lack of feedback when grabbing and releasing puck.

Feedback when scoring

Maybe add a countdown to when the ball is put back into play.

Could add a variable so the longer you hold the puck the less power it has, this could force the player to not stall gameplay.

- **Was anything confusing?**

Could add colour highlights to opposing sides of the play area,

Show player characters playable area more clearly (rocket league blue v orange)

Playtest Two

Date: 20/03/2017

Demographic:

Player One and Two, early twenties female, first year games design student.

Playtest:

Again we decided to go first to 10 goals. This was the **first playtest I've completed without being one of the players**. Unfortunately the playtest capture footage corrupted for this playtest.

Both players seemed to enjoy the game, with lots of laughter and friendly banter throughout the play session. Both players seemed to have trouble with the current keyboard controls, player one then focused on using horizontal movement which ensured every shot she took came out at an angle (this is the play whom won the match).

Players were also having the initial puck launch score goals against them, if left unfixed this could make victory feel less earned and defeat felt more unfair, which could add frustration and have a negative impact on player fiero.

Player One Questionnaire

Name: Alice

- **What were your overall thoughts on the game?**

Good fun and laughed a lot

- **What were your thoughts on the gameplay?**

I only used the up and down arrows which made it easier

- **How easy did you find learning the basic of the game?**

It was very easy

- **How clear was the objective of the game?**

Very clear

- **How would you describe this game to someone who has never played it before?**

Funny, very casual and easy to learn

- **Now that you've played the game is there any information you have now that would have been useful before starting?**

No

- **Was there anything you didn't like about the game?**

Sprite just disappeared instead of moving into the goal, looks glitchy

- **Was anything confusing?**

No

Player Two Questionnaire

Name: Beth

- **What were your overall thoughts on the game?**

I really liked the game, caused a lot of laughter

- **What were your thoughts on the gameplay?**

I liked the gameplay, it was a bit chaotic but that's what made it fun

- **How easy did you find learning the basic of the game?**

It was very easy to learn, only took me a few seconds to get used to it

- **How clear was the objective of the game?**

It was very clear

- **How would you describe this game to someone who has never played it before?**

Funny, easy to play, chaotic

- **Now that you've played the game is there any information you have now that would have been useful before starting?**

No, everything was fairly self explanatory

- **Was there anything you didn't like about the game?**

I lost and it made me sad :(

- **Was anything confusing?**

The fact that I didn't win even though I tried my very best :(

Playtest Three

Date: 20/03/2017

Playtest Footage:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B_ZHkAG62QhCYXlsczIlZjNOa3M

Demographic:

Player One: 19/20 year old male, first year games design student.

Player Two: Early twenties male, first year games design student.

Playtest:

Again we decided to go first to 10 goals.

The Puck launcher issue/bug persisted on this play test, as can be seen happening to Player One, on the footage at 0:09 and 0:11. This left the player visibly frustrated.

Although at the half way point in the match, player skill plays a stronger role in the outcome and players seem more engaged in the game. Unfortunately the winning goal was down to luck more than skill.

At one point in the match both player weren't sure who had the puck due to sprite disappearing and would sometimes not notice a goal. Hopefully the changes we are currently working on should resolve these issues.

Despite these issues both players seemed to enjoy the game, but these are short playtest sessions so we don't know if we have the elements required to keep players coming back for more, or striving for mastery.

Player One Questionnaire

Name: Bailey

- **What were your overall thoughts on the game?**

The game felt unresponsive at time when moving though it was very fast paced whenever the puck was pushed around.

- **What were your thoughts on the gameplay?**

The gameplay seemed to work well whenever the players could actually catch the puck, however, there were some times in the game where the puck would move back into the players own goal.

- **How easy did you find learning the basic of the game?**

The controls were easy enough to understand quickly and get a hang on how to play the game.

- **How clear was the objective of the game?**

The objective of the game was pretty clear from the start, with most games similar to that having a similar goal to win the game.

- **How would you describe this game to someone who has never played it before?**

I would describe it as a game quite similar to pong, but the players can actually move around the map that they're on to give more freedom of choice.

- **Now that you've played the game is there any information you have now that would have been useful before starting?**

No.

- **Was there anything you didn't like about the game?**

There didn't seem to be much of a choice in the way that you could choose how powerful your shots were.

- **Was anything confusing?**

Not exactly, though it did take me some time getting used to how to catch the puck and then release the button to shoot it back at the opponent.

Player Two Questionnaire

Name: George

- **What were your overall thoughts on the game?**

Game was fast paced but at times felt unresponsive.

- **What were your thoughts on the gameplay?**

Fluid and fast.

- **How easy did you find learning the basic of the game?**

Not an overly complex game so it was easy to pick up and play.

- **How clear was the objective of the game?**

Very clear, almost instinctual.

- **How would you describe this game to someone who has never played it before?**

Like pong but with an arctic skin.

- **Now that you've played the game is there any information you have now that would have been useful before starting?**

No, it was pretty well explained before hand.

- **Was there anything you didn't like about the game?**

There was no way to adjust the power of the throw.

- **Was anything confusing?**

There was no indicator to let you know if you actually had the puck or not. At times, it took a couple of moments to figure out that no, the opponent hadn't scored and that instead I had actually caught the puck.

Conclusion

Overall playtesting has gone really well, everyone seems to enjoy and understand the game, and all playtests were accompanied with laughter and friendly trash talk. But as can be expected by playtesting our game at this stage in development that issues would arise, hopefully our results will help us focus and prioritise issues as we continue development.

Issues:

Pong:

One of the problems we've been having throughout development has been differentiating our game from Pong. Almost all playtesters mentioned pong in their feedback or at some point during playtesting.

We have other mechanics and systems that have yet to be implemented that should hopefully distance the play experience of our game from that of pong. As well as other elements such as the animating wall (which seems to be a much harder task to implement than we first thought).

This could be an inherent risk of having a symmetrical, top-down, isometric "Air Hockey" style game. That even if we do manage to make a unique play experience, that people will still naturally be drawn to compare our game to one of the most iconic video games going.

Accidental Goals:

A common occurrence across most playtests were "accidental goals", whether it be an own goal, a goal from the puck launcher or as an end result of the puck bouncing around with neither player able to catch it until it happens to land in a players goal.

This issue, cheapen goals and add unnecessary frustration to the game. Hopefully most of this should be fixable by tweaking variables exposed in the Unity Project Editor, although some may require changes to some of the base systems in the game.

Awkward Keyboard Controls:

As we set out to make our game playable on the arcade machine the controls are currently 'WASD' for movement and 'E' to catch and throw (and similar for Player Two with 'IJKL' and 'O').

Most playtesters brought up how the controls felt uncomfortable, although WASD is common for pc games where E is the use key, in most PC games the E key is rarely used while trying to line up an angle using the WASD keys.

If we can get a build onto the Arcade Machine that may help with this issue, but I'm not sure how easy that is to both do, and update as we continue to iterate and playtest new builds.

We could solve this by using Unity's Input Manager, this way we could map additional buttons and add controller support (opening up the possibility of getting the game onto additional platforms in the future). This also brings us to the next issue.

Puck getting stuck in predictable loops:

This could be due to puck speed being too fast, but also could be due to the trouble of only having three throwing angles as using four binary buttons instead of an analogue input restricts the angles.



Most of the rest of the feedback can mostly be categorised into **polish, player feedback and bugs**. Issues I believe we're mostly aware of, but by focusing on these we can improve the over feel of the game, such as making goal have more of an impact, a countdown to when the puck drops/launches or the player being able to see they are holding the puck.