

James Orr
IGME 420 - Level Design
12/06/22

P03C - FPS Final Build and Postmortem

-Video Breakdown-

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzPTBYDP3Ek>

The video is of a short playthrough for the final build of a level for Quake 1 created in TrenchBroom.

Timestamps:

0:09 - The player starts in the first room, nothing sitting in front of them aside from an altar of sorts with a machine gun on top. Torches light the room to give in to an ancient setting for the level, while the player can turn around to find a portal, identifying how they got in the level.

0:17 - The first round of enemies is encountered in a brightened room, some enemies patrolling a catwalk above the player.



0:35 - The player enters a room guarded by a single enemy with one large button to press. They can see from the bars in this room that the button opens a secret door in the room below.

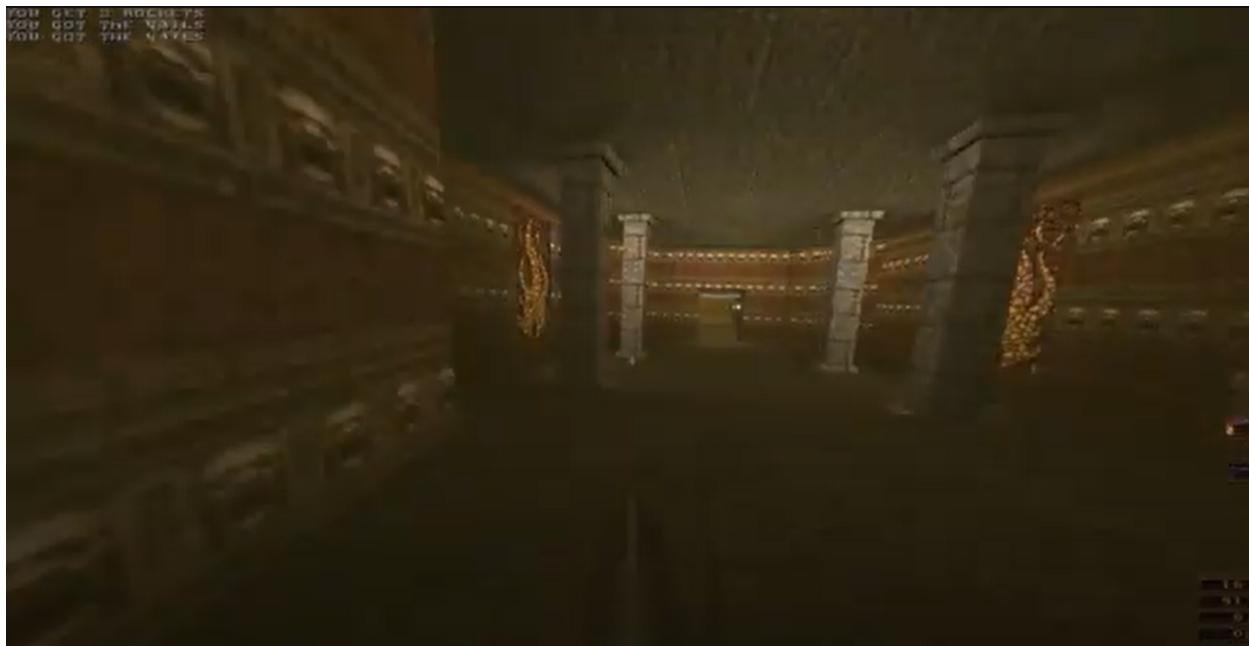
0:47 - After dealing with the Ogre in this room, the player finds a reward behind the once hidden wall; a set of armor.

0:50 - The next room features two grunts and another Ogre sitting at an elevated position. The player has two staircases to get to the same level, or can stay at the bottom to take advantage of the Ogre being stuck above them.



1:03 - After defeating the enemies, the next door unlocks to a cathedral-like structure with two more Ogres. The player can charge in to exploit their grenade attacks, or wait back and shoot at them.

