

+ 25

Changing `/std:c++14` to `/std:c++20`

How Hard Could It Be?

KEITH STOCKDALE



20
25





About me!

- Senior Software Engineer at Rare Ltd
- Started as an intern in 2015
- Work on the rendering and engine teams
- Website -> <https://kstocky.github.io/>

About Rare



Agenda

- Talk about Sea of Thieves
- Backstory of the upgrade
- Summarize the motivations
- Planning
- The Fun™ Part
- Conclusions and future work

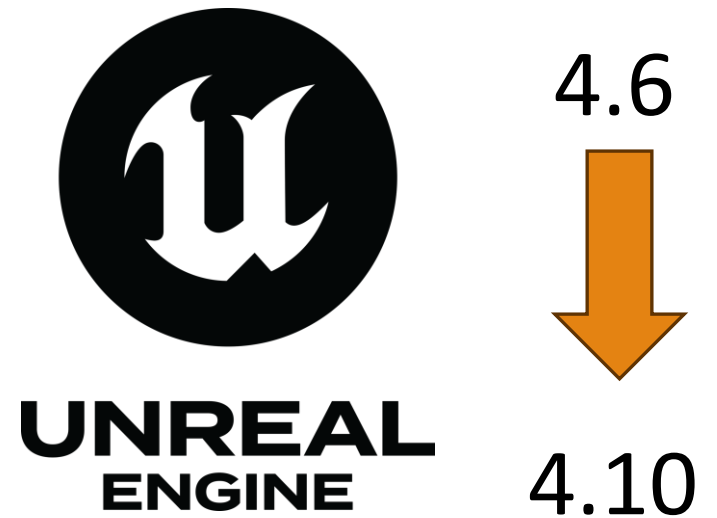
What is Sea of Thieves?



What is Sea of Thieves



The beginning



Why stop taking new releases?

- Many engine mods
 - About 37,500
- Each release took more time to integrate than the last
- We forked
- Cherry-pick features when it makes sense



Development continues...

- We release in March 2018!
- And we continue to release new stuff!



Unreal Engine development continues...

- UE 5.0 Released April 2022
- Big features like:
 - Nanite
 - Lumen
 - C++17
- UE 5.3 Released in September 2023
- C++20!



Upgrade to C++20



Improved developer experience

```
for (const auto& [Key, Value] : MyMap)
{

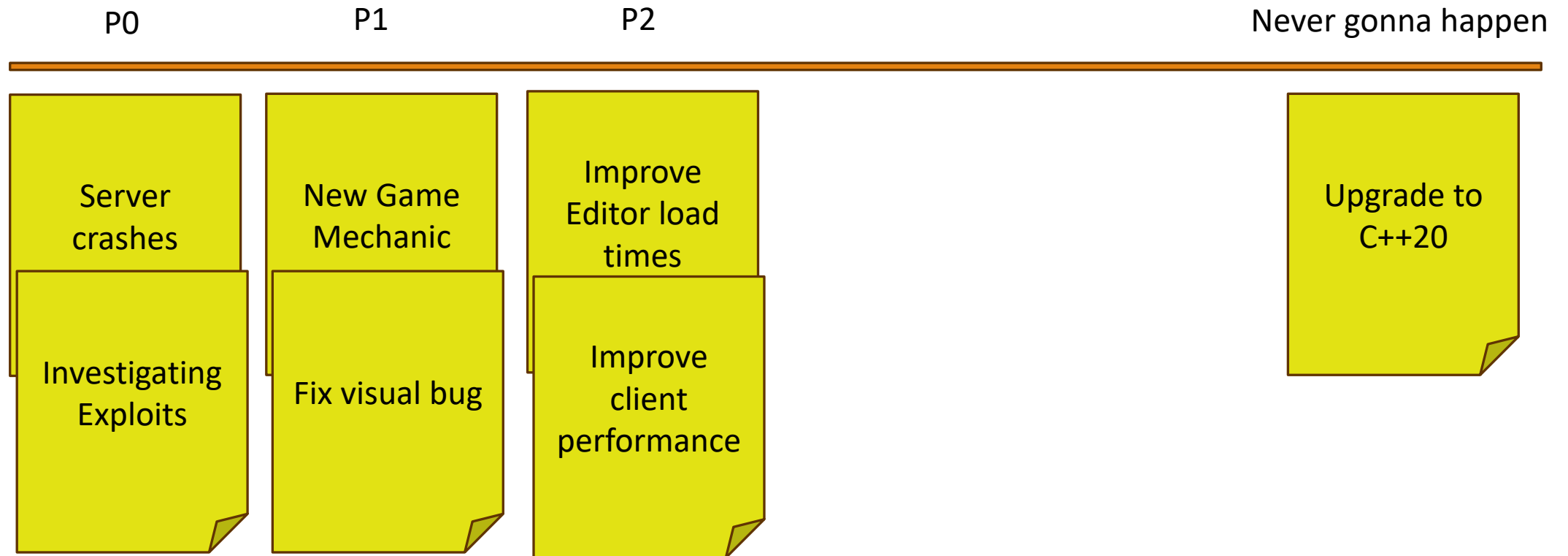
}
```

```
TArray Values{ 1, 2, 3, 4 };
```

```
template<typename T>
concept THasToString = requires(T In)
{
    { In.ToString() } ->
        std::convertible_to<FString>;
};
```

```
MyStruct MyObj
{
    .Name{ TEXT("Foo") },
    .Position{ 2.0, 3.14, 42.0 }
};
```

But there is a problem...



