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GAT 211A—Fall 2014

Instructor: Jeremy Holcomb

Project 3

Team Fortress 2  
Game Analysis

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Team Fortress 2 (version 1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

Playtesters

Classmates from the GAT211 participated as first-time players for the version of my Team Fortress 2 board game that I brought to lab.

**Name: Email:**

* Jason Guelbert j.guelbert@digipen.edu
* CJ Payne [cj.payne@digipen.edu](mailto:cj.payne@digipen.edu)

Playtesting

During the lab I had a team of 4 students, including myself, to playtest my game with. My game is only two player, so CJ and Jason were chosen to playtest my game, while Berne and I watched. The game seemed easy for both of the players to set up, but considering we all have been playing similar games, and the fact that we all know Team Fortress 2, it might be a good idea to playtest outside of school to see if set up is confusing or not. CJ won the starting die roll and decided to go first, leaving Jason to elect to play as the Red team, leaving CJ with the Blu team.

While setting up the game took no time at all, deciding which class to play took both Jason and CJ quite some time. I suppose this is understandable, because each class has unique rules to it and no one wants to misplay with their limited classes. CJ choose to start the game with a good mix of range and close combat with a sniper, pyro, and a soldier. Jason choose to start the game with a scout, heavy, and pyro.

The game started off a little slow with both players inching their classes closer. Without warning, Jason opened up with his pyro, burning CJ’s sniper. While the pyro did take some damage from the sniper, being so close up hurt the sniper’s ability to really damage the pyro and so CJ’s sniper burnt rather quickly.

This was an important moment of the game to gauge how both Jason and CJ felt about their classes. Jason took a lot of glee in rushing in like a mad man with his pyro. Jason would later comment that the pyro felt right and the ability to catch multiple people in the flame AOE stencil was fun. CJ thought the sniper should be able to do a little more damage at close range, but agreed that the sniper should not have an easy time when a pyro is right in its face.

The game continued with CJ spawning a scout to point-blank blast the pyro to death. By this time the slow moving heavy on Jason’s team go in range to tear the scout apart. Soon thereafter a close range heavy war went down with the first heavy to open fire, Jason’s heavy, winning the war. Thanks to a medic, Jason’s heavy was able to stay alive for some time before dying to a soldier rock blast.

The game continued in this kind of a fast pace for some time, with Jason ending the game with 3 classes left to spare. Both CJ and Jason agreed that the Heavy felt a little overpowered and that the scout needed some form of evasion to keep from dying right away. The turn order in its current form also has issues, causing some classes to never be moved when a big fight is going down. Maybe it would be best to have both player’s move all their pieces to be considered one turn. Further playtesting will help to solve this.

Overall, the playtest went better than I expected. I really stripped the game down to a “if you are in range, you do damage” mentality. This allowed me to drop a lot of complexity and keep the game simpler. For the most part the classes feel pretty good, with the idea of one weapon and one special ability seeming to cut down on player’s constantly scanning the rules for confirmation of what their classes can do.

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Mechanics

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Dynamics

The dynamics of "Fire Run" involve the pacing of the game. The game is as much about avoiding enemy shooting and obstacles as it is about maintaining a good balance of health meters and fire intensity. Avoiding enemies shooting at you and water puddles means taking the right lanes at the right time. As a whole taking the most optimal path available is a key strategy in the game.

However, the rate at which you move forward and your overall health requires you to run into enemies to gain a new host. The game has a strategy element where players must judge which host to take at any one point in time. This makes the player have to balance health meter decisions like taking a big guy for his durability over his speed or taking the small guy because the path ahead requires good mobility.

While taking care of a health meter you also need to care for your fire intensity. This makes the game a balancing act where you must navigate a map while maintaining your meters as optimally as possible. The tempo of the game is mostly in the hands of the player, depending on which path they take and how quickly they make their hosts run by choosing a host and controlling the fire intensity.

Experience

"Fire Run" is mostly a game that focuses on the challenge aesthetic. The joy of this experience is feeling smart about how quickly you were able to blow through a challenge with the difficulty of avoiding obstacles and managing a health and fire intensity meter. The game does have a small bit of fantasy in believing that you are this little flame creature, but the bulk of the game does not rely heavily on this.

Intensity Curve

The intensity curve I was hoping for when designing this version of my Team Fortress 2 board game and the intensity curve that I think actually occurred during the playtest are \_\_\_\_\_\_BLANK\_\_\_\_\_\_ I had wanted.

