Happy Halloween, osu!

TRICK or TREAT

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osu!monthly
October 2011 Edition
Issue 6
osu.ppy.sh

Just look at the time!

Very recently, osu! officially broke the milestone of 1,000,000 users registered. With this achievement, it makes us look back. It's been over six months since the first issue of osu!monthly came out. From the small newspapers on Google Docs to the magazine hybrids on Adobe PDF's, we'd like to thank you, the reader, for sticking with us through good times and bad. Cheers, and hope you enjoy this edition more than ever!

This just in!

The tip box is back! In our last edition, we supplied you trusty tips on creating the ideal Easy/Normal map. Now let's move onto the modding side of things. Be on the look-out for these special boxes containing helpful tips for anyone interested in the modding stage.

Important Links

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An **alternate listing** of the osu!monthly staff can be found here.
Submit **questions** to mm201 for next edition's **interview** here!
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Submit your answers to the **crossword** using this form, here.
A **printable version** of the crossword can be accessed here.
Submit your **caption** for the Caption Contest here.

INTERVIEW WITH: LYBYDOSE

Written by: KRZY

This month, we had the pleasure to interview Lybydose, a member of the BAT and well-known player of the Flashlight (FL) mod.

Thank you for giving us your time, Lybydose. It's a pleasure having you here. First off, as a mouse player, do you feel you're more accomplished at this game than tablet players that are roughly on the same level as you are?
Not really, I think it's just personal preference. However, I haven't had much experience at actually using a tablet for more than a few hours, so I can't say how much easier it would be. I do know that in those few hours, it certainly wasn't easy at all, and I couldn't even pass, let alone Full Combo, songs that I thought were very easy.

Many consider you to be a unique player, and that is largely due to the fact that you are probably the only consistent Flashlight player in the western hemisphere. Why do you play with Flashlight, and what mod, if any, do you think you'd be playing the most if there was no Flashlight in this game?
I originally started using Flashlight mostly to prove to myself that it's actually possible to Flashlight a lot of things that I figured would be absolutely impossible. There was usually a lot of negativity towards the then-rare Flashlight users, because most players thought they were cheating—and a couple of players were actually banned—so I figured I'd see just how possible some of those maps actually were. Also, I mostly prefer no-mod over just about everything else.

Alright. Now, for some time you have been insisting Flashlight is overweighted.
It is. But then again, so is every mod.

Can you elaborate a little, please?
At the risk of sounding too much like Cyclone, I think that high accuracy should be rewarded more than it is now. I think it's kind of stupid that a low accuracy, 94% <insert mod here> can easily beat a 100%. Of course that's more of an issue with Hidden and Flashlight, because neither actually makes it more difficult to accurately hit the notes.

Fair point. A lot of players I know do think that way, although they're far less passionate about actually changing things.
Also, I can just straight up sightread some easier maps with Flashlight in a couple of tries. It doesn't really add difficulty in those cases, so it's just "hey, free 12% bonus". Of course, on most maps like that any mod is a free bonus, so it sort of balances out. But in those cases, it's generally harder to 100% with, say, Double Time or Hard Rock than Flashlight.

Being a Double Time/Hard Rock player, I totally agree with the last part. Moving on, who is the best player in your eyes/best Flashlight player in your eyes? You may name yourself in either.
Cookiezi and Bikko.

What was the hardest Flashlight record you set and, unless they're one and the same, what is the Flashlight record you are proudest of?
Hardest is probably Masterpiece because I seriously question my ability to be able to do it a second time. Proudest would probably probably be One or Haru Haru, because those were a couple of the first maps I actually FC'd *[Ed.'s note - Full Combo'd]* with Flashlight.

Hmm, I would have guessed Haru Haru but not Masterpiece! Alright. Decay wants to throw in a question: "Is Decay your idol?"
Paste the answer from the exact same question on my Formspring.

"Gonna have to go with no." I see. Reisen Udongein wants to ask: What do you think about Hidden + Hard Rock users? Does Hidden + Hard Rock giving a x1.1236 score bonus and Flashlight giving a slightly inferior x1.12 score bonus bother you a lot?
Somewhat, because in most maps with circle size 4 or bigger, Hidden + Hard Rock is easier than Flashlight. However, the very slight score increase balances out with the harder accuracy requirements and lower spinner scores, and I'm a fan of rewarding more accurate hits.

Next in line is the classic "favorite mapper" question. Who is it?
Probably Nexy. Can't really explain why. Probably SOGASOGAMO (Furawa) as a second favourite.

Alright. Another guest question then!
C R E A M wants to ask: How do you pick which maps to FL? Just personal preference?
It's usually based on how "doable" I think it will be. As in, could I do this in a reasonable amount of time? A general rule of thumb is that if I can reach 200 combo without really trying very hard, it's easily doable. If I can't even reach 100, I'm probably not going to bother. I often end up playing with Flashlight on maps/songs I like because I've played them quite a bit without even considering Flashlight, so I already know the map well enough that I can add Flashlight without too much

Lybydose's efforts on Haru Haru were so high that he can play the entire map invisible. One's feat was equally admirable – stacked notes were completely hidden due to the nonexistent stack leniency.

trouble. This is the reason for Flashlight scores on most of Nexy's maps, as well as MATRYOSHKA, which I played quite a bit to try to get 100%. Another factor is whether or not the map has much copy/paste or symmetry, as both make the map much easier. MATRYOSHKA fits that example as well.

I see. Well, we will wrap this up here. Thank you for your time!
Thank you as well.

Next edition we will be interviewing osu!developer mm201! Submit your questions with this submission form here!

Last month, osu! experienced another new generation of BATs. Among them is RandomJibberish, well known for his organizational map structure, keen eye on sliders, and overall skill in the editor.

Hello! My name is Gcode and I'm here to interview you on your recent promotion to BAT!
Hey.

How do you feel about being promoted?
It was certainly unexpected, but I'm motivated to do the best job of it I can. It allows me to help mappers even more than I could as a MAT, which is really fulfilling for me.

You've been here since 2009! It's been quite some time, but do you remember how you found osu!?
It's funny, but the person who until recently I thought had introduced me to osu!, NotShinta, signed up a few weeks after I did. I'm not sure what it was that really brought me to osu!, but I have a feeling it had something to do with Don't Stop Me Now — I was a member of a couple of Ace Attorney fan sites at the time, and I think that map was mentioned a few times.

What was your first experience with osu!'s editor? Did you like mapping from your first time using it, or did you believe you would never use it?
I've always been pretty creative, so I was drawn to the editor from the very start. My first few mapping attempts were as atrocious as everyone else's, though, and I don't recommend checking them out!