Hard to prioritize

- C++14 is fine
- Doesn't directly improve player experience
- Old libraries don't support C++17/20
- Hard to gauge amount of work required

Sea of Thieves code base

	Sea of Thieves project	Engine	Engine Test Project
Number of C++ files	28,269	19,419	579
Lines of Code	2,977,148	3,449,028	56,057

But then two things happened...



GAME IMPROVEMENTS

GDK Integration

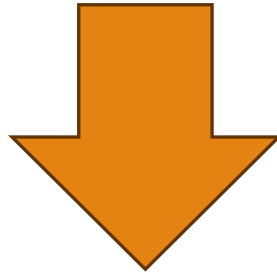
- *Sea of Thieves* now operates on the latest Xbox GDK (Game Development Kit). Players on PC are encouraged to update to the latest graphics drivers to ensure the best compatibility and performance.
- *Sea of Thieves* now supports DirectX 11 and DirectX 12 where supported by the hardware. While the title will now auto-detect and optimise the experience, players can also choose within the game settings.

But then two things happened...



Getting the PS5 port to compile

```
ZeroMemory(&MemoryStats[0], sizeof(MemoryStats));
```



```
#if PLATFORM_PS5  
memset((void*)&MemoryStats[0], 0, sizeof(MemoryStats));  
#else  
ZeroMemory(&MemoryStats[0], sizeof(MemoryStats));  
#endif
```

Why not just fix the code?

FIX THE CODE

- Pros
 - Minimal Tech Debt
- Cons
 - Could break other platforms
 - Slower

PREPROCESSOR BRANCHING

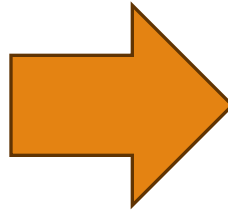
- Pros
 - Much less risk in breaking other platforms
 - Faster
- Cons
 - Accrues Tech Debt

Other kinds of issues arise...

```
template<typename T>
auto DoTheThing()
{
    T::RetType ret = T::Do();
    return ret;
}

struct A
{
    using RetType = int;
    static int Do() { return 42; }
};

int main()
{
    return DoTheThing<A>();
}
```



```
template<typename T>
auto DoTheThing()
{
    T::RetType ret = T::Do();
    return ret;
}

struct A
{
    using RetType = int;
    static int Do() { return 42; }
};

int main()
{
    return DoTheThing<A>();
}
```

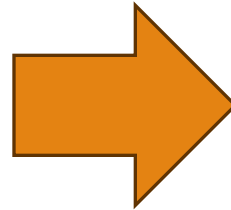

Other kinds of issues arise...

```
template<typename T>
auto DoTheThing()
{
    T::RetType ret = T::Do();
    return ret;
}

struct A
{
    using RetType = int;
    static int Do() { return 42; }
};

int main()
{
    return DoTheThing<A>();
}
```

Dependent
name requires
typename



```
template<typename T>
auto DoTheThing()
{
    typename T::RetType ret = T::Do();
    return ret;
}

struct A
{
    using RetType = int;
    static int Do() { return 42; }
};

int main()
{
    return DoTheThing<A>();
}
```



MSVC “permissive” mode

- Default for C++14 and C++17
- Non-standard conformant C++
- Turned off with /permissive-
- /permissive- is the default in C++20
- <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/cpp/build/reference/permissive-standards-conformance?view=msvc-170>




Permissive vs Standard: Nested lambdas

```
struct A
{
    int Do(){
        return [this]()
        {
            return [MyThis = this]()
            {
                return sizeof(*MyThis);
            }();
        }();
    }
    bool MyBool;
};

int main(){
    A thing;
    std::cout << thing.Do();
}
```

<https://godbolt.org/z/xWhP1vGr7>

Output of x64 msvc v19.latest (Compiler #1) ✎ ✕

A ▾ ☐ Wrap lines  Select all

example.cpp

ASM generation compiler returned: 0

example.cpp

Execution build compiler returned: 0

Program returned: 0

1


Permissive vs Standard: Nested lambdas

```
struct A
{
    int Do(){
        return [this]()
        {
            return [MyThis = this]()
            {
                return sizeof(*MyThis);
            }();
        }();
    }
    bool MyBool;
};

int main(){
    A thing;
    std::cout << thing.Do();
}
```

<https://godbolt.org/z/qKT55Ke74>

Output of x64 msvc v19.latest (Compiler #1) ✎ ✕

A ▾ ☐ Wrap lines  Select all

example.cpp

ASM generation compiler returned: 0

example.cpp

Execution build compiler returned: 0

Program returned: 0

8

Permissive vs Standard: Copy elision

```
static int Num = 0;
struct Inc
{
    Inc() { ++Num; }
    Inc(const Inc&) { ++Num; }
    Inc(Inc&&) { ++Num; }
    Inc& operator=(const Inc&) { ++Num; return *this; }
    Inc& operator=(Inc&&) { ++Num; return *this; }
    ~Inc() { ++Num; }
};
```

Execution build compiler returned: 0
Program returned: 0
With Standard C++: 1

```
int main()
{
    auto Make = []()
    {
        Inc ret;
        return ret;
    };
    auto thing = Make();
    std::cout << Num;
}
```

Execution build compiler returned: 0
Program returned: 0
With Permissive C++: 3

/permissive- is important

- “Permissive C++” is detrimental to our developer experience
- Compilers should interpret code in the same way
- More copy elision is great

P0

P1

P2

Never gonna happen



/permissive-

Reprioritizing C++20

- /permissive- should help towards C++20
- Largely the same kind of work
- Flick a switch, then
 - Hit compile
 - Fix compilation errors
 - Repeat until no compilation errors.

