

= Solipskier =

Solipskier is a sports video game for Adobe Flash , iOS , and Android developed and published by Mikengreg , a two @-@ man independent development team consisting of Michael Boxleiter and Greg Wohlwend . In Solipskier , the player draws the snowy slope for an on @-@ screen skier to pass through slalom gates and tunnels . The character accelerates with downhill sections and can launch into the air to perform tricks and earn a higher score . The idea came from a brainstorming session about parallax scrolling with speedy action in the foreground and the ability for the player to " paint " the terrain . It was Boxleiter and Wohlwend 's first game to receive public appreciation . It was released August 29 , 2010 to generally favorable reviews and was a runner @-@ up in the 2011 Game Developers Conference Independent Games Festival 's Best Mobile Game category .

= = Gameplay = =

In the sports game Solipskier , the player draws the ground for the on @-@ screen skier to pass through a level filled with gates , tunnels , and walls . Drawing an incline , for example , will launch the skier into the air to perform tricks , and a downhill section will accelerate the skier . Upcoming obstacles are indicated at the right of the screen along with the necessary altitude and distance . A streak of successful passes through gates will accrue a bonus score . The skier 's speed also increases with time . As an endless runner (compared to Canabalt) , the characters advance until they die , as there is no end . If the skier travels fast enough , he loses his headphones , which cuts out the background music to the sound of the wind passing by . The player receives " All Star Dunk Contest @-@ like scorecards " after landing big jumps . Solipskier also has an online leaderboard , and offers tips for new players to improve their scores . It focuses on style and emotion from the player @-@ character 's terminal speed rather than on jumps and tricks . It also has a hard rock guitar soundtrack .

= = Development = =

Solipskier was designed for the Adobe Flash platform . Michael Boxleiter and Greg Wohlwend had worked on Flash games earlier as Intuition Games . The idea for the game came from a brainstorming session about parallax scrolling , and was revised in fits of creativity . They paired the parallax scrolling with speed , and eventually Boxleiter " blurted out with wide @-@ eyes " that the player could " paint the terrain to determine the speed of the character " . They chose a snow or snowmobile theme and began to prototype that same night . Boxleiter used skills he had acquired from previous games (heightmaps from Dinowaus and bitmap drawing from EON) to make a mockup within hours : a red ball that moved along with a slope (made with the mouse) and floated down slowly when suspended in air . He added three gates to create a slalom skiing course and a sense of distance and speed , which was not apparent otherwise . Boxleiter then set up indicators to show the incoming gates , though he thought it was odd to have the indicators move to the right as the gate moved to towards the player (to the left) . There was no parallax scrolling implemented in this phase .

Meanwhile , Wohlwend mocked up a 2D course in grayscale , with humps of mountains . He originally designed the visuals such that there would be nothing on the screen where the player had not painted , which was later cut . After seeing Boxleiter 's draft , he used crisp colors to make distinct gate markers and made the foreground highly contrast with the background . Their early drafts had a nighttime theme and included an aurora that was later cut due to difficulty of implementation in Flash . Wohlwend left the character design for last as his " weak point " . Boxleiter was particularly inspired by the idea of a skier replacing the snowmobile , and set up the parallax scrolling and motion blur , which made the skier appear to go faster . He also added the " tunnel " idea as a series of gates . They animated the skier , who they gave an " ego @-@ tastic " large head on a stick figure body , and decided to not use tutorials , opting for a game that began with the player 's first click . Wohlwend 's rainbow trail effect was added as a scarf or cape (which later

became a rainbow burst behind the player) , and the scoring mechanics were refined to reward players who took risks by letting the skier fly through the air without touching the screen . This was partly inspired by the Tony Hawk 's Pro Skater series . The title refers to a combination of solipsism and skiing .

The game was their first to receive public appreciation . Boxleiter first understood its potential when publishers fought for the bid to the game . At the time , it was solely designed for Flash and not iOS , though they were interested in making bigger games outside the Flash market . They announced the game in mid August 2010 , where they revealed that the game would release on Flash (through Kongregate) and iOS simultaneously , which happened on August 29 , 2010 . Joe Bergeron , a programmer who had previously worked on Dinowauers with Mikengreg , helped with the iOS version of the game . Solipskier made around \$ 70 @, @ 000 in its first two months (as compared to \$ 15 @, @ 000 from the Flash release) , which let them work in other non @-@ Flash mediums in the future . They released an Android version three months later .

= = Reception = =

The game received " generally favorable " reviews , according to video game review score aggregator Metacritic . It was a runner @-@ up in the 2011 Game Developers Conference Independent Games Festival 's Best Mobile Game category . IGN 's Levi Buchanan praised the art direction , especially the rainbow scarf against the gray , monotone background . Chris Hall of 148Apps called it " the most original since Fastar " . Hall praised the touch of having the headphones fall off , with the contrast between the hard rock guitar and the rushing natural wind , but criticized the complex scoring system . Edge 's Chris Donlan , on the other hand , appreciated the trade @-@ offs between the different opportunities to score higher . Hall of 148Apps added that Solipskier did not look as great on a Retina Display . Tim Rattray of Slide to Play called the graphics " pure eye candy " . He felt that the game was " unique , but a ' one @-@ trick pony ' combination of fast Canabalt and platform @-@ drawing Line Racer " . Likewise , IndieGames.com felt Solipskier 's novelty was ephemeral . Pocket Gamer 's Mark Brown called its difficulty " steeper than the Alps " . Pocket Gamer listed the game as one of the toughest and best indie games in 2011 , one of the best endless runners in 2012 , and a " hidden gem " in 2013 .