RandomJibberish's first well-known contribution to the community was releasing a Professor Layton skin. Its release was only two weeks after he registered on osu!.

That's enough about the past. Do you currently enjoy mapping or modding more?
I've always been a mapper at heart and probably spend more time mapping than modding. I love modding too, though — helping other mappers out is really fulfilling, and it's great to start out with a good map, knowing it'll be a great map by the time you're done with it.

Describe how you make your maps, and give us an example of a map that best describes your style.
My maps aim above all else to be memorable and feel like a coherent whole. Each pattern is figured out based on what's happening in the music and fitting nicely with everything else. I pay a lot of attention to detail and making sure everything interlocks nicely, but it means mapping takes

Obsession is the epitome of RandomJibberish's style. It implements a myriad of aesthetically and symmetrically appealing sliders with patterns nicely reminiscent of Elite Beat Agents.

me a lot longer than it does for most people! I'd rather have a perfect map that I've really spent time on than an average one churned out in a few days. I'd say the map that best represents my style right now is Sky Ferreria - Obsession.

Now about the community! How much do you think it has changed since you joined? Would you say it's better or worse?
I find it hard to remember what the community was like back when I joined. Mainly it feels like it's a lot less unified, made up of lots of mini communities, which is both good and bad. It's great that we can become close friends with a few people and see them every day, but all the different opinions across the whole community seems to cause an awful lot of drama. Sometimes I wish we

could all just agree on some things, but the different perspectives across the huge community really interest me.

Do you think the growing number of maps from the already large amount of users will intimidate you when looking over beatmaps?
I'll confess that I don't play every single ranked map, and that I don't enjoy many of them. The sheer quantity and variety of them means there's really something for everyone, though. The main problem with the masses of maps is getting your maps noticed as a new or less popular mapper, and all the work the MAT, BAT and other modders have to do getting them all ranked.

What would you say to someone aspiring to be a MAT or BAT?
Just keep modding — it's all about practice when it comes to looking at the mapping side of things. Also, a lot of people miss out on tricky technical stuff like tags, bitrates and skin element dimensions - they're easy to check and really help when it comes to the MAT round.

Thank you for your time, RandomJibberish!
You're most welcome.

A good mod post is defined (by several experienced modders) as "One or more objective statements that serve the purpose of informing the mapper of a potential flaw or an oversight in their map, thus helping the mapper make their map more playable, enjoyable, and rankable".

THE OSU! SHOW

WRITTEN BY: Mr Color

Hey guys! Ever wanted to have a show where you could watch some wildly entertaining osu! action? Well, it's now possible! ztrot launched earlier this month his weekly osu! show, hosted on his Livestream page! It's still at its early beginnings, but things are starting to build up for it, as the last show reached around a constant 20 viewers. Hopefully, it can get past this number and gain more popularity among osu! players.

So, "What is this osu! show about?" you may ask. It is about everything, from mapping tutorials to modding tips, to map testing and skin reviewing... You name it! You will even be able to interact with the hosts via the Livestream chat. ztrot will try to get guests on the show. Whether they be mappers or pro players, you will have the opportunity to ask them questions, watch them play maps, or maybe even make maps. In fact, the osu! show will probably continue to prominently feature guest appearances!

Another aspect of the osu! show is the mutual and general discussion. It doesn't always need to be about osu!, does it? Even if the main topic of the stream is osu!, expect to see other things, ranging from games, anime, and whatever else you're interested in. A great aspect of the osu! show is that you, the viewer, decide what's on air, and as I stated before, there's a lot to decide from.

At every show, there will be a mapping tutorial with a theme that changes over the time. It might be getting started with the editor, timing your map, getting a good background, and so on. All of the basics will be presented. Then, of course, for more precise help, note placement, adjusting the difficulty triggers, learning to have

flow in your map... Anything, really! Even comprehensive looks into storyboarding is planned!

As for modding tips, if you were present to the osu! show's very beginnings, you already know that ztrot himself checked a bubble to show other players how he mods and what he has to be on the lookout for. The show will, for example, regularly provide advice on how to get started on modding, and possibly show aspects of a map many modders often tend to overlook.

The osu!show doesn't forget about skins! The show will promote new skins, provide skinning help, ideas, or fixes, along with varied discussions. For instance, there may be chatter about favorite skins, what skins do people commonly use... Maybe even get skinners as guests! So if you happen to have suave skin preferences, feel free to tell others about it in the chatroom.

In a nutshell, there's a lot to see on show. It is going to be aired every Saturday at 12PM (UCT-6), or 6PM (GMT). It has no set time for the moment, so it could very well last 30 minutes if the week's been boring or 2 hours if there was really a lot to talk about! For now, you can still watch the very beginnings of the stream, and in addition, feast your eyes on ztrot playing maps! Here is the link to the stream. See you on the flipside!

Remember that while the guidelines exist to help the map become more enjoyable, the rules are obligatory. Do not hesitate to tell the mapper that they must follow the rules or their map will not be ranked.

FELLOW READER!

A new section is in the works over at the wonderful denizens of the osu!monthly. However, we'll need your help to create it! We're looking for people who have made an impact to our community, awesome players, or just your overall Good Samaritan. Got someone to nominate? Click this link over here and send it straight to us! We hope to meet and chat with some of the best in our lovely abode.

storyboarding by scripting

part 3: storyboarding commands

by: starrodkirby86

It's been a while! I hope that your storyboard mindset is still a bit warm and not terribly rusty or anything. For reference's sake, you can recap yourself by taking a quick skim of last edition's part right here. Basically, we learned how to insert an object, but, to our disappointment, we aren't seeing it on the editor. However, this lack of appearance doesn't mean there's something wrong, it's just that way because we didn't assign it any commands. After all, what's the point of a hired actor if he's not going to be in any scenes in a movie? Why, let's go give commands to these things, shall we? Remember to have the Storyboarding by Scripting thread in hand for further reference!

Basic Commands

Now that we have our sprite created, we'll have to tell it what to do. Without commands, the object won't even appear. I'll give a rundown of what each of the commands are and how to execute them. However, just before that, we should learn a few general patterns we'll see with all of these commands.

To start off, commands are slightly indented. **Every command line should have one space or underscore character at the beginning.** Without this indent, osu! will think you're trying to define a new object.

Let's cover the items that a typical command line would contain.