Plan of Action

Background work

- Sea of Thieves is a game
- New features and perf work take priority
- No deadline



No “fixing” things



Small changes

- Divide fixes into small changelists
- Easier to review
- Easier to undo if something breaks
- Enabling compiler switch should be a one-line change

Step 1: Standards conformance



Step 2: C++17

- Structured Bindings
- CTAD
- If Constexpr

```
for (const auto& [Key, Value] : MyMap)
{

}

TArray Values{ 1, 2, 3, 4 };

template<typename T>
auto GetThing(T t)
{
    if constexpr (std::is_pointer_v<T>)
        return *t;
    else
        return t;
}
```


Step 3: C++20

- Concepts

```
template<typename T>
concept THasToString = requires(T In)
{
    { In.ToString() } ->
        std::convertible_to<FString>;
};
```

- Designated Initializers

```
MyStruct MyObj
{
    .Name = TEXT("Foo"),
    .Position = FVector(2.0, 3.14, 42.0)
};
```

- Spaceships!

```
auto operator<==>(const A&, const A&) = default;
```

Let the FunTM Begin!

Two-phase name lookup

- Rules for name resolution in templates
- “Permissive C++” does not follow these rules
- Template bodies only evaluated at instantiation time
- <https://devblogs.microsoft.com/cppblog/two-phase-name-lookup-support-comes-to-msvc/>

```
template<typename T>
void DoThing(T)
{
    This is not real code!
}
```

```
int main()
{
}
```



Accessing templated base class members

```
template<typename T>
struct Base
{
    void DoTheThing(){}
};
```

```
template<typename T>
struct Derived : Base<T>
{
    void Do()
    {
        DoTheThing();
    }
};
```



```
template<typename T>
struct Base
{
    void DoTheThing();
};
```

```
template<typename T>
struct Derived : Base<T>
{
    void Do()
    {
        DoTheThing();
    }
};
```

Accessing templated base class members

```
template<typename T>
struct Base
{
    void DoTheThing(){}
};
```

```
template<typename T>
struct Derived : Base<T>
{
    void Do()
    {
        DoTheThing();
    }
};
```



```
template<typename T>
struct Base
{
    void DoTheThing();
};
```

```
template<typename T>
struct Derived : Base<T>
{
    void Do()
    {
        this->DoTheThing();
    }
};
```


What's a **template**?

```
template < typename T >
struct Other
{
    template < typename U >
    static void DoTheThing()
    {
    }
};
```

```
template<typename T>
void Do()
{
    Other<T>::DoTheThing<T>();
}
```

What's a **template**?

```
<source>(13): error C2760: syntax error: ')' was unexpected here; expected 'expression'  
<source>(13): error C2760: syntax error: ')' was unexpected here; expected ';'   
<source>(13): error C3878: syntax error: unexpected token ')' following 'expression_statement'  
<source>(13): note: error recovery skipped: ')'   
<source>(13): error C2760: syntax error: '>' was unexpected here; expected 'declaration'  
<source>(13): note: error recovery skipped: ')'
```

What's a **template**?

```
template < typename T >
struct Outer
{
    template < typename U >
    static void DoTheThing()
    {
    }
};
```

```
template<typename T>
void Do()
{
    Outer<T>::DoTheThing<T>();
}
```

Interpreted as an
actual "Less Than"
symbol

```
template < typename T >
struct Outer
{
    template < typename U >
    static void DoTheThing()
    {
    }
};
```

```
template<typename T>
void Do()
{
    Outer<T>::DoTheThing<T>();
}
```

What's a **template**?

```
template < typename T >
struct Outer
{
    template < typename U >
    static void DoTheThing()
    {
    }
};
```

```
template<typename T>
void Do()
{
    Outer<T>::DoTheThing<T>();
}
```

Interpreted as an
actual "Less Than"
symbol

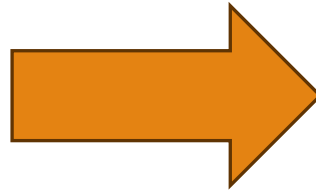
```
template < typename T >
struct Outer
{
    template < typename U >
    static void DoTheThing()
    {
    }
};
```

```
template<typename T>
void Do()
{
    Outer<T>::template DoTheThing<T>();
}
```

static_assert(false, "")

```
template<typename T>
struct OnlyInt
{
    static_assert(false,
        "T must be an int!");
};
```

```
template<>
struct OnlyInt<int>
{
};
```



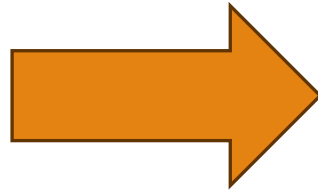
```
template<typename T>
struct OnlyInt
{
    static_assert(false,
        "T must be an int!");
};
```

```
template<>
struct OnlyInt<int>
{
};
```

static_assert(false, "")

```
template<typename T>
struct OnlyInt
{
    static_assert(false,
        "T must be an int!");
};
```

```
template<>
struct OnlyInt<int>
{
};
```




```
template<typename T>
struct OnlyInt
{
    static_assert(TIsAlwaysFalse<T>,
        "T must be an int!");
};
```

```
template<>
struct OnlyInt<int>
{
};
```


Enter P2593/ CWG2518

Defect reports

The following behavior-changing defect reports were applied retroactively to previously published C++ standards.

