Tribes Editor Tutorial . . . Continued

Hey all. I guess if you are reading this, you have probably run thru the first tutorial I put together and are hungry for more. Well, here's more.

Thanks to everyone (and there are a ton of you out there) who requested the first tutorial. I still get 3 or 4 requests daily for the first one, so there are plenty of hungry mappers out there wanting to put their creativity to the test and see what they can do. To those people, I say "Thanks and keep up the good work".

When I put together the first tutorial, I was working nights and had time to kill and wanted to share the wealth, and now, with my furthered knowledge and back on nights again, I'm gonna send you guys a ~Continued version of the tutorial. In this installment, I'm gonna cover a few things that I didn't cover in the first. Things like doors and elevators and I will also include a FAQ that includes questions I get every day.

Also, since the first tutorial, I, with another Tribes fanatic, Dark Demon, started a site dedicated to custom built maps and skins for Tribes. It's called The Mapper's Extreme and its located at ~www.planetstarsiege.com/extreme~ . We take requests from clans and individuals alike and build custom maps and skins. Come check us out.

Something I didn't include in the last was a way to contact me for questions. I wasn't sure that the first tutorial would be well received, but here ya go:

E-Mail: c0027763@airmail.net
ICQ: 23201788

I prefer emails as I can respond to them much better. Use ICQ only if you have to or you just have a quick question. Alright, with all of that out of the way, let's get started with the next installment.

Doors

Doors and elevators confused me so much when I first tried to install them. I got frustrated and didn't bother with them for a long time. In fact, whenever I wanted to have a door or an elevator put in a map, I would send the semi-finished product to a friend who knew how to do them and had him finish them off. Thanks X. I finally sat down with a map I had built and tried out a door. I finally figured it out and it is a piece of cake.

Every door you install will require some sort of power source. I've read a few other tutorials on doors and elevators and the overall belief is that each door/elevator requires it's own power source. After intense troubleshooting, I'm not sure that I believe that, but I may have just gotten lucky 20 or 30 times in a row. As long as there is some sort of power source in the radius of the door/elevator, then it should work.

Doors and Elevators consist of a few objects. First, and most obviously, the door. Now, the door itself will not be visible until you get the other parts of the setup complete. Don't waste your time, like I did, choosing a door from the list and getting mad because it doesn't show up. The door itself, like a real door, needs to move in some direction for you to enter or exit the base/object. The doors in Tribes don't sit on hinges, they slide. Kinda like the sliding glass door your parents have to the back yard. You walk up, it slides open, you walk thru and it slides closed. It isn't confined to just sliding left or right, but also can slide up and down. The example I will use is the forcefield door that you see in Rollercoaster. When you walk up to the door, it "disappears" until you walk in and then it "reappears". Technically, it slides down into the base until you walk thru the doorway and then it slides back up into place. It does so on a track or what Tribes calls a "path". The path consists of two points. The point it sits at when the door is closed and the point it sits at when it's open. Once you set up those two points, all you have to do is chose a door and POW! you have a door.

You will need to set up a separate group for each door, so from the mission group (bottom right black box – first item in the list of objects) chose Group (make sure it is assigned to the team) and click F2 to name it. I normally call it to where it is located in the base (front left door, back right door, etc.). Once you've named it, you need to give it a path. This tells the door where to go when you walk up to it. Path is also located in Mission. After you chose the path option, you need to give the door its starting and ending points. Where it will sit when closed and where it will go when someone walks thru the doorway. It is called a marker. The marker is comprised of three arrows. One that runs the Z-axis (yellow), one that runs the X-axis (blue) and the other that runs the Y-axis (red). The alignment of the red arrow is what is important. The red arrow has to be lined up perpendicular to the face of the door. So, the way the red arrow points is the way the front face of the door will be directed. If the arrow is facing another direction or doesn't sit perpendicular to the opening, then the door will sit slanted. Try this to see what I'm talking about. This first marker should sit centered in the doorway with the yellow arrow popping up thru the floor. The other arrows should sit below floor level. This marker sits at the base of the door when the door is closed. That is why it needs to sit at the base of the opening. The other marker will be much further below the surface as it will be at the base of the door when the door is open (or below the surface). This second marker should be aligned exactly below the other one but far enough below the surface that when the door slides down, it sits below the surface and none of it protrudes in the doorway. The arrows should face exactly the same way on the second marker as the first. Once you have the two markers set, then you chose the door. Chose this from the Door list in the object listings. In this case, it will be the Forcefield option. Re-chose the group and then chose the Forcefield and for a second, you will see the forcefield show up in the doorway. It will then disappear. Hit F5 to go into walkthru mode and walk up to the door. It will not appear to be there, but when you walk up to it, you will hear the ever familiar door opening sound, so walk thru the doorway and let the door close and the forcefield door should be visible. I usually walk thru the door a coupla more times just to make sure it is set up correctly.