\_\_\_\_ACTUAL\_CONTENT\_HERE\_\_\_\_ I was hoping that each round would show a spike in intensity as players eagerly awaited the die throw to see the results of their pre-round strategy. While I am glad that the intensity curves for both Jason and Berne show some indication of spiking during the rounds and dipping during the planning, the level of intensity is not quite there.

The beginning of the game saw Jason and Berne having a hard time getting into the game due to confusion about the rules and so they did not seem to be fully in that moment. Also, Berne seemed to checkout near the end, when it became increasingly clear that his crazy train strategy would not work out. Jason kept a pretty consistent intensity throughout the game as his strategy was sound and kept him increasingly in the lead.

I think the biggest problems with "Drunken Boxing", as is evident with the intensity curve, is that the game is difficult to understand right away and does not allow a player who has gotten too far behind a way to catch up. \_\_\_\_ACTUAL\_CONTENT\_HERE\_\_\_\_

Team Fortress 2 (version 2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

Playtesters

Classmates from the GAT211 participated as first-time players for the version of my Team Fortress 2 board game that I brought to lab.

**Name: Email:**

* Jason Guelbert j.guelbert@digipen.edu
* Berne Capone [charlesberne.capone@digipen.edu](mailto:charlesberne.capone@digipen.edu)

Playtesting

During the lab I was lucky enough to once again have Jason Guelbert and Berne Capone playtest my game. After setting up the map and briefly scanning the rules the game started with Berne opting to play as Blu and Jason playing as Red. Right away there was an oversight in my game as to what kind of die should be used to determine who goes first. This was a silly mistake, but Berne picked up on it so I should correct this in the next version of the game. Berne won the d4 roll for who goes first and the game officially began.

The first couple of turns did not have a lot of action in them as far as shooting at the enemy goes, but it was interesting to see that Berne and Jason had different ideas for moving their teams. Berne choose to use the first couple of turns grouping up his classes, standing still, and taking advantage of the overheal provided with the medic healing ability. He overhealed 4 of his classes before finally breaking this formation. Jason took to casting a wide net with his classes, only overhealing 2 of his classes that were in range and mostly keeping his Medic close to the Heavy.

As soon as Berne’s sniper got in range he proceeded in a sniper war with Jason’s Sniper. None of them managed to roll headshots and this felt kind of lame. In a future version of the game I’m considering adjusting the headshot roll to give a better chance at more damage instead of the all-or-nothing approach that it is now. This change should make the sniper headshot roll more fun and less of a disappointment. Berne managed to kill the Red sniper on the second shot, but Jason quickly used the Scout’s speed to close the gap with the Sniper and shoot it down.

The game continued with much mindless violence: Blu Scout killing the Red Scout, the Red Pyro flaming the Blu Soldier and Pyro, and it all came down to an epic showdown between Red Heavy and Medic and most of the Blu team. The Red Medic kept the Red Heavy alive long enough for him to destroy 2 other Blu classes, but he could not last forever and was wiped out by the Blu Soldier at a medium range. Overall the game felt like it was working alright, and the fight was pretty fair until the end. Jason was even taunting Berne at several points in the game, a good sign that the players were engaged in the game and not distracted with things that broke the gameplay. Berne won the game with his Soldier and Heavy left after about 10 turns.

Overall Jason felt the game worked well, but the map could use some tweaks. He thinks the game needs more of an objective other than kill the other team, and I’m obliged to agree. At this point the classes mostly feel good, with the exception of the Scout. The little bit of evade he has is not effective, so I’ll be increasing this and maybe giving him another option, like a second smaller move in addition to his move and attack. Berne was happy with the game but mentioned that the medic’s overheal might be too strong. Both Berne and Jason felt the Medic was the most important class, which is an okay feeling to have, but both agreed the Scout was lame. This could be fixed with the above change, or even an objective, like capturing a point on the map.

Other Student Games

I got to play as the Red team on Jason Guelbert’s game against Berne as the Blu team. The game went pretty well, but I feel like the Scout in this game is incredibly broken in that it feels pretty useless. In particular the Scout is out-ranged by every class, including the Pyro, and is paper thin. The Heavy is very powerful, in contrast to the Scout, and can even move as fast as the Scout if the Scout fires in a turn. The game went pretty well, it is very similar to what I have going on in my game, so I think that with a few tweaks to his classes it will work out well.

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