NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

**Investigating AI approaches and how they challenge resolutions: State AI vs Machine Learning**

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MComp Computer Science

May 2022

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Word Count: 12345

Abstract

Declaration

“I declare that this dissertation represents my own work except where otherwise stated.”

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Giacomo Bergami, for his guidance and support through each stage of the process.

Dr Giacomo Bergami

Dr Rich Davison???

Dr Graham Morgan

Dr Gary Ushaw

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Introduction

Aims & Objectives

Background Review

Hardpoint

Hardpoint is a game style that is similar to Capture the Flag and has been implemented as a main game mode in many popular online multiplayer games. Whilst this style of game is commonly known as “Hardpoint”, its name varies across different franchises. Other names include: “Stronghold” (Halo), “Headquarters (Call of Duty), “Hardpoint Domination” (Titanfall) to name a few. Each franchise has modified the game to fit their own style, however the foundation stays the same.

Rules

Two teams play against each other on a map that has designated areas (hardpoints) that reward points when players enter them. The minimum amount of hardpoints is 3, with one of these hardpoints being equal distance from both team’s respawn areas. The aim of the game is to beat the opposing team by reaching the total score before them (for example, 100points). Points can be earnt by capturing the hardpoint from the other team and for defending the hardpoint from the opposing team.

Capture

A player can only capture a hardpoint that is either owned by the enemy or has yet to be captured by anyone for the first time in a game. To capture it, a minimum of one player must enter the hardpoint and stay within the area for a small period of time (for example, 3seconds). If an enemy enters the area during this time, the hardpoint will become congested. Once captured, the team gains a large portion of points (for example, +15points).

Defend

A player can only defend a hardpoint that is owned by its own team. To defend it, a minimum of one player must enter and stay within the area for an extended period of time (for example, 10seconds). If an enemy enters the area during this time, the hardpoint will become congested. Once defended, the team gains a small amount of points (for example, +5points). This will repeat for as long as a player is within the hardpoint and it belongs to said players team.

Congested

If players from both teams are present in the hardpoint at the same time, it becomes “congested” and no points are rewarded whilst the hardpoint is in this state. To exit this state, a team must remove all enemy players from the area. Once complete, the hardpoint will go back to the state it was beforehand and normal gameplay continues.

Kills

Players can kill other players, however, this does not affect the score. Respawns are enabled.

Examples from the real world

AI

Overview

State AI

Finite state, heiracly finite state, probalistic finite

Machine Learning

Algorithms, compare etc, Deep Reinforcement, Imitation Learning

Tools & Technologies

Software

Unity, compare other options perhaps.

Mlagents, do a lot of research into this. What alorithms it uses etc

Hardware

Kind of like system requirements. Obvs tho, I don’t match those. Maybe try to find some graphs /studies that show how better equipment can affect the training times etc

Similar Projects

Project Development

System Setup

Hardware

* Device Type: Laptop
* Processor: Intel® Core™ i5-7200U CPU @ 2.50GHz, 2713 MHz, 2 Core(s), 4 Logical Processor(s)
* Operating System: Microsoft Windows 10 Home
* RAM: 8GB
* GPU: Intel® HD Graphics 620

Software

EDITORS

* Unity (v.2021.1.21f1)
* VSCode (v.1.67.0)
* Microsoft Excel (v

Toolkits, Libraries & Packages

* ML-Agents (release.19)
  + Pip
  + Gym Unity
  + Numpty
  + Tensorflow
  + TensorBoard
  + Torch
  + https://github.com/Unity-Technologies/ml-agents/releases
* Python (v. 3.9.9)

Version Control

* Git (v.2.21.0.windows.1)
  + Github Desktop
  + GitBash

Design

Map Design

Gameplay Rules

I have implemented the basic version of the Hardpoint game mode outlined in <>. Below is a list of parameters that I have used to run the game. These will stay the same for all playthroughs so as to not affect the result comparisons.

Total number of teams: 2 *(teams)*

Total number of players per team: 4 *(players)*

Total number of Hardpoints: 3 *(hardpoints)*

Score needed to win: 100 *(points)*

Time it takes to capture: 3 *(seconds)*

Time it takes to defend: 10 *(seconds)*

Points earnt for capturing: 15 *(points)*

Points earnt for defending: 5 *(points)*

Points earnt for killing an enemy: 0 *(points)*

Respawns enabled: Yes

State Machine

Deep Reinforcement setup?

Implementation

Testing

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Appendices