_Command,Easing,Start-Offset,End-Offset,[parameters]

Command: This'll tell osu! what sort of action the object is going to do at that time. Virtually all the commands you're going to use are one or two-lettered, so it's quite easy to input them in.

Easing: Easing is how fast or slow osu! will execute the command, from the Start-Offset to the End-Offset. There are three possible settings Easing can be: 0, 1, and 2. A 0 tells osu! to "tween" from the Start-Offset to the End-Offset without any imbalance in speed. In other words, it'll be a smooth ride from Point A to B. A value of 1 will make the command initially start fast, but then slow down as it reaches to the End-Offset. A value of 2 will do the opposite; that is, starting slow and then speeding up quickly. You'll notice that with easing you'll have a slightly delayed or hasty effect with your command, like when a car starts to brake or accelerate. Feel free to experiment to find the best effect you'll need.

Start-Offset: The Start-Offset is the offset where osu! will start the command at. For example, if I create a command that will move my sprite and set the Start-Offset to 2363ms, then osu! will start moving that sprite once the song is at 2363ms. Two convenient ways to check offsets are to glance at the bottom left-screen at the time (since that's essentially the offset), or go to the Design tab and gander at the exact offset in ms (nearby the Insert Background Button.)

End-Offset: The End-Offset is the offset where osu! will end the command at. This is where you'll specify the time when the command completes. Going back to my example, if I wanted my sprite to stop moving 5 seconds after it started, then I'll set the End-Offset to 7363ms. For the time in between the Start-Offset and End-Offset, osu! will automatically make a smooth transition between them, or tweening. This will mean that you'll see the whole animation of the sprite moving from one area to another when the song is in between 2363ms to 7363ms.

[parameters]: This is simply the bit where things start to get unique per command. The square brackets are simply for reference and should not be in your actual script.

With that aside, let's put this to practical use.

Fading

Fading is arguably the most common command in storyboarding. Fading handles all smooth entries and exits for sprites, so it's definitely a staple command when it comes to any situation. To start off:

_F,Easing,Start-Offset,End-Offset,Fade-Start,Fade-End

As we can see here, **the command letter for Fade is simply F.** The unique parameters for Fading are only Fade-Start and Fade-End. **Fade-Start is the opacity of the sprite at the starting offset.** The opacity is how solid or transparent your object is. It's a value that can go from 0 to 1, 0 being completely invisible to 1 being fully solid. **Fade-End is the opacity of the sprite at the ending offset.**

How about an example? Let's also include the sprite properties to make sure we're doing this right.

Sprite,Foreground,Centre,"sb\names\natteke.png",400,420
_F,2,1012,3770,0,1

This is telling osu! to have "natteke.png" start fading in at 1012ms and stop fading at 3770ms from invisibility to full visibility. Also, since the Easing is set to 2, the fading will start slow at first but will speed itself up by the end.

Pretty awesome, right? However, if there's only one command like this, right after 3770ms, the object disappears. That's because once that command is done, the object doesn't really have anything left to do. This is where we need to add an accompanying command to make ends meet. If we wanted "natteke.png" to disappear because say, "yeahyeahyeahhh.png" is coming in, then let's add this line.

_F,0,20322,21701,1,0

With this line, "natteke.png" will fade from being completely solid to completely invisible from 20322ms to 21701ms, all in a constant smooth motion (since the Easing is set to 0). "natteke.png" will now remain solid from 3770ms to 20322ms as well, since now it has some sense of completion.

Moving

What fun would storyboards be if nothing ever moved? Motion is also an important command, and is slightly a little more complicated than Fade. Let's take a look.

_M,Easing,Start-Offset,End-Offset,Start-x,Start-y,End-x,End-y

For movement, the command letter is M. The specific parameters here all relate to the location of the object in x and y-coordinates. Start-x and Start-y are the starting points for your sprite to be at, where x is the x-coordinate and y is the y-coordinate. osu! will automatically move the sprite there if it's not already on those coordinates. End-x and End-y are the ending points for your sprite. In other words, your sprite will be at that point once the song reaches the End-Offset.

NOTE:

If you want to have no tween whatsoever, then you can set either the start and end-offset the same or the start and end-fade the same.

There's a shortcut where you can leave an end-field blank, and osu! will treat it as the same value in the start field (e.g. _F,0,20322,,1,0 will make the end-offset also 20322).

Scaling

Scaling changes the size of the object, much like resizing something on your favorite image editor. For all those users of Photoshop and GIMP, scaling is done in bicubic compression, which can give a slight blur to objects, more noticeably on pixelated images such as sprites. Let's take a look at the parameters for this.

_S,Easing,Start-Offset,End-Offset,Start-scale,End-scale

For scaling, the command letter is S. For this command, the parameters relate to the size of the object. The start-scale is the size of the object at the Start-Offset. A 1 would mean the object is at 100% of its original size, which, in other words, is no resize at all. This means that a .75 would be 75% of its original size, a 2 would be 200%, and so on. osu! will automatically resize the object if it's not the same size as the value specified. The End-scale is the size of the object at the End-Offset. This will effectively create growing or shrinking animations in between the two offsets. Experiment with proper scale dimensions, and don't be hesitant to use small decimal numbers. After all, these are simply based off of percentage values.

Rotating

Rotation is a simple idea to grasp, but a bit of it might be a little intricate. Be prepared!

_R,Easing,Start-Offset,End-Offset,Start-angle,End-angle

For rotating, the command letter is R. What can make rotation a bit more difficult is the slight knowledge of trigonometry behind it. Start-angle is the angle of the object at the Start-Offset in Radian units. For many people unfamiliar with trigonometry, radians seem completely foreign. Fortunately, online converters exist, making the conversion relatively painless. Positive angles rotate the object clockwise (to the right, like a clock's hands regularly go), while negative angles rotate it counterclockwise (reverse of a clock's motion). End-angle is the angle the object is at when the song reaches the End-Offset. If I wanted to have my object flip upside down, then I would need to rotate it 180 degrees. This means I would set my Start-angle as 0, since that denotes no rotation whatsoever, and then I would convert that 180 to radians, resulting in π, or 3.14159. I'd then put 3.14159 in the End-angle. One final thing to consider is that, since rotation is circular, the angles start repeating themselves once you reach 360 degrees. In radians, that's 2π, or 6.283. 360 degrees is the equivalent of saying 0, so you can cut some slack and simplify it as such.

Sadly, that's all the space we have for this month! Next edition we'll take a look at some of the more advanced commands, such as vector scaling, colors, and parameters. Happy scripting!

NOTE:

When something is resized or rotated, the object will resize or rotate based on the origin set in the object properties.