DR	Applied to	Behavior as published	Correct behavior
CWG 2518 (P2593R1) 	C++11	uninstantiated <code>static_assert(false, "");</code> was ill-formed	

- GCC 13
- Clang 17
- MSVC 19.40 / VS 2022 17.10

Implicit conversions

```
enum class IndexEnum
{
    First,
    Second,
    Third,
    Num
};

int main()
{
    int* MyIntPtr = false;
    int MyInts[IndexEnum::Num] = { 4, 5, 6 };

    int Choice = static_cast<int>(IndexEnum::Second);
    switch (Choice)
    {
        case IndexEnum::First:
            return MyInts[0];
        case IndexEnum::Second:
            return MyInts[1];
        default:
            return MyInts[2];
    }
}
```

Direct vs Copy Initialization

```
struct A {};
```

```
struct B  
{  
    B(A) {}  
};
```

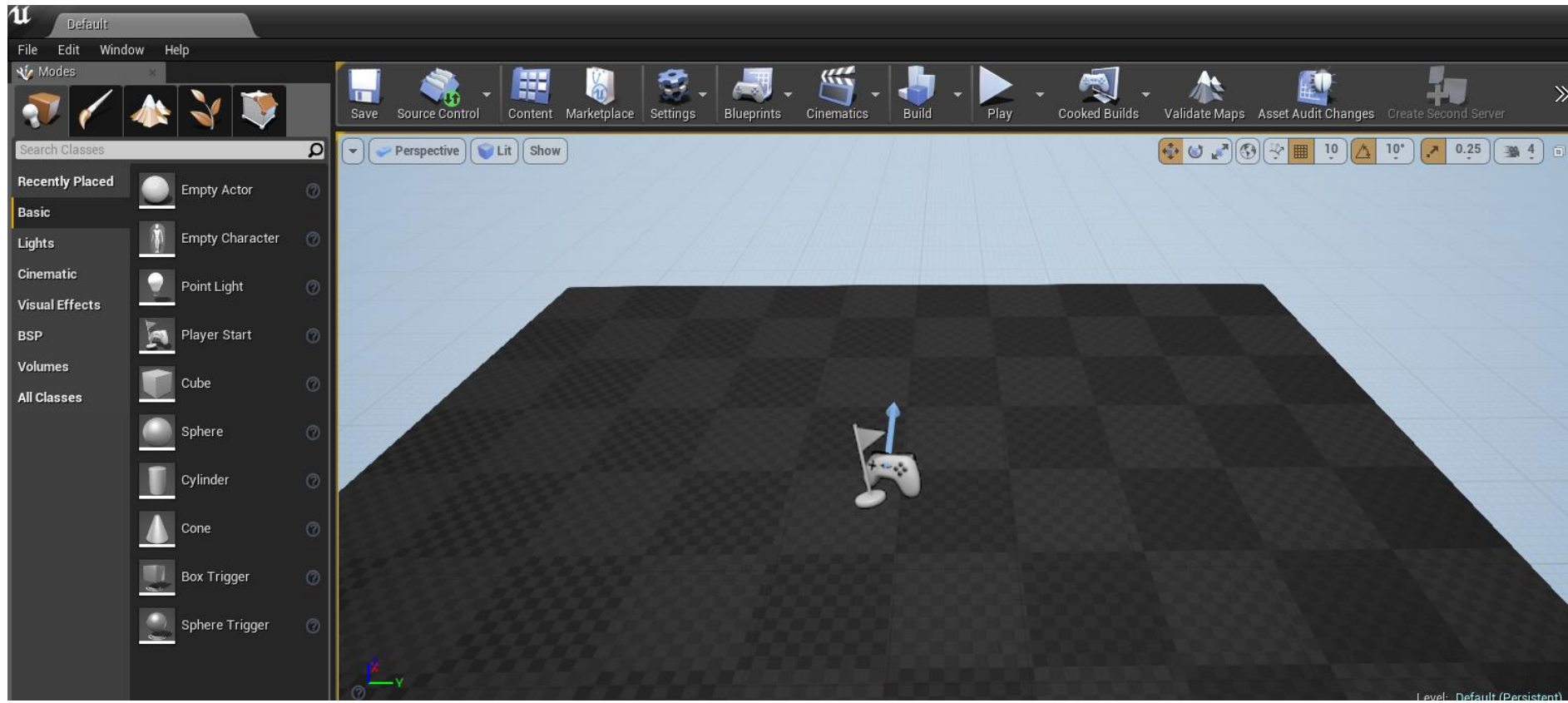
```
struct C  
{  
    C(B) {}  
};
```

```
int main()  
{  
    C c = A{};  
}
```



```
int main()  
{  
    C c{ A{} };  
}
```

It compiles!



What about tests?



Template name lookup

```
template<typename T, typename U>
int GetValueImpl(T, U) {
    return 0;
}
```

```
template<typename T>
int GetValue(T In) {
    return GetValueImpl(In, 3.14f);
}
```

```
template<typename T>
int GetValueImpl(int, T) {
    return 1;
}
```

```
int main()
{
    return GetValue(42);
}
```

What's happening here?

Lookup rules


The **lookup** of a dependent name used in a template is postponed until the template arguments are known, at which time


- non-ADL lookup examines function declarations with external linkage that are visible from the template definition context
- **ADL** examines function declarations with external linkage that are visible from either the template definition context or the template instantiation context


(in other words, adding a new function declaration after template definition does not make it visible, except via ADL).

