Sweta Karlekar

CS Project Summary

The fourth quarter CS project made for an interesting few weeks. At first, Julie and I were a group, but Emma didn't have a group, so she joined ours. We discussed about our topic for a while until I came up with the idea that we should have a horse race using JKarel. It started out as a simple idea. One would bet on one of the three horses and then a JKarel window would pop up, bets would be closed, and you would either win or loose money. However, because we were all over-achievers, we ended making the game rather complex. It was decided that each player should be a Trainer and own a Horse. Each trainer would then be able to increase their Horse’s health and speed and stamina by feeding them and buying carrots and points. The ideas were very creative and interesting and, if we could pull it off, they would make a very interesting game. We split the work up evenly, two classes each, and began to work. The classes were the Scoreboard, the Display, the Driver, the Panel, the Trainer, and the Horse class. I took responsibility for the Display and Driver, Julie took the Scoreboard and the Trainer while Emma took the Horse class and the Panel. The Display displayed the horses and controlled the betting, selling, buying, and feeding of the horses. The driver ran the panel and was supposed to prompt the user for an old saved game or a new game.

I completed my share of the work properly and turned it into the group early. However, the ideas about the project continued to grow more and more complex, just as more problems began to arise. The deadline was approaching fast yet there were still more things everyone wanted to or needed to add. We all grew more and more worried. Emma and Julie were working ferociously to get their classes done, and I tried to help them to the best of my ability. Eventually, it was the last day before the deadline, and we still did not have a working project. At that point, I couldn’t help Emma and Julie anymore with their own complex ideas of their respective classes. I approached Julie during school and asked her if I should work on back-up project so at we'd have at least something to turn in. She agreed, and I began to work during eighth period. I stuck to my original vision of a simple, yet fun game of betting on a horse and incorporating JKarel. As Julie and Emma worked parallel to me on the primary project, I felt good that I was contributing to the group.

Eventually it got to the point where no one really knew what was going on with the primary project and everyone was just getting frustrated. Both Emma and Julie were glad that I had done the back-up project. I completed all the coding of the final project, which included a Driver, a Panel, a Racecourse, and a Horse class. Julie completed the JavaDoc comments. Emma made a map using MapBuilder.jar called horsetrack.map, however, it did not fit our robots, so I made another map called RoseRacesRaceTrack.map using the same software. Even though it was not as complex as our originally planned idea, I was proud of my work.

I was very glad to have such a hard working team that was so dedicated to our project. During this project I actually learnt quite a bit. I learnt about packages and protected variables, though we didn't end up using either of them, and I also learnt how to use MapBuilder.jar, which was frustrating and fun. I learnt to be flexible with my code because a lot of code could not stick to the straight rules that we follow during the labs, such as what goes into the Panel and the Driver. I also learnt that it is always best to close your brackets quickly and to store a lot of variables so that it is easy to change the value without going through the whole code and searching for every time you used that variable.

This project was a very fun experience. Though I wish it could have been less stressful, it was definitely interesting and unique and tested us to see how far we could push ourselves. I enjoyed it very much. I learnt how to be a better team player and how to lead a team through frustrating moments. If I had to do it again, I would have made sure our team stuck to one goal and not continually added on more and more ideas. I would have also made sure that everyone was clear on what exactly each class should do, as many of us got confused along the way. However, despite all our challenges, I was very happy with the end product, which was fun to code, fun to play, and looked sophisticated. It started as a creative idea and soon became a reality through teamwork and dedication.