It's usually best to stick with Centre so things would remain even for the most part.

The History of osu!Taiko

Written by: Backfire

Most of you know that osu!'s name, game play, look, and mechanics is based on the rhythm game series Osu! Tatakae! Ouendan. However, there is one other rhythm game that is also a prominent part of osu!: the Taiko no Tatsujin series, referred to as "Taiko" for short. Taiko forms one third of osu!'s game modes, boasts a stable community, and is often represented in osu!standard map sets as guest difficulties. osu! has even incorporated game play elements from Taiko into the standard game: kiai time is a feature of Taiko no Tatsujin originally called Go-Go Time.

Despite its strong presence in osu! though, Taiko is the most underrated part of the game. When it comes to the Taiko high score boards, there's barely enough scores to fill out all 50 slots, which is good news if you absolutely want a spot there, but not so good news for the mode's popularity. Meanwhile, Catch the Beat, the other non-standard osu! mode, racks thousands more plays per day by comparison! Given the commercial success of the game series the Taiko mode comes from, this situation is nothing but puzzling. Let's have a look into the Taiko mode's history, and perhaps you'll see it for the worthwhile part of osu! it is.

Taiko's History

Although Taiko has been a part of osu! since the first months of its existence, its beginnings were humble, starting out as a selectable mod like Hidden or Flashlight, and an unranked one at that. You clicked it, picked a map, and off you went. The transition to a bona fide game mode, with online rankings, authentic scoring, and the

works, would take place further along the line as the demand for Taiko at the time wasn't sufficient. Similarly, the Taiko mapping aspect was a bit slow to take off. The first Taiko-specific maps were featured by aquabluu in his Taiko thread, the largest and longest running thread in the entire forum. Of those early examples, the ever so classic Saitama2000 by Kharl stands out. A practically quintessential Taiko map, Saitama's beautiful and fun patterns are perfect to teach newcomers how to play, so if you're looking for a good map to start with, I urge you to check it out.

Little Drummer Boys

Aside from aquabluu, crystalsuicune, Zekira, Rokodo, and mattyu007 were some of the very first Taiko mappers, helping a lot in familiarizing osu! with its (at the time) new mode. Other significant "donders" are lepidopodus, a renowned

Saitama2000's beautiful fun and patterns make it the quintessential Taiko map of its time. It's perfect for getting newcomers into osu!Taiko.

expert in Taiko mapping, and arien666, one of the first Taikosu! (maps playable in both standard and Taiko mode) mappers. There are many modern Taiko mappers and players who have a large part to do with the community, however their individual impact wasn't quite as large as these pioneers.

The Drum Circle

Last spring, osu! had its first official Taiko World Cup (check out osu!monthly's coverage on Issue #2). It was a great success, and brought the majority of osu!'s Taiko players together. Lots of friends were made, and we even got our own channel for the tournament. Perhaps one reason for the tournament's success is how closely knit the Taiko community is. Almost everyone knows everyone else in some way. Our humble size may be, in fact, what has allowed us to be such a

Rikers' storyboard for Future Lab attempts to replicate a multiplayer Taiko battle against the robotic Mekadon.

pleasant community after all this time. A lot of us are friendly enough, so feel free to send us a message if you want to get to know us more!

Taiko Maps

Obviously, the meat of Taiko in osu! is the Taiko maps themselves. Today, there are numerous mappers who dabble and specialise in Taiko beatmaps and over a thousand Taiko maps to play. This quantity allows for many different styles to cater to all tastes. While I can't tell you which Taiko maps are the best, I can, at least, point you in the direction of one of the best storyboards made for one: Rikers' storyboard for "Future Lab", mapped by tetsutaro, is breathtakingly authentic, with dancers at the bottom, a clashing sequence on the spinners, and neat effects that capture the Taiko atmosphere perfectly.

With all the Taiko maps out there, there's a high chance one of your favourite songs has been given the Taiko treatment. If you find one, go ahead and watch it on Auto. I think you'll be surprised by how different the Taiko rhythm patterns make the song sound – sometimes it even makes it cooler! Hopefully I've been able to drum up your interest in the Taiko mode. Give it a try, and you may find an entire new dimension of fun waiting for you!

Remember that mod posts exist to inform, not enforce your opinion on how should a map be. If you're upset that a mapper is not following your well thought out advice, just remember they'll eventually crash on the BAT roadblock.

The Long Haul
Doomsday on Marathons
Written by: Doomsday

Y'alright? It's Doomsday.

I'm sure you're all familiar with what you would expect from ranked beatmaps, but perhaps some of you are unaware of just what you can find in the mysterious and remote Approved Beatmap Listing (well...it's not that hard to locate, especially now that I've gone and given you the link, but play along). Delving into this section of the osu! website can yield some uniquely weird and wonderful gems of beatmap design. Incredibly difficult beatmaps, storyboards that interact with the map itself, and even a beatmap which mimics the style of the rhythm game DJMax Technika are all yours for the taking! Far and away, though, the Approved listing is dominated by one particular type of map called the marathon. If traditional beatmaps, with their length of 2-4 minutes, are short sprints, the colossal duration of marathon maps makes them endurance races, ranging from 8 minutes to over a half hour of grueling rhythm action. Let's check out four of these beasts.

Shibayan - Boundary of Space
(Collaboration uploaded by Al-Azif)

Boundary of Space is one of the shorter marathons out there, but by no means the least. Seven mappers (Al-Azif, darrihuka, deepsea, James, Alace and kioukiou) chipped in to make a map representative of all things good about collaborations (hopefully you've read my article on collabs on last month's issue!) Its funky mapping style, which harmoniously blends the rhythm patterns that these mappers are known for, makes Boundary of Space a cohesive collab beatmap that's unique, challenging, and just plain fun to play. Throw in a nice little storyboard to keep the look interesting, and a song which suits the mapping style of these mappers well, and you have, in my opinion, the perfect collab marathon.

Length- 8:00

Yoko Ishida - paraparaMAX I
(Mapped by chan)

ParaparaMAX I, "parapara" for short, is a medley map of popular theme songs from vintage anime series that enjoys a number of distinctions. It doubles as the first true marathon beatmap and the first approved beatmap in osu! history, the reason, of course, being its length. Oh boy, its length. Clocking in at an astounding 36:17, this absolute monster of a beatmap remains, more than three years after its approval, the longest marathon in osu!. Fortunately, the pace is slower and the beat patterns much more forgiving than in other marathons. Don't let that cause you to drop your guard, though. Any way you slice it, that's still 36 minutes of clicking, sliding and spinning, so you'll need some serious focus and stamina to make it to the end.