The purpose of this rule is to help guard against violations of the **ODR** for template instantiations:

Sounds familiar...



 Cppcon 2022
The C++ Conference
September 12th-16th




Mateusz Pusz

Back to Basics:
Name Lookup and
Overload Resolution

Dependent names: Lookup

- The lookup of a dependent name used in a template is *postponed until the template arguments are known*
- **non-ADL lookup** examines function declarations with external linkage that are *visible from the template definition context*
- **ADL** examines function declarations with external linkage that are *visible from both the template definition context and the template instantiation context*
- Adding a new function declaration *after template definition does not make it visible, except via ADL*

 CppCon 2022 | Name Lookup and Overload Resolution 34



How about now?



C++17

std::auto_ptr

```
#include <iostream>
#include <memory>

struct LogAll{
    LogAll(){
        std::cout << "Hello CPPCon\n";
    }

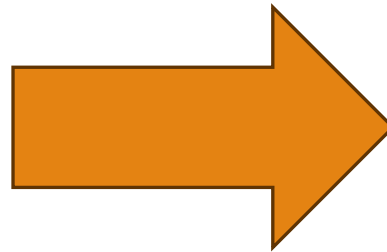
    ~LogAll(){
        std::cout << "Bye CPPCon";
    }
};

int main(){
    std::auto_ptr<LogAll> MyPtr{ new LogAll() };
}
```

Hello CPPCon
Bye CPPCon

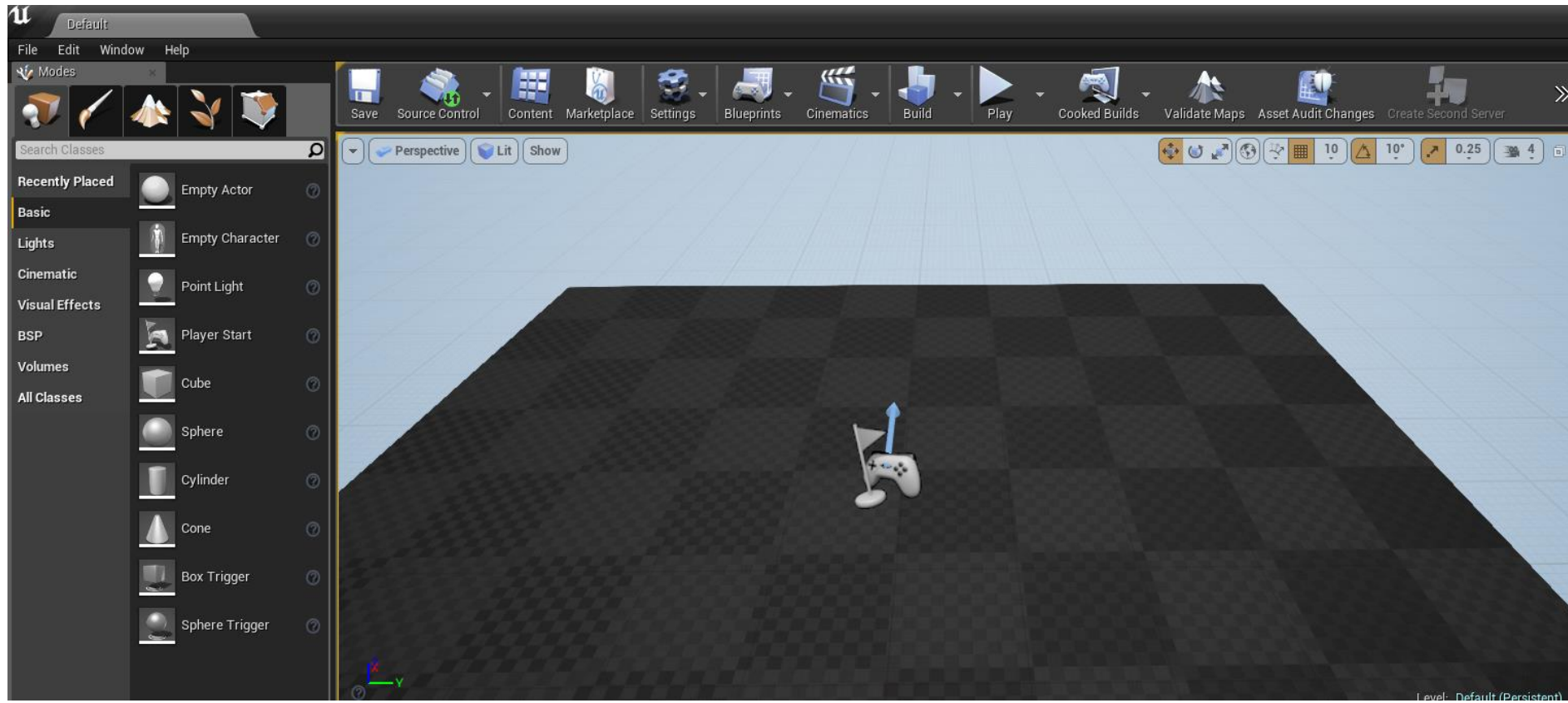
Incrementing bools

```
int main()
{
    bool IsTrue = false;
    ++IsTrue;
}
```

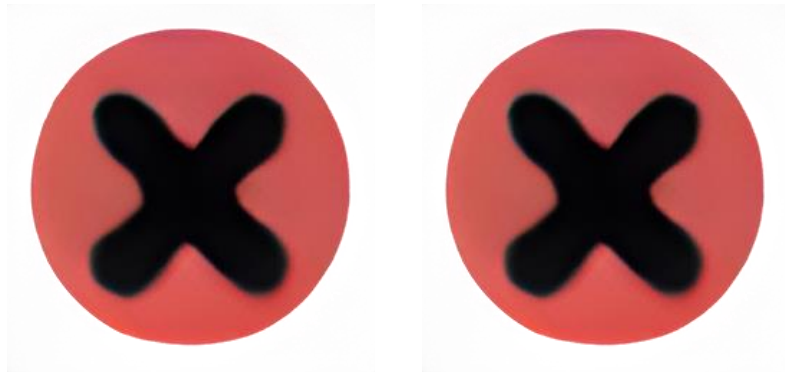


```
int main()
{
    bool IsTrue = false;
    IsTrue = true;
}
```

It compiles!

