**DES 212 Playtest Report**

**Designer:**  Jennifer Assid **Project Name:** Combat Simulation

**Date:** 4/4 – 4/10/2022 **Project Version:** Release (v.1)

**Playtest Goals**

Determine whether the enemies feel different from one another from the player’s POV.

Determine whether the player feels that each ability is distinct and well-balance with one another.

Determine whether how difficult the player feels the group / multigroup modes are.

**Playtest Notes**

**Test #1: Mason Kaschube (mason.kaschube@digipen.edu)**

*As far as the player abilities are concerned, the player felt that each was distinct and well balanced with one another. The player did not a lethargic feel to the ability cooldowns but then amended that the whole simulation had a “slow feeling” to it. At the beginning, the player noted that they were using a button mashing protocol but as they progressed further (and got more familiar with the enemies) they began to develop the following strategy: hit them with AoE to stun them, hit ability four as soon as possible, closely followed by ability two, and use one and five as backups.*

*For the enemies, the player only noted that the ranged enemy felt heavily unbalanced – coming across as an “instant kill” in group setting. Due to their quick cooldowns and high damage rate, the ranged enemy proved to be the deadliest (even outweighing the elite). Outside of that, the player felt that each enemy was challenging on its own and was able to defeat almost all of them with a set strategy. Group setting felt tense for the player (with the ranged group just feeling unfair) but the player noted that the multigroup were well balanced and have a definite “synergy” to them. Other than the ranged enemy, the player also noted that the Rock hatchling felt a bit “too tank-y” but was also able to defeat the rock both in solo and group mode with some effort / engagement.*

**Test #2: Liam Sarett (liam.sarett@digipen.edu)**

*The abilities did feel unique to the player, but they found themselves using ability two (restore) and ability five (stun) in junction with one another which left the other abilities inherently inert. Even though this method took significantly longer than if the player had utilized other ability combos, the player was satisfied with the semi-guaranteed success. Once asked to stop using that strategy, the player resorted to a first-available which had a higher variance in win / defeat ratio. When asked what made the ability 2-5 combo sustainable, the player noted that since the AoE did some damage there was no reason to use the other (more damaging) abilities.*

*With the enemies, player was able to defeat all of them in solo mode with a defined strategy and without much issue. Each enemy felt unique and were “pretty sweet” though did come across as overly tanky all around (this can probably be explained by the lethargic feeling noted in the other playtest). As for the enemy groups, the player was able to easily defeat the grunt / healer, sometimes the melee, never the ranged / elite / tank. Once again, the ranged enemy was noted as overly powerful due to the short cooldown rate and the amount of damage done (the 2-5 combo proved useful but not victory sustaining against the groups).*

**Test #3: Dillon Goicoechea (**[**dillon.goicoechea@digipen.edu**](mailto:dillon.goicoechea@digipen.edu)**)**

*\*\*\* This playtest was done after the ranged enemy had been rebalanced / the speed of the simulation adjusted / and the speed of the player movement increased\*\*\**

*As far as the abilities – the player immediately started with the strategy of having 2 be the default ability to use because “it seems like the safe bet” since it is restoring resources. The abilities felt unique to the player (“as they always have been”, they noted) but definitely felt more refined than before (i.e. their differences were more evident and useful to creating a different gameplay feeling). AoE especially felt more useful with the increase effect duration; the duration itself let the player get a few hits in but didn’t last long enough to have an unfair advantage associated with it.*

*Each enemy did feel unique to the player, but they struggled to understand what the difference between each enemy was until they had fought it a few times. Though they suggested a different visual indicator, that won’t be possible due to the nature of the simulation – but some sort of affordance needs to be put in to mitigate this confusion. As for the player v enemy, the player was able to defeat every enemy on its own and had an easier time defeating the ranged group as opposed to prior playtests. They also noted that the player was moving faster which allowed them to “dodge” certain enemies (they found that to be incredibly useful).*