Length- 36:17

Various Artists - osu! Stream Compilation
(Uploaded by Natteke)

So you can clear Revolution Deathsquad? Impressive, but how about playing rog-limitation next? And then Banned Forever after that? And there's more where they came from, too. Tired? I thought so.

The Stream Compilation, as the name suggests, is an anthology of the most well-known "streamy" sections from 21 osu! beatmaps, assembled into one huge challenge. (If you don't know what streams are, read Mr Color's article in Issue #4). It starts out slow, with a 130 BPM song, but then works its way up to fearsome 240 BPM maps, armed with deathstreams to make your fingers shatter. Clearing streams of a single map can be hard enough on its own, but having to pass some of the toughest streams around one after another is a true test of both endurance and skill. Just making it to the end of this beatmap is a remarkable feat.

Length- 12:38

TERRA - Dance Dance Revolution NON STOP MEGAMIX

(Mapped by James)

If you're a TERRA lover, then you probably already know about this. Otherwise, feel free to squeal now. This 26 minute map mixes 14 songs by the TERRA group, adding a little bit of color flair for good measure (good thing, too, since it has no background.) Following the example set by paraparaMAX, this map's considerable duration requires endurance on your part, but the mapping itself is not so difficult. Nevertheless, beware. Even though this is 10 whole minutes shorter than paraparaMAX, it also has some cruel moments that can throw you off...but don't go throwing your mouse at the wall just yet! No, not even if those short spinners in that one section made you miss. The rest of this cohesive and consistently fun map makes up for that. As a bonus, this map has separate difficulties for each song! Handy if you feel like playing just your favourite parts, or if you want to practice a particular section.

Length- 26:22

Needless to say, I've only scratched the surface of the marathon maps available. I could go on about maps like the KIRBY Mix Compilation, Ryuuseigun, Kumikyoku 'Lucky Star Douga'...like those maps, the list is long. Then again, why would you want to read about them when you can go play them yourself? What are you waiting for? Get to it!

IT'S OK TO BE A NEWBIE

Written by: DarkEmerl

Everyone knows that osu!, being a game, is meant to be a fun, casual diversion, but people sometimes act as though they've forgotten. For example, like Doomsday discussed three months ago, some users take their player statistics extremely seriously. Today, I'm going to talk about people who would like to be a part of the community, but hold themselves back because they think they have to be a great mapper or have a high rank; in other words, people who are ashamed of being "noobs". However, being new or inexperienced in a community is simply one stage of your life in osu!, and there's lots of simple ways you can become a contributing element of the osu! family!

First of all, there are the osu! forums. Chances are you found the link to this newsletter from there. A good place to start is probably the Introductions subforum, where you can get yourself known and dip your toe in communicating with other members. From there, you can find threads on a large variety of interests, like anime and manga, video games, forum games or pretty much anything else. You are sure to find people who share your interests, whatever those may be, and talk to them about your favourites.

For more direct interaction, you can go on the osu! chat, either using the Mibbit client widget I've linked, an external IRC client, or the game itself! Just press F8 to bring up the chat window. All sorts of people talk about a variety of things in there, so it's a great opportunity to meet more people.

When talking to people in the forums or chat, just be relaxed and natural. Don't be afraid to say, "Hi" and try to talk about a topic you like, but don't spam or insist people to discuss something they're not interested in right now, either. If you feel confused or alienated by the terminology the other players are using, you can try checking the FAQ, Glossary, or the in-game FAQ (type !faq list for all the topics you can look up). Still, don't be afraid to ask directly if you're not sure what to do.

Lastly, you could try creating a beatmap! The number of mapped songs on osu! is only a small fraction of the total number of songs in the world, and you could be the one to map one of them! If you discourage yourself by thinking you can't make good maps, just remember that technically, no map ever submitted is good enough for ranking. That's why modding exists, after all! I have only just started making beatmaps myself, but I think that if you read and follow the Beatmapping FAQ and rules while having a little patience and willingness to devote time and care to your beatmap, then you can't help but get better!

Remember that every single member of this community was a "noob" once. Every staff member, great mapper, or awesome player like Cookiezi started out as a new user that needed to have some things explained to them. Don't let your anxiety stop you from enjoying the game! Get out there and have fun with the rest of us!

If there are a lot of similar errors in a map, don't hold the mapper's hand by pointing them all out. Try to teach mappers the right way to map instead of just pointing out their mistakes.

Copy-pasting: The Pasta of the 21st Century
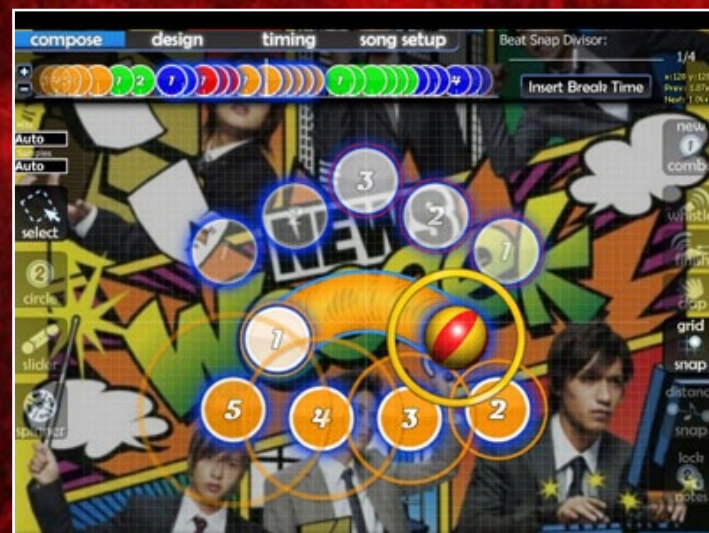
Written by: Starrodkirby86

Repetition. In language, it creates emphasis. In music, it creates patterns, symmetry, and balance. In osu!, it supposedly creates the best of both these worlds, yet to many it creates boredom and frustration. Is there something wrong with osu!, making it deficient compared to language and music? Absolutely not. Language and music also have their faults — pieces written unwittingly can also end up containing those same headaches we experience in the world of osu!. What's exactly the key fault then?

Our fault lies in the execution, the usage of repetition. This can probably be attributed to the famous duo of copy and paste. Informally coined together as "copypasta", the pure notion of it is very tempting. Duplicating and rotating that pattern made a few measures back can save a substantial amount of time. However, such shortcuts can end up falling flat. Groove Coverage - 21st Century Digital Girl Remix (Nightcore Ver.) technically has a minute's worth of original patterns, considering the other minute of the map is simply the same pattern mirrored. Such déjà vu isn't exciting and could be easily mapped to something imaginative and fresh.

