

= Gasketball =

Gasketball is an action , sports video game for the iPad by Mikengreg , an independent development team of Michael Boxleiter and Greg Wohlwend . Players flick basketballs through 2D physics puzzles into the hoop in single @-@ player , local multiplayer , and asynchronous HORSE @-@ style online multiplayer modes . The game is free @-@ to @-@ play with in @-@ app purchases . Development began in mid 2011 following Mikengreg 's successful Solipskier . They were able to live off of the earnings for Gasketball 's two year development at their previous salary , which afforded them the stability to try new avenues and reject prototypes , though they worked 100 @-@ hour weeks . Towards the end of their development , they ran out of money and lived on the couches of friends . It was released on August 9 , 2012 , and the game did not reach their desired conversion rate at the time of launch .

The game received " generally favorable " reviews , according to video game review score aggregator Metacritic . Pocket Gamer gave the game their silver award , and Tim Rogers of Kotaku named Gasketball his 2012 game of the year , calling it " the beginning of the hardcore social game genre " .

= = Gameplay = =

Gasketball is a part @-@ basketball , part @-@ puzzler shot @-@ matching sports video game where players flick basketballs through 2D physics puzzles ( with flippers , portals , circular saw blades , and gravity switches ) into a basketball hoop . Some puzzles include banking the basketball shot off of multiple surfaces before making the basket . In the HORSE @-@ style games , the player must match the exact setup of the opponent 's shot , such as hitting the floor before entering the hoop . In the campaign , players get more points for making the shot without retrying , and have five attempts to make the hoop before moving to the next level shamefully . Players are awarded medals for the quality of their performance at the end of each chapter . Gold medals unlock new modes of play in the chapter . Every chapter has a unique theme , such as a construction site or outer space .

The game has local two @-@ player multiplayer with a divided iPad screen , and asynchronous online multiplayer where players construct levels for their opponents to complete . Players spin a wheel at the beginning of their turn to determine how many hazards they get to place via drag and drop . A few of the items are unlocked at first , and more are available with progress through the game or in @-@ app purchases . Gasketball uses a colorful palette and features a cranky robot , who provides a tutorial and resets the ball . It was released as free @-@ to @-@ play with the tutorial unlocked , and four to five chapters available as additional paid downloads .

= = Development = =

Gasketball was developed and produced by Mikengreg , an Iowa @-@ based two @-@ man team : Michael Boxleiter and Greg Wohlwend . After releasing their first game , the sport @-@ inspired Solipskier for iPhone and iPad , Boxleiter and Wohlwend lived off the profits for two years while working on Gasketball , paying themselves their same salaries from their Adobe Flash development days but having the security to try new ideas . Wohlwend made somewhat more income due to other collaborations , such as Puzzlejuice with Asher Vollmer , but shared his income with Boxleiter . Development began in mid 2011 . Even though Solipskier was successful , the duo did not have a following comparable to indie developers like Team Meat and thus did not feel pressured to meet high expectations . Instead , their pressure was internal . Wohlwend said he worked 100 @-@ hour weeks with no weekends or vacations while living off of the Solipskier funds . When they ran out of money , Boxleiter borrowed money from his parents , and eventually they both went homeless , living off of the couches of friends .

In making Gasketball , Boxleiter and Wohlwend felt that their game quality had been improving over time , though designing for a million @-@ person audience was " daunting " and Wohlwend questioned whether he could even recreate Solipskier 's success . The former game was designed

in fits of creativity while the latter had no such moments , and took longer to produce . They discarded " everything " multiple times during their prototyping process with the understanding that anything less than what they wanted would lead to a subpar end result . Boxleiter had difficulty accepting praise towards the end of development , considering the weight of having to leave the industry if the many 100 @-@ hour weeks did not pan out in an accepted product .

Mikengreg first announced the game on March 1 , 2012 , and it was later released for iPad on August 9 , 2012 . Mikengreg decided to release the game as free @-@ to @-@ play for the base game with in @-@ app purchases for the extended content . Wohlwend saw that a quarter of the top grossing games on iOS used in @-@ app purchases ( albeit with predatory practices ) and felt that they could follow the model with a more ethical strategy : free to play , but pay once to unlock forever . Wohlwend later remarked that , " So far , humanity is proving to us that we can 't have it both ways . " They were told by friends that the purchase function was too hidden , which they later fixed . Journalists had noted the difficulty in purchasing the full version as well . Gasketball had been downloaded 200 @, @ 000 times in its August 2012 launch week and was briefly ranked near the top of an iTunes top downloads ranking , though it did not break the top 200 grossing chart . The game 's conversion rate from its free @-@ to @-@ play base package to the paid version was 0 @. @ 67 % ? lower than their goal of at least 2 % of an estimated five million downloads . The paid addition includes 100 additional levels and 10 new objects .

= = Reception = =

The game received " generally favorable " reviews , according to video game review score aggregator Metacritic . Reviewers noted the game 's character and creative vision . Pocket Gamer gave the game their silver award . Gasketball was Tim Rogers of Kotaku 's 2012 game of the year .

Edge noted Mikengreg 's deft ability with simple sound effects , citing their previous work with Solipskier . They praised the " sweet and personable " art design and the mix of " freewheeling creativity with arcade precision " . Edge also praised the addition of the " decent " single @-@ player campaign alongside the multiplayer . Pocket Gamer 's Harry Slater called the single @-@ player " entertaining " but felt the asynchronous multiplayer was the highlight . TouchArcade 's Brad Nicholson called the game a cross between Amazing Alex and NBA Jam . While he found some puzzle designs imbalanced , Nicholson also felt that the interactions between the flipper and portal hazards were " surprisingly solid " and noted the game 's lighthearted " welcome playground sort of feel " even as the easy learning curve reached Rube Goldberg @-@ like complexity . Tim Rogers of Kotaku called Gasketball the " inverse Rube Goldberg " and " the beginning of the hardcore social game genre , of asynchronous gameplay as meaningful as FPS deathmatches " .