1:21 - The Ogre's defeat unlocks the next door, but the player can shoot at the stained glass art to reveal other hidden rooms with health, ammo, and a new weapon to use; the double barrel shotgun.



1:34 - Exiting the tunnel brings the player to a large field with a night sky created with the portal effect, making the area feel detached from reality. They also turn back to find that the exit came from the mouth of a temple, with knights surrounding and guarding the place.

1:41 - The player can see the enemy encampment set up in the distance, and with the locked door being the only other way to go, they would explore to find the key, while dealing with the horde of enemies ahead.



1:49 - The player can instead scale the walls of the temple to find a lone knight with other supplies at the top, as well as a rocket launcher to deal with enemies at a further range.

2:01 - Entering the encampment, the player finds other enemies behind barred walls, and two different ramps to climb and reach the top most area where the key is.

2:42 - The player reaches the highest point of the encampment and finds the key to open the exit.



-Postmortem-

The concept of the level was kept intact from the original blueprint, with the player traversing different combat scenarios, finding secrets, and battling enemies so they can make it to the exit. The original blueprint had a different idea in place for the second half of the level, with the players rising from a central platform in the room with the two Ogres to the temple and field, but that was changed to a hallway to make the transition between the two halves feel more seamless. I also extensively studied the earlier levels from the original Quake, as well as Doom to understand how that game handled the boxy level structures, progressive difficulty, and secrets through matters like shooting walls or finding switches. I also attempted to strike a solid balance with the enemies the player fights being a reasonable amount with the items the player can find in those spots of rest.

Instead of listing off general points from across the board, I wanted to list off the peers individual pieces of feedback and how I took that into account for this final build:

Dominic Cook

Dominic pointed out the fast paced gameplay of the original Quake, something I didn't take into account when first constructing the level. He said that despite the nature of the game in comparison to the level's structure, the action was still present throughout, though he noted that the use of easier enemies with ammo drops to compare to the stronger enemies and break rooms would be valid additions. With the level now finished, I attempted to rework the beginning segment with the placement of enemies and power ups, as well as making a larger space to run around in compensation for movement. Though he noted that the lift would give players the time to take a breather and reflect on their status, I believe the hallway to the field accomplished this more as it was up to the player to head out without needing to prepare halfway through a one way trip.

Connie McGinnis

Connie brought up the use of differing elevations and enemy formations to make the level interesting to progress through, how there were moments of intensity with those resting spots between them, and that the environment was set up in a compelling way to describe the narrative. She did note the abundance of health packs and some elements of the then final room, both of which I attempted my best to expand upon when reworking this early part of the level. I threw in some different enemy types to adjust the health pack situation and worked beyond the final segment to express a better environmental story than the prototype level had.

Chloe Brazier

Chloe noted that the level had a nice flow and that there was a good balance between the enemy numbers with power ups to even the field, as well as the use of the secret wall in the original ending segment, though she noted that the level was a bit short. Now that the second part of the level is finished, I believe I kept the original balance from before with the new positions of enemies in accordance with the new layout, and I wrapped up the narrative with the larger setpieces in the last area. I don't believe it would be too long now with how quickly the player can move through or too short how slowly they approach to get to the end, and now it feels like about the same length as a standard Quake level.

Henry Orsagh

Henry noted that the level was well formatted and had a solid pace between the different encounters and he was able to pick it up again after not playing for years thanks to the fair difficulty. One note he mentioned was the lack of a real narrative, which I couldn't blame him for since many of the elements for that weren't made yet. As stated previously, I expanded on that.

In general, the feedback I got was positive for the idea I was proposing, and gave solid feedback for the areas I could improve on. Trenchbroom was difficult to understand at times, but I eventually got in the rhythm to make the level I had in mind. I ran through the level multiple times in fast and slow paced ways to try and make sure the level was enjoyable either way. Now that the final version is finished, I believe I made a successful evolution of the original version after applying a bit of polish to the areas where it was needed.

Screenshot of the whole level in Trenchbroom