But even if the duplication is well-intentioned, it can sometimes present itself in the wrong way. For instance, OK Go - WTF? faced a ton of fiery controversy over its repeated pattern usage, yet the patterns were well-placed for structure. In fact, most uses of copy-pasting are indeed well-intended — symmetry mappers copy-paste to complete other halves, structural mappers copy-paste akin to the iNiS styles of Elite Beat Agents and Ouendan, and so on. But where do mappers generally falter then, if their thoughts were for the best of the map?
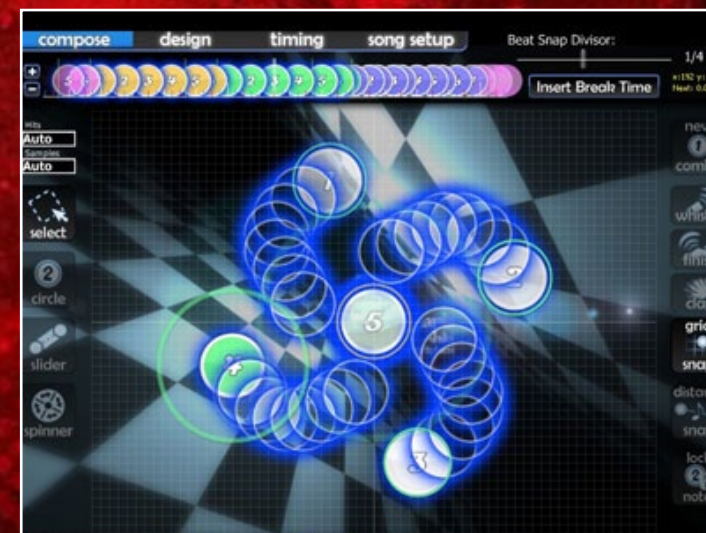
We then go back to the tantalizing problem of execution. However, even if we simply label it as that, the actual problem can be complicated. For symmetry mappers, the problem arises from the trade-off these mappers made. In trying to accomplish symmetry through copy-pasting, they give up an additional pattern, since that space is being used instead to create symmetrical balance. My [KIRBY Mix] in NicoNicoDouga - Miracle Mat-tan, for example, had to mirror numerous sections of itself in order to fulfill a balance of symmetry. While the occasional flip is always welcome, having a map with a third or even half of its measures as these mirrors can severely limit the final amount of original and creative patterns for it.

However, this doesn't mean that symmetry is an inefficient mapping style overall and should be demonized or mocked. For this case, the pattern should incorporate and blend its symmetrical mirror together. Not only can it increase any flow and cohesiveness within the map, it'll also supply opportunities to create even more innovative patterns. Echo, in particular, is a master of blending the two together, such as the crafty rapping done in NEWS - weeeek and the smooth fluidity created in Aaron Kwok - Para Para Sakura. The contrast between Miracle Mat-tan and weeeek or Para Para Sakura is how quick and effective their balance of symmetry was. Where Miracle Mat-tan had symmetry as a crutch, handicapping itself to long, sloppy mirrored patterns, weeeek and Para Para Sakura found creative and snappy methods to create symmetry, thus complementing the map instead of hindering it. Nharox also possesses this symmetrical creativity, especially when comparing one of his earlier works, Kosaka Riyu - Danzai no Hana ~Guilty Sky~, to group_inou - HEART.

Echo's patterns on NEWS - weeeek are able to blend both symmetry and flow in a quick, snappy manner.

What can one gather from all of this, then, especially if they don't incorporate symmetry? The significance of it all is the creative usage of copy-pasting. Instead of using it as a tool of duplication, whether it'd be to quickly finish a map, to balance another side, and so forth, these mappers used it as a tool for creativity. For example, kiddly's beginning pattern for SHIKI - Lapis is effectively done through the use of copy-pasting diamonds, gradually scaling and rotating them to build up into the main body of the map. In a toolbox of goods to help make a map exciting, many mappers would overlook copy-pasting, not realizing that copy-pasting could be used in conjunction with other tools to create unprecedented, ingenuous patterns. It was a fusion of copy-pasting and the Rotate function that allowed me to create the volleying circle effect at the end of [KIRBY Mix Deluxe] in Susumu Hirasawa - KIRBY Mix Compilation.

At the end of the day, instead of a mapper considering copy-pasting as solely a time-saver, a forced symmetrical mirror, or a dull, superfluous rerun, a mapper should consider copy-pasting as yet another medium of exciting game play in osu!. After all, a skilled writer doesn't repeat their words unless they wanted to enhance and emphasize certain points. A skilled musician doesn't repeat measures and sections unless they wanted to complement, balance, and deliver a well-rounded piece. In this sense, a skilled mapper doesn't repeat their patterns unless they wanted to incorporate and think outside the box to make an overall fresh and exciting beatmap. And that can very well be achieved with a clear understanding of repetition and copy-pasting.

kiddly's starting pattern in SHIKI - Lapis can be accomplished through a use of copy-pasting, Rotate by, and Scale by.

Games Corner: Notrium

Written by: Vext

What comes to mind when you hear the words "Survival Game"? Games like Silent Hill, probably. If I add "Action" into the mix, you may start thinking of Resident Evil, Left 4 Dead, or Killing Floor. What about "Freeware Action Survival/Exploration Game... IN SPACE!"? No clue? Well, that's exactly what Notrium is.

You play as a member of one of four possible races: Human, Android, Alien and Psionic. While the storyline for each has slight differences, the main setup is the same: the spaceship you are in is exploring an unknown area of space when it is attacked by an automated missile defense system from a nearby planet, the titular Notrium. You manage to flee the doomed spaceship in an escape pod and end up crash-landing on the planet's surface. Your joy at your narrow escape is short-lived, however, as Notrium quickly proves to be an inhospitable place crawling with hostile life forms. In order to survive and, possibly, escape, you'll have to use the unique abilities of your race.