Once the door appears, you can look at how it is aligned with the rest of the building. If it is off-kilter, then you know you need to rotate the markers to line up the arrows with the building.
Once you have created your first door, you can mess with the different door options. There is a pretty nice list of door options with logos and different opening options. Many of the doors are set up to open sideways. So, logically, if you want the doors to slide open to each side, you need to set the markers up to the side. The first marker should be in the same place, but the second one should be to the right or left instead of below.

Here is how it should look in the Mission list on the right:

+Left Back Door
- path
  - marker
  - marker
- forcefield

The two markers (in order) are the "door closed" and "door open" points. The first marker created will always be the starting marker or the point when the door is closed. The second marker is when the door is open. The list of the "forcefield" is the door itself chosen from the list of doors. The door needs to be placed in the main group, not under the path group.

That should take care of doors. Elevators are exactly the same. They are set up the same with two markers and a "platform" instead of a door (chosen from the Platform list). The only difference is that the markers are set for where the elevator moves to when the player steps on the platform. The first marker is placed where the platform sits when not in use. This is usually at the bottom of the elevator shaft. The next marker should be the top point the elevator goes to. Alignment should be the same. Elevators can be set up to move sideways as well as up and down, so the second and further markers will sit wherever you want the platform to travel to.

Once you have mastered elevators as well, try to set up some advanced courses for your platform to move thru. Up, down, sideways, and diagonally. Also, when you rotate the arrows on the marker to a different direction than the original, you will notice the platform will rotate to meet where the arrows have now been moved. You will be able to run a single platform, by itself, great distances over open fields and around corners and over hills. It's kinda cool to set it up and then ride the platform all over the field.

It seems frustrating now, but once you get it to work once, you will be installing doors and elevators in all your maps in abundance.

The next thing I'd like to cover is terrain editing. Most of this is simple enough for a five-year-old to complete successfully. The problem with this is that when you edit the terrain, it changes the "status" of the map and ultimately makes the map a client side

map. Client and Server side maps is an issue that I will cover in the FAQ. Until then, we will carry on with editing. The great thing about the patching that Dynamix has done with Tribes is that it has made the editor more stable and easier to use. More user friendly. There are still some instabilities within the editor, but I'm sure you've already stumbled across that and it probably doesn't matter. Editing the terrain can be done a number of different ways. You can cut holes in it, raise and lower terrain and expand the boundaries. The most common is cutting holes in the terrain. This is primarily done for underground bases and so forth.

When you have the editor open, chose F4 for the terrain editor and your options will post across the top of the screen. Clicking in and out of them is good to familiarize yourself with the options. The first thing you will notice is that your cursor now has a box attached to it. That box is the size of the terrain you will edit when you click on the terrain. You can edit the size of the box by choosing level 0 (larger the number, the larger the area you cover) near the top left of the screen and choosing a larger number. I don't suggest going over 5 as Tribes will lock up on you and you'll have to shut it down. The default is a good setting because you'll find the holes you're gonna cut don't need to be that big. Chose the terrain you want to cut and click the area out with the box. This will highlight the area. Then, press the "O" key on your keyboard and an option list will pop up. You will want to check or X the Empty1 option and then hit the "O" again to close that box. Then, click the "Selection Action" in the top, center and chose the SetFlags option. This will delete the terrain that is highlighted. Hit F5 to go into walkthru mode and walk your player into the bottomless pit. That is cutting. Replacing the terrain is done almost the same way. Select the area of the terrain missing that you want to replace and under "Selection Action" is "set terrain type". Click that and the terrain will magically appear! You can also choose what type of terrain to use as all maps use more than one type of terrain. The button to the right of the Level 0 is the terrain options. Click it and you should have 6-8 options of terrain to use. This is fun to use if you have the patience.

Raising and lowering certain areas is even easier. If you'd like to create a small pit or add a small hill to an area, make sure you have chosen the F4 option into the terrain editor. Chose the size of the terrain by the size of the box on the cursor, click where you want to raise or lower and drag up or down. You should see the terrain raise or lower. The editor is a bit shaky in here, so be patient. It may take its time or look like it's locked up, so give it a bit of time before you kill the program.

OK, that should cover what you are looking for. Now that I've finished putting this together, I realize I have no desire to put together a FAQ, so if you have any questions, please e-mail me and I will try to answer.

Good luck to all mappers! Keep up the good work and I look foreword to seeing your work.

~Goldberg