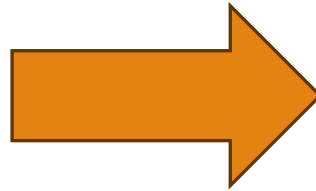


What about tests?



Expression order fun!

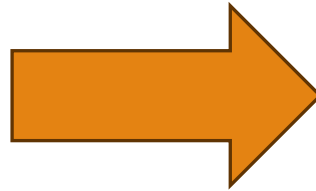
```
#include <iostream>
#include <map>
int main()
{
    std::map<int, int> m;
    m[0] = m.size();
    std::cout << m[0];
}
```



```
#include <iostream>
#include <map>
int main()
{
    std::map<int, int> m;
    m[0] = m.size();
    std::cout << m[0];
}
```

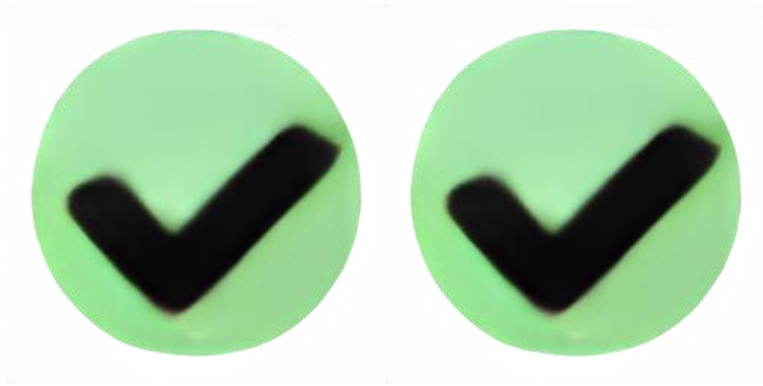
Expression order fun!

```
#include <iostream>
#include <map>
int main()
{
    std::map<int, int> m;
    m[0] = m.size();
    std::cout << m[0];
}
```



```
#include <iostream>
#include <map>
int main()
{
    std::map<int, int> m;
    auto& element = m[0];
    element = m.size();
    std::cout << m[0];
}
```


How about now?

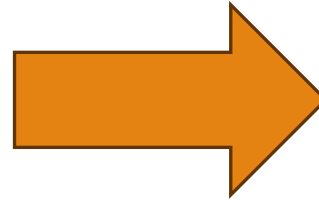


C++20

Aggregate initialization

```
struct MyStruct
{
    MyStruct() = default;
    int a = 42;
    float b = 3.14f;
};

int main()
{
    MyStruct MyObj{ 42, 3.14f };
}
```



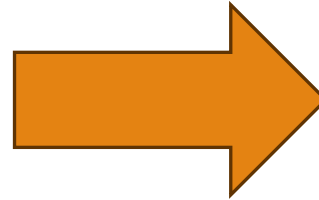
```
struct MyStruct
{
    MyStruct() = default;
    int a = 42;
    float b = 3.14f;
};

int main()
{
    MyStruct MyObj{ 42, 3.14f };
}
```

Aggregate initialization

```
struct MyStruct
{
    MyStruct() = default;
    int a = 42;
    float b = 3.14f;
};

int main()
{
    MyStruct MyObj{ 42, 3.14f };
}
```



```
struct MyStruct
{
    int a = 42;
    float b = 3.14f;
};

int main()
{
    MyStruct MyObj{ 42, 3.14f };
}
```

basic_ostream<char> vs wchar_t*

```
#include <iostream>
```

```
int main()
{
    std::cout << L"Hello CPPCon";
}
```

```
Execution build compiler returned: 0
Program returned: 0
00007FF66CC0D3E0
```

// The following deleted overloads prevent formatting strings as pointer values.

```
template<class traits>
```

```
    basic_ostream<char, traits>& operator<<((basic_ostream<char, traits>&, const wchar_t*) = delete;
```

std::result_of -> std::invoke_result

```
#include <type_traits>
```

```
struct MyCallable  
{  
    bool operator()(int, float) { return true; }  
};
```

```
static_assert(  
    std::is_same_v<std::result_of_t<MyCallable(int, float)>, bool>  
);
```



```
static_assert(  
    std::is_same_v<std::result_of_t<MyCallable, int, float>, bool>  
);
```

std::result_of -> std::invoke_result

```
#include <type_traits>
```

```
struct MyCallable  
{  
    bool operator()(int, float) { return true; }  
};
```

```
static_assert(  
    std::is_same_v<std::result_of_t<MyCallable(int, float)>, bool>  
);
```



```
static_assert(  
    std::is_same_v<std::invoke_result_t<MyCallable, int, float>, bool>  
);
```

Non-const with comparison operators

```
struct MyStruct
{
    int a = 42;

    bool operator==(const MyStruct& InOther)
    {
        return a == InOther.a;
    }
};
```