The races are not some lazily pieced together set of nearly identical characters with minor game play differences between them, but there are distinct and varied approaches to playing the game. Humans, much like in real life, are fairly weak all around, but their ability to craft tools and items makes up for that. The Android can craft items too and is stronger than the Human, but it can only heal itself through mechanical means. The Alien survives through its combat prowess and ability to evolve. Finally, the Psionic is incredibly fragile and cannot carry items at all, but has a wide range of mental powers at its disposal. The available objectives and how you go about meeting them can change drastically depending on the

A little hot rain and bugs shouldn't hurt you, right? Not in Notrium.

race you choose. For example, right after landing, you find yourself locked in what must be the lowest fenced-in area imaginable. A small robotic alien creature demands a subspace radio in exchange for the key to exit. Humans and Androids can salvage parts lying nearby and build the radio, while Aliens and Psionics may opt to solve the problem with a little brute force.

During your exploration, you will have to manage three attributes: health, hunger and energy. Health is pretty self-explanatory; if it ever reaches zero, you die and the game is over. If your hunger meter dips too low, starvation will set in, steadily sapping your health and causing your screen and movements to jitter. To sate your hunger, you'll have to eat frequently, but prudently. If you eat the wrong sort of fungus, for example, you'll get food poisoning, and overeating may wipe out the local food supply. Energy, stored in your "battery", is expended on actions that are race-specific, such as the Human or An-

A Psionic using one of their exclusive psychic powers in an uncharted area of Notrium.

droid's item crafting or the Psionic's mind powers. The Alien boasts a unique, additional number to keep track of: experience. Once it accumulates enough by killing enemies, it can evolve, changing its form and adding or improving to its combat capabilities.

Unless you're playing on Easy mode, you'll find that your earliest concern in the game is neither enemies nor hunger, but the fickle climate. The weather in Notrium shifts rampantly between freezing cold rain, moderate temperature, and heat waves. Each of them can have adverse effects and learning to respond appropriately is a must. For example, if you find yourself in extreme heat, you'd do well to seek the shade of some trees, whereas a cold snap calls for a blazing fire.

As if the weather and your hunger were not enough to worry about, you also have to fight for your life against Notrium's wild inhabitants. The Alien is always raring for a fight, since it's
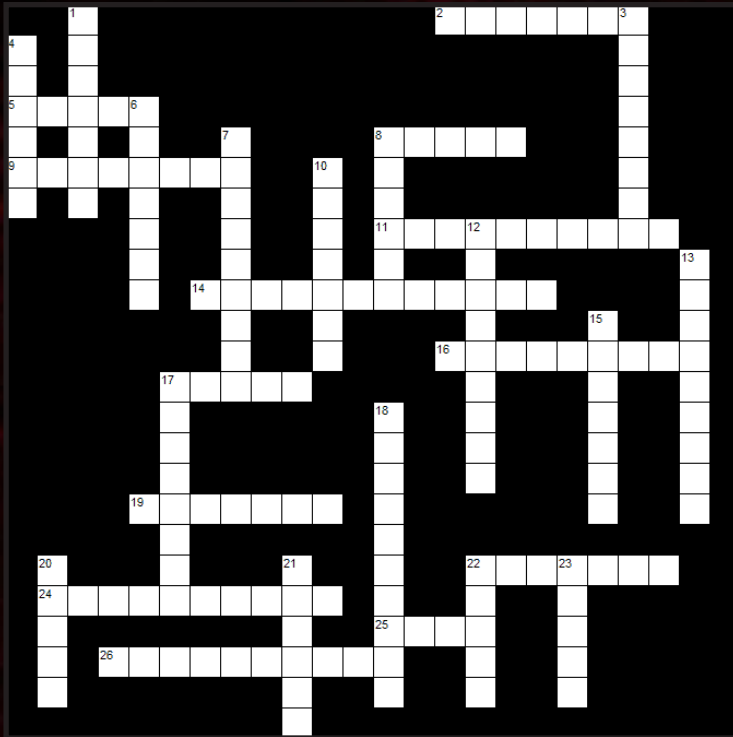
equipped with enemy-slashing claws from the beginning and has an appetite for meat. On the other hand, the Human and Android begin with nothing but their bare fists and a handful of components, which makes fighting hordes of aliens a less than prudent strategy. Instead, you should bide your time a bit, explore discreetly, and try out various combinations of items until you find a way to fight back. Once you have a way to protect yourself, it is time to begin exploring Notrium. With the exception of some key areas, such as the impact site, the world is randomly generated. The planet's terrain can range from swamps filled with aliens to deserts full of machines and even a peculiar jungle where rainfall heals you and some of the most dangerous enemies dwell.

Besides the randomly generated maps, another aspect of the game that does wonders for its replay value is the different ways to win, which depend on your race and the terrain you've been given. One of the most obvious paths to victory is to repair your escape pod and leave the planet behind you, but if, for example, you're an Alien and you find some alien queens, you can choose to kill them, wiping out the indigenous species and replacing it with your own spawn.

Despite it being a fairly old game (first launched in 2003!) Notrium has enjoyed third-party support and managed to improve as time went by, thanks in part to the many mods that are available for it. Its solid foundation of game play and style allows it to retain a high level of enjoyability even today. Since the game is free, there is no reason to not download it and give it a try!

osu!monthly CROSSWORD #4

Here's a perilous puzzle for you. Try tackling on this osu!monthly Crossword!

- Feel free to work in teams!
- All answers use only alpha characters. No numerals or symbols.
- Consider the deadline as December's edition.
- Please don't publicly discuss the answers or hint at them. It's a competition, after all!
- A printable version can be viewed here.
- To submit your answers and view a more detailed list of the rules, click here.

