

Grant Joyner – Project 2 Playtesting report

1. Robert Alsman

- Punch action needs a cooldown timer – *Punch feels too loose and spammy as is*
- Game feels very defensive right now since defending player has so much power against the player with the ball and has multiple chances to gain possession – *not necessarily bad, just important to keep in consideration. Does this line up with design concept?*
- No actions feel exceptionally lacking in feedback, but could always use more
- Blocking is underused
- Bug (controller): Bob's controller disconnected during the game and wasn't able to rejoin (*hardware bug? Unity bug? Not sure*)
- Bug (visual): Character visual effect for dash (fire) continued after dash ended; characters appeared to be on fire and wouldn't stop
- Stamina bar for actions was suggested, compared to Turbo meter in NBA Jam

2. Chris Onorati

- Reached for WASD and Spacebar – *These buttons are used, but are for two different players!! Possibly awkward control layout*
- Bug (physics): Was able to throw (not shoot) the ball through the rim and score
- "I like how the arrow switches direction based on where the other player is" – *understands the direction his character is facing and what causes it to change, good*
- Assumed art and sound was incomplete; "looks and sounds very incomplete"

3. Casey Dengler (*already knew dunking*)

- Expected X button to do every action (punching, shooting, throwing, dunking, etc)
- "Blocking doesn't really do much [against punching]"
- Confused about space at first; "Oh it's like Nidhogg", "The field needs landmarks"
- Shot clock; reset ball back to center upon running out
- Player w/ ball should move even slower
- Didn't realize throwing ball at other player stunned them

4. Matt Mixan

- Very confused about field layout; took a long time to understand
- Didn't recognize hoop; "I thought that was a minimap"
- Didn't know how to dunk until Casey taught him

- "What's the difference between shooting and dunking?"; "Dunking is worse, you have to get right up there"; "I don't see the point"
- "There's no 'You Win' screen"
- Had a strategy of throwing ball at Casey and then running up and punching
- Started scoring more against Casey once he realized dashing was a thing

5. Sam Schimmel

- Felt like he couldn't compete against players who played fighting games (like Bob)
- Found screen-switching disorienting
- Didn't recognize hoops at first, but began to once opponent started scoring on him
- Didn't want to use block action; "I win by playing aggressively so blocking seems pointless"

6. Randall Totah

- Bug (UI): Controls screen has overlapping text
- Controls don't feel very smooth; input lag (might have to do with my laptop)
- Dash cooldown gauge would be more clear than the particle effects
- Stamina bar would be cool; dash should be more expensive than punch
- Assumed we were playing to 10 points – spot on!
- Suggestion: Having hitstun push players further back would prevent spamming

7. Nolan Dost

- Was very confused about *everything* – scoring, field layout, controls
- Tried to throw ball at boundary to score
- Found the screen transition disorienting and confusing; needs transition animation
- Not enough feedback on hitstun (didn't recognize when he was hitstunned)
- Felt that the controls learning curve was very high (like a fighting game)
- Instantly knew he wouldn't use blocking

8. Nick Johnston

- Instantly grasped how to score; didn't know how to dunk
- Figured out controls on his own (plays a lot of Smash Bros which the controls are somewhat based on)
- Bug (visual): player is on fire for some reason (dash particle effect?)
- Assumed win condition was first to 21

9. Dakota Wright

- Didn't like having the ball used as a weapon; "If the ball is coming at me, I should be able to grab it"
- Didn't like the arrows on characters; "breaks immersion"
- Outcomes for blocking were confusing and uncertain
- Bug (field): teleported to center court randomly
- Bug (scoring): after the first game, the winner of the previous game wins instantly

10. Jacob Cuddihy

- Really enjoyed the game! Wanted to play it for another half hour
- "Is that the score on top?" – couldn't immediately tell what the numbers up top were but made the correct assumption
- "Am I scoring double points?" – didn't recall traditional basketball scoring
- "The dot on the basket is how I score?" – didn't read the circle as the basket rim
- Enjoyed punching the most; cooldown for punching felt fun
- "Punching is more fun than blocking" – players don't like to block
- Didn't use the bumpers in the first game; "X button was enough for me"
- Suggested having parallax background with spatial monuments so players understand the space
- Couldn't tell me the difference between shooting and throwing after the first game
- Suggestion: having obstacles (like Nidhogg) would help with spatial mapping and encourage using different mechanics like jumping and throwing
- Lots of depth to mechanics!
- Arrows were good for telling which way you were facing; "Looks kinda like the Bit.Trip Runner character"
- Suggestions for catch-up mechanics: field obstacles, being able to dash all the time
- Having a dynamic court > having a stamina bar

11. Matt Craig

- Controls UI: Players columns and Controller columns mixed together and were confusing to look at; suggestion: only display controls for connected control methods
- Thought hoop was a minimap
- Couldn't understand the field space; suggested having a scrolling camera instead of just static frames
- Movement feels slow
- Hitstun cooldown feels bad; discourages engagement

- Had trouble discerning boundary states using alpha along; "alpha difference between solid wall and passable boundary should be greater"

The Good (These shouldn't change)

- Once players understand the game, most have fun with it
- Arrows for direction facing were recognizable and helpful for players
- Punching feels fun and has good feedback
- Dashing helps players who are new to the game score points
- Menu lookin' nice

The Bad (Action should be taken on these)

- Space is very confusing to understand and navigate for new players
- Goals are not communicated and players don't understand what to do from the center court screen
- New players are consistently confusing the hoops as minimaps
- Players don't think they need to block; they always opt for punching instead of being defensive
- Movement feels slow, and movement speed difference between offensive and defensive players is negligible
- Keyboard controls are kinda yucky as they are; uncomfortable and not conventional
- Players were able to get pretty close to figuring out the win condition (score 10 points) on their own, but they were never 100% sure
- Dashing and punching can be spammed; most players suggested either a stamina bar or field obstacles
- Art and audio feels very incomplete right now
- Overall the biggest issue seems to be communicating the space and the player goals

The Ugly (Bugs and Technical Issues)

- Controller: Bob's controller disconnected during the game and wasn't able to rejoin (*potential Unity problem*)
- Visual: Character visual effect for dash (fire) continued after dash ended; characters appeared to be on fire and wouldn't stop
- Physics: Was able to throw (not shoot) the ball through the rim and score
- Controls UI: Controls screen has overlapping text
- Controls UI: Players columns and Controller columns mixed together and were confusing to look at (*only display controls for connected control methods?*)
- Field: teleported to center court randomly
- Scoring: after the first game, the winner of the previous game wins instantly