What's the error?

```
<source>(17): error C2666: 'MyStruct::operator ==': overloaded functions have similar conversions
<source>(6): note: could be 'bool MyStruct::operator ==(const MyStruct &)'
<source>(6): note: or 'bool MyStruct::operator ==(const MyStruct &)' [synthesized expression 'y == x']
<source>(17): note: while trying to match the argument list '(MyStruct, MyStruct)'
```

```
<source>:17:11: warning: C++20 says that these are ambiguous, even though the second is reversed:
```

```
17 | a == b;
```

```
| ^
```

```
<source>:6:10: note: candidate 1: 'bool MyStruct::operator==(const MyStruct&)'
```

```
6 | bool operator==(const MyStruct& InOther)
```

```
| ^~~~~~
```

```
<source>:6:10: note: candidate 2: 'bool MyStruct::operator==(const MyStruct&)' (reversed)
```

```
<source>:6:10: note: try making the operator a 'const' member function
```

Non-const comparison operators

```
struct MyStruct
{
    int a = 42;

    bool operator==(const MyStruct& InOther)
    {
        return a == InOther.a;
    }
};
```

Non-const comparison operators

```
struct MyStruct
{
    int a = 42;

    bool operator==(const MyStruct& InOther) const
    {
        return a == InOther.a;
    }
};
```



P0515 -> Spaceship operator

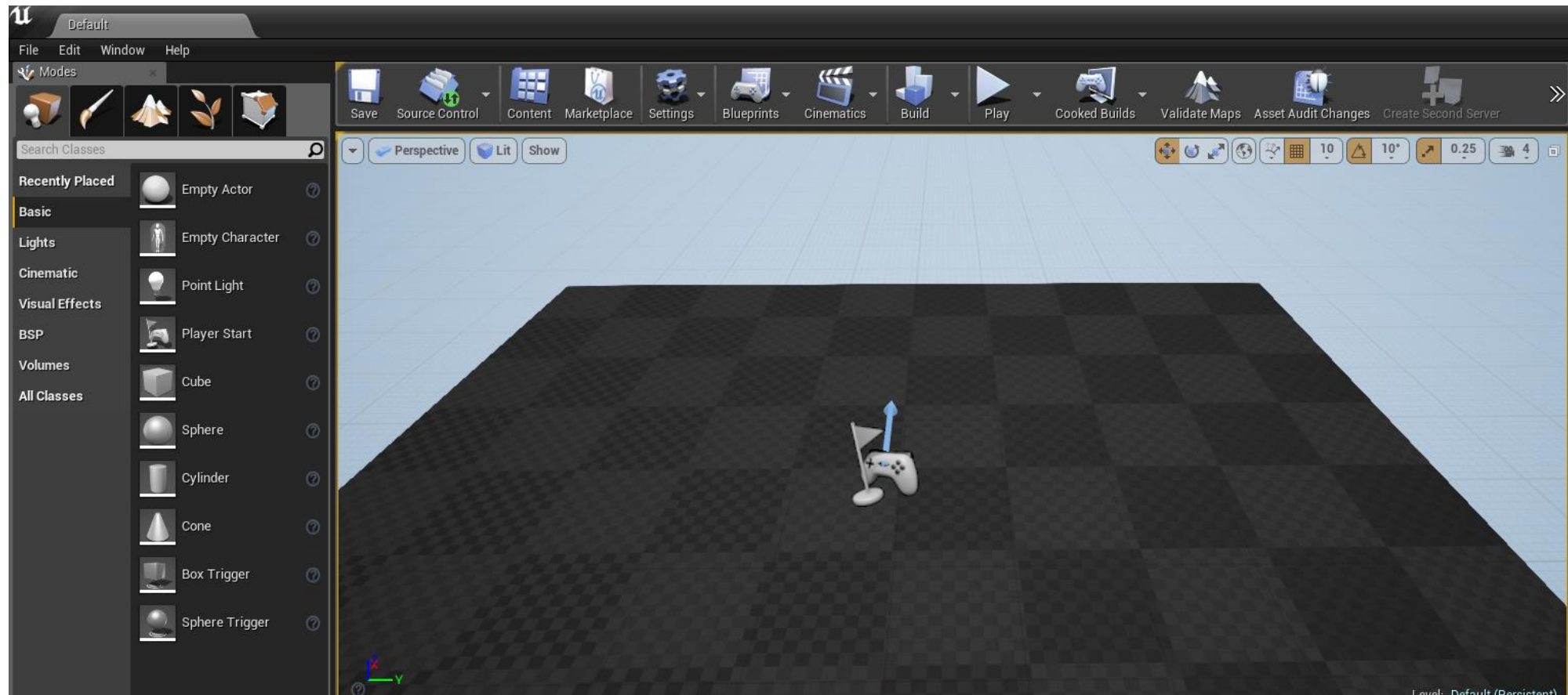
Change in 16.3.1.2 [over.match.oper] paragraph 6 and add a new paragraph after that:

The set of candidate functions for overload resolution of some operator @ is the union of the member candidates, the non-member candidates, and the built-in candidates for that operator @. If that operator is a relational (5.9 [exp.rel]) or equality (5.10 [expr.eq]) operator with operands x and y, then for each member, non-member, or built-in candidate for the operator $\lt{=}\gt{=}$:

- that operator is added to the set of candidate functions for overload resolution if $x \lt{=}\gt{=} y @ \theta$ is well-formed using that operator $\lt{=}\gt{=}$; and
- a synthesized candidate is added to the candidate set where the order of the two parameters is reversed if $\theta @ y \lt{=}\gt{=} x$ is well-formed using that operator $\lt{=}\gt{=}$;

where in each case operator $\lt{=}\gt{=}$ candidates are not considered for the lookup of operator @.