Last Edition's Answers
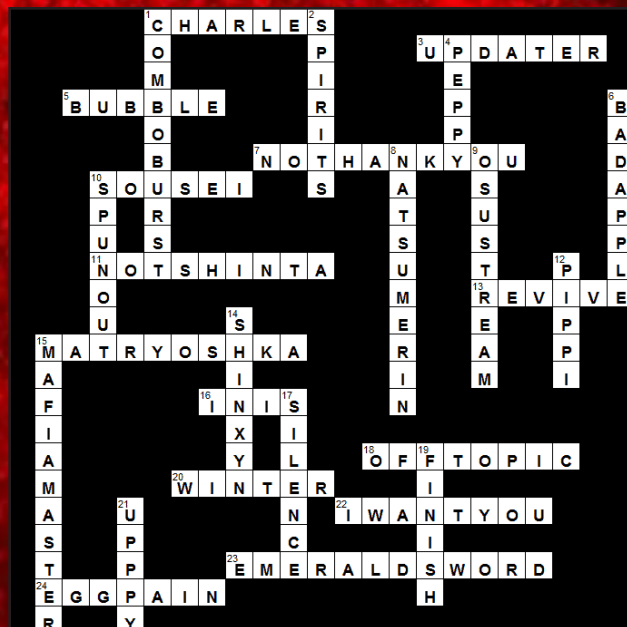
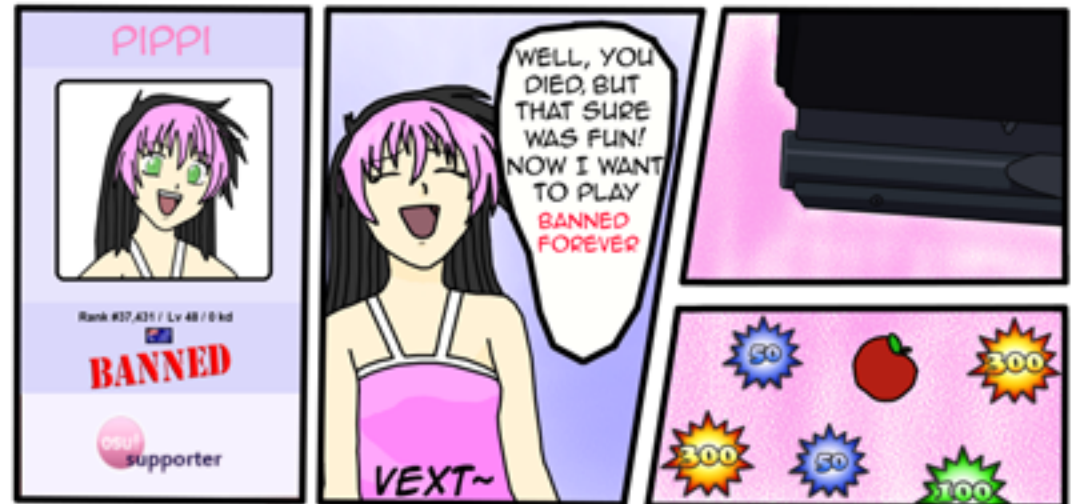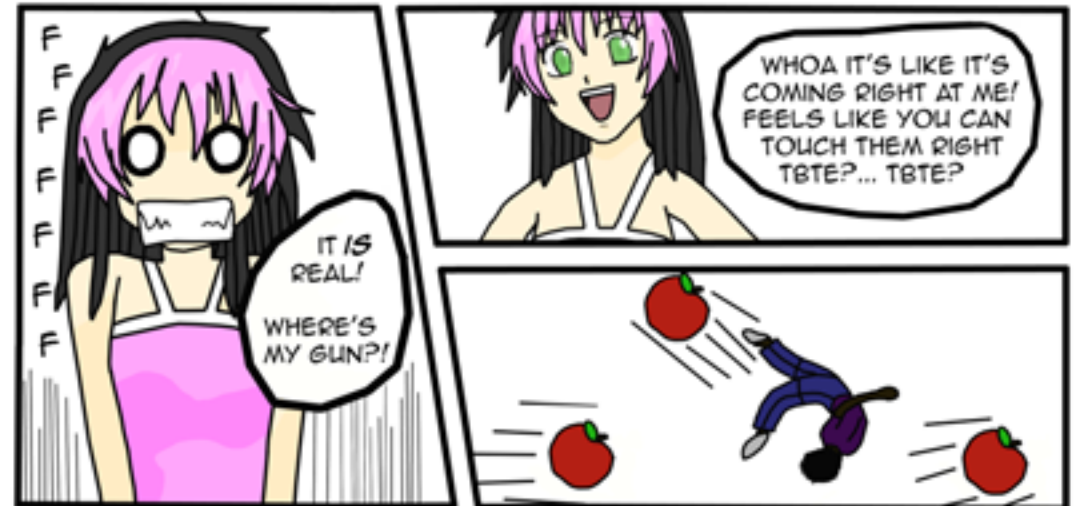## Hall of Fame
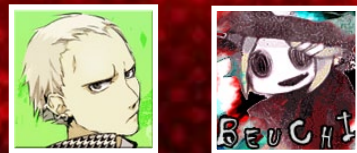
1. Derekku, Beuchi-chan — 27
2. Nivalis — 23
3. pieguy1372, Cheer-no — 23
4. foulcoon — 21
5. Charles445, ouranhshc — 20

ACROSS:
2. Dick Grayson inherits 17 across
5. Take it easy
8. ¿?
9. Hooded, mysterious moderator
11. Hirasawa's watching you
14. It's a secret to everybody
16. Know what's being updated
17. Make a big leap across the screen
19. Bruce Wayne
22. Drum-tap hybrid
24. No heart for you, that's _____
25. Insane of 4 down with 23 down
26. osu!'s night light

DOWN:
1. Marvin, the depressed robot
3. 17 across, 9 across, 13 down are members
4. Strips for your support
6. Has been G2'd
7. A confusing hive of 1/2
8. Rockman + Protoman
10. The disappearance of ironic badass Miku anime listener
12. Hail our metal gang leader
13. Resident tenant of the 80's
15. Coming soon to a heart near you
17. Popular DJMax track
18. JAMES _____!!
20. In a single-filed line, please
21. Mobile red unit
22. World dominator in music (and hitsounds)
23. Overdriving the spectators

osu!monthly OSURESHII! #2

CAPTION CONTEST#2

THE RESULTS ARE IN!

I GUESS SKINNING IS NOT MY THING.

VEXT~

WINNER:
"I guess skinning is not my thing." -LunaticMara

FINALISTS:
"Uhhh... This isn't Fruit Ninja, is it?" -NoHItter
"...Don't tell me I have to clean that up!! " -Chibi_Fox

HONORABLE MENTION:
"aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhh!!!!!!!!! i think im dead! aaaaaaauhh-hhhhhhh!!" -r3yn41d0

NOW PIPPI'S IN A *NEW* SITUATION, AND SHE NEEDS *YOUR* HELP!

CAN YOU THINK OF A *WITTY CAPTION* TO *SAVE* THE DAY!?

SUBMIT YOUR ENTRIES *HERE*!

SA86

Next Issue....

osu! monthly

Cheers to another edition of the osu!monthly! What's in store for the next issue though?

- Prepare yourselves for an interview of osu!dev mm201. We'll get a first-hand developer's perspective into the workings of osu! Submit any questions you have for him with this form.
- Last month, osu! experienced a wave of fresh new MATs into our community. But let's get to know them better! Keep an eye out for this special feature next time.
- We'll be mustering some of the tougher commands in yet another part of our Storyboarding guide. No worries, though! We'll make the trip understandable and fun.

There's plenty more to come, so reserve yourself a front-row seat in the Announcements forum once November rolls around. See you next time!