

Playtesting Report

The Kirthi Experience

Super Hook Ball

Will Lanoie

Jason Zhu

Javier Quintero

Alejandro Mendez

1st Session: Presentation Build

Purpose

For this session we were testing how the core mechanics of the game felt after we went back and set-up a better code structure underneath. We were also testing our initial UI for the ammo.

Participants

	Playtester	Contact Info	Description	New
1	Samson Jinks	samson.j@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
2	Ander Amo Del Ser	ander.delser@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	N
3	Markel Madina	markel.madina@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	N
4	Ander Goenaga	ander.goenaga@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
5	Kevin Giang	kevin.g@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
6	Jessie Hibbs	j.hibbs@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	N
7	Aditya Hirokawa	a.hirokawa@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
8	Blaine	None Given	Unknown	Y

October 30, 2014 (1 hour)

After our presentation we took advantage of playtesting club time to get some people to try the game. This time instead of playtesting in our team space we reserved a TV cart to be closer to the playtesting club area and get more testers.

Raw Observational Notes:

Shooting

- With current button layout shooting (button X) and aiming (Right Stick) is impossible
 - Returning player said aiming was better but still off
 - A tester suggested visual feedback for being out of ammo
 - Precision aiming wasn't mentioned to the players, however one tester figure it out but he said that because the aiming is off it was useless

- It wasn't explicitly explained to the players that they could charge the shoot button
- A bug lead to a discrepancy between that ammo displayed in the UI and the real amount a player had

Hookshot

- There was a case in which a player got disconnected from its hookshot and wasn't able to get it back
- Players experienced many difficulties when using the hookshot, which made them ignore that mechanic
- The hook would get stuck while aiming either too high or too low

Portals

- Like in previous sessions new players find portals confusing
- Our only major "crash" came from a bug in the portals where players would get out of the geometry of the level and fall forever

General

- Jump was a little confusing since it doesn't have feedback
- Testers agreed that stomping was overpowered
- Testers generally preferred stomping over shooting
- It is possible to pick-up while dying animation is playing
- Players expected to see some sort of scoring system
- Animations are too subtle and don't give enough feedback
- Players would get stuck in the shoot charging animation
- As seen in previous playtesting sessions some players hoard balls as a strategy to spray shoot them and leave other players defenseless
- Eventually the game became a stomping contest
- When asked about a possible UI for scoring most of the testers agreed on having the standings visible on the screen (1st, 2nd, etc) in addition to a more detailed breakdown on demand by pressing a button
- Since no scoring system was implemented the game was practically infinite so testers were encouraged to stop whenever they felt like it was enough. They stayed for long periods of time even when reminded that they could leave at any time

Notes:

This build we tested was the same we used for presentation, so it was mainly focused in showing at least the same content we had at engine proof, and many new features were not in it because of lack of time. So we knew that some of the feedback we got was already solved just not quite yet in the final build.

Feedback:

People hoard balls
Stomping is overpowered
Change shooting to Right Trigger
Aiming is still off
The hookshot doesn't work
Portals are confusing
Stomping is better than shooting

Comments:

"Hook-shot only works
half the time"
Unknown

"The character picks-up the ball
with his last breath" (referring to
picking ammo after dying)
Ander Amo del Ser

"Camera still has problems"
Markel Madina

"Your game has some problems
but I had fun with it"
Kevin Giang

"Your need to change the
button layout "
Ander Goenaga

Conclusions:

- Being able to aim and shoot at the same time its crucial for our game, we knew about the button layout problem but we were having problems with implementing input with the triggers, we decided to follow a tester's suggestion and use the bumper buttons temporarily instead
- Many of the feedback issues will be easily solved by adding the particle system feedback we weren't able to include for the presentation build
- Fixing the UI ammo and real ammo count discrepancy is a priority before testing again
- The stomping mechanic was overpowered in this build since we overlooked a step in the implementation while porting it from the prototype, fixing it should be pretty simple
- A temporary ending condition should be implemented for future testing

2nd Session: Playtesting Build

Purpose

This new "playtesting build" fix most of the issues in the previous session, so we expect more "fresh" feedback from playtesters. We also added a temporary end game screen after 15 points, however no score is showed during gameplay, this was mostly added so that playtesters don't feel hostage of an infinite game

Participants

	Playtester	Contact Info	Description	New
1	Lucy Tibbits	lucy.t@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
2	Thomas Ball	thomas.ball@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
3	Cole Ingram	c.ingram@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
4	Alex Fricke	alex.fricke@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	Y
5	Jorge Robles	antonio.robles@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	N
6	Esteban Maldonado	esteban.maldonado@digipen.edu	DigiPen Student	N

October 31, 2014 (1 hour)

Since this session took place outside playtesting club we set-up the game in our team space and we played among ourselves first to draw people's attention. Also we change the button layout and moved the shooting to the right bumper temporarily.

Raw Observational Notes:

Shooting

- Players could shoot themselves in the head on accident
- Sometimes ball would still knockout players even while inactive
- There was a lot more shooting than stomping in this session**
- A tester asked if we could change to inverted camera
- Changing the button layout improved aiming and allowed players to "camp" and kill players from far away

Hookshot

- The bug in which you can hook to yourself while aiming to high or too low was still in the game
- This time a player's hook got stuck in the geometry and couldn't get it back
- Once again players experienced many difficulties when using the hookshot, which made them ignore that mechanic

Portals

- This time the testers took a really long time to figure out what the portals were
- When a player successfully sent the hook through multiple portals, everyone stopped and watched him do it again
- The bug in the portals where players would get out of the geometry of the level and fall forever, was still in this new build
- Players found out and start exploiting a bug where by going through a portal and walking slightly back they could stay concealed inside the portal and get free "kills"

General

- When attempting to jump onto a platform players usually collided with it and fall back
- There is still some camera clipping artifacts
- Some players didn't realize the stomping mechanic existed until after the session**
- Players suggested that the balls should bounce off the walls
- There were two main strategies for playing collect many balls and then throwing them all at once or try to patiently wait for the right time to shoot
- Most of the action took place on the ground plane of the level, only going to the upper platforms for ammo or when falling through portals
- Players would hang out near spawn points making gameplay chaotic
- Players suggested to highlight the "death" animation, maybe sending the player flying after contact
- Game felt short
- There were suggestions to display score

Notes:

The fixes from the previous build brought a completely different set of feedback. Changing the button layout got rid of almost all shooting related comments, and fixing the stomping mechanic made it go completely unnoticed by the testers. We color coded the portals and apparently this made them more difficult to understand, finally the ammo count bug was fixed but now we encountered the "live ammunition" problem instead.

However despite all the bugs the overall sensation from the testers was that even in this early stage the game is fun and has potential to create interesting dynamics.

Feedback:

You can stomp people?
The hookshot doesn't quite work
You should show the score
I think I shot myself
The game is fun
Those are portals?

Comments:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "It feels like the balls
should bounce off walls"
Lucy Tibbits | "You guys should show the score"
Unknown |
| "Can you guys do inverted?"
Alex Fricke | "You guys should randomize
spawn points"
Jorge Robles |
| | "It was really fun"
Thomas Ball |
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