It compiles!



What about tests?



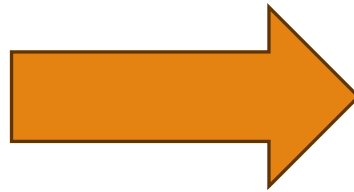
Upgrade done?



Comparing arrays

```
int main()
{
    int a[] = { 1,2,3 };
    int b[] = { 1,2,3 };

    return a == b ? 1 : 2;
}
```



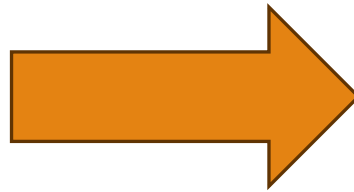
```
int main()
{
    int a[] = { 1,2,3 };
    int b[] = { 1,2,3 };

    return a == b ? 1 : 2;
}
```

Comparing arrays

```
int main()
{
    int a[] = { 1,2,3 };
    int b[] = { 1,2,3 };

    return a == b ? 1 : 2;
}
```



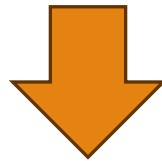
```
int main()
{
    int a[] = { 1,2,3 };
    int b[] = { 1,2,3 };

    return &a == &b ? 1 : 2;
}
```

Fix comparison of
arrays

Volatile = Threadsafe?

```
static volatile int NumThreads = 0;  
void MyThreadFunc()  
{  
    ++NumThreads;  
}
```



```
static volatile int NumThreads = 0;  
void MyThreadFunc()  
{  
    NumThreads += 1;  
}
```

Investigate volatile
usage

Volatile = threadsafe?

Multithreading — The Wrong Tool for the Job

- The Standard Library and other threading libraries provide synchronization tools designed for inter-thread communication, such as:
 - mutexes
 - semaphores
 - condition variables
- ✓ *For inter-thread communication, use synchronization tools such as mutexes and semaphores.*
- ✓ *Don't use volatile objects for inter-thread communication.*

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What Volatile Means (and Doesn't Mean)

Ben Saks



Capturing **this** with =

```
struct MyStruct
{
    int ReturnTheThingImpl(int InVal)
    {
        return InVal;
    }

    int ReturnTheThing(int InVal)
    {
        return [=]()
        {
            return ReturnTheThingImpl(InVal);
        }();
    }
};
```

Capturing **this** with =

```
struct MyStruct
{
    int ReturnTheThingImpl(int InVal)
    {
        return InVal;
    }

    int ReturnTheThing(int InVal)
    {
        return [=, this]()
        {
            return ReturnTheThingImpl(InVal);
        }();
    }
};
```

Capturing **this** with =

```
struct MyStruct
{
    int ReturnTheThingImpl(int InVal)
    {
        return InVal;
    }

    int ReturnTheThing(int InVal)
    {
        return [this, InVal]()
        {
            return ReturnTheThingImpl(InVal);
        }();
    }
};
```



Sea of Thieves code base

	Sea of Thieves project	Engine	Engine Test Project
Number of C++ files	28,269	19,419	579
Lines of Code	2,977,148	3,449,028	56,057

Upgrade statistics

	/permissive-	/std:c++17	/std:c++20
Number of Files changed/added	215	68	111
Number of individual changes	369	31	408
Number of Changelists	30	4	18
Number of tests to fix	6	2	0

So how hard was it?

	Time to first successful local compilation	Time to submit switch
Enabling /permissive-	2 days	~4 months
/std:c++14 -> /std:c++17	3/4 hours	2 weeks
/std:c++17 -> /std:c++20	1 day	~3 months

Build times

PC Specs:

AMD Ryzen
Threadripper PRO
3975WX 32-Cores
3.50GHZ

128GB RAM

Build Config:
Development Editor

MSVC: 19.42

	/std:c++17 (minutes:seconds)	/std:c++17 /permissive- (minutes:seconds)	/std:c++20 (minutes:seconds)
Rebuild 1	13:22.1	12:53.0	12:45.4
Rebuild 2	13:01.9	12:44.4	12:48.9
Rebuild 3	12:46.3	12:48.4	12:45.7
Rebuild 4	12:44.6	12:39.9	12:50.8
Mean	12:58.7	12:46.4	12:47.7

What did we achieve?

- Sea of Thieves is even more cross platform
- Faster debug builds
- Fixed test suite error reporting
- Improved error detection
- Got some great new features!

Devs love the new features

- Sam was our previous Engine team intern
- “I just tried to use designated initializers but then I realized I was on Sea of Thieves. Very much looking forward to getting C++20”
- “Sea of Thieves is now on C++20 so let's upgrade!
I'm already making use of C++20 concepts for unit testing”

Takeaways

- Upgrading is worth a try
- Newer standards improve code quality
- I learned A LOT
- Compile with multiple compilers
- Automated tests are exceptionally helpful.
- Build times don't get worse

Future work

- Removing more `#if PLATFORM_PS5`
- Enabling warnings as errors
- Re-enable warnings that were disabled
- C++23 and beyond!

Q&A



About me!

- Senior Software Engineer at Rare Ltd
- Started as an intern in 2015
- Work on the rendering and engine teams
- Website -> <https://kstocky.github.io/>