**Playtest Analysis**

*For the first playtests, it is clear that the simulation was running a bit too slow and gave off a lethargic feeling. This resulted in the player’s feeling that the ability cooldowns felt too long, the enemies too tank-y, and the overall game too slow (which decreased the engagement seen). As such, the DT was restored to default value (having previous been adjusted for telemetry purposes) for the last playtest. Another thing that was noted what that the range enemy felt way too overpowered in both the solo and group settings (though the difference was evident in the group settings). For that reason, the ranged enemy had an increase in the cooldown timer and a decrease in damage dealt and range covered. This with hopefully make the ranged enemy more palatable for the players (and more keeping in the theme); this was tested in the last playtest. The final thing that was noted in the first playtests (and adjusted for the final one) was that the player felt slow. Even though this was also because of the DT difference, the player’s speed was increased to be slightly above the average speed for the enemies to give the player a bit more of an edge (and encourage dodging which was brought up in a previous playtest); this will be tested in the final playtest.*

*With the final playtest, the following was changed. Due to the player not understanding the gameplay difference between each enemy – an added descriptor was placed on each enemy to notify the player their general categorization (i.e. Melee v. Range). The ranged enemy was much easier to defeat than in the previous playtests but still not as easy as the grunt / healer (still setting it apart from the “easy” enemies). And the player movement was noted and enjoyed, letting the player “dodge” enemy attacks which increase their engagement in the overall strategy of the game itself.*

*Overall, the telemetry and playtest show that the simulation can be considered both balanced and fun. The abilities and enemies all feel (and are mathematically) difference from one another with a small margin of error. Players had to develop a strategy with (and, by association an understanding of) the abilities which changed based on which enemy was present. The UI was well received and informative to the player (though that wasn’t necessarily tested in this play test, this fact is evident in the other playtests). The group mode and multimode felt more difficult for the player b ut not to the point of frustration as in prior playtests.*

**Raw Notes** *(optional, but highly recommended)*

*Mason Kaschube –*

* *The timing of everything seems really slow (look at the DT)*
* *Defeated the wind hatchling easily*
* *Player moves a little too slow*
* *The ranged enemy is able to take away a lot of health as the player approaches to stun*
* *The Ice Hatchling could use less range on their ranged ability*
* *Enemies go off screen so health bar is hard to see*
* *The tank feels tanky – a little too tanky*
* *The weapon cooldowns are going too slow*
* *You fixed the healer!*
* *The length of the distract is really nice*
* *Defeated the Elite with 27 health remaining*
* *Abilities have their cooldowns a bit high*
* *Group mode feels fine to far – the melee feel a bit tanky (but that might be because the simulation has a slower feel to it)*
* *Ranged group is an issue – immediate death*
* *The other groups feel like I have a chance at winning – the ranged group is instant death*
* *First multigroup engaged the player very nice*
* *Check targeting – last enemy error changing target results in win*
* *The ranged feels like the unbalanced enemy – all the other enemies feel fine*
* *The Rock Hatchling has a little too much health (but not by a lot – lower it by 50 at the most)*
* *Each ability feels unique – there is a bit of a strategy that is developed (reliant on the AoE stun)*
* *Four is the priority – three secondary – 1 is the backup*
* *Multigroups are well synergized*

*Liam Sarett –*

* *Changed Damage Reduciton ot Enemy DMG Reduction*
* *The ranged is OP*
* *Player was able to defeat all enemies alright*
* *Player was able to defeat grunts / healer groups well – melees some time – ranged never – tank and elite never*
* *The enemies are pretty sweet – The enemies feel sort of different from one another – they all feel a bit tanky*
* *Abilities – each ability feels different | they do not feel well balanced with each other. 2 and 5 together is an OP combo*
* *Move the UI up a little bit to take advantage of the space (in group mode the enemies overlap with the text)*

*Dillon Goicoechea –*

* Defeat grunt / melee but ranged kicked his ass because he didn’t understand that it was the range
* Mistook the AoE as the enemy range
* Pressed ability 2 as the default
* The abilities felt unique from one another and a lot more refined then from other playtests.
* The enemies are a lot more unique but there aren’t a lot of visual indicators as to what they do
* Used the manual targeting to get the best use out of the AoE
* Group mode is way harder – more of a challenge
* AoE is more useful with the increased duration – long enough to get some attack off but short enough to give you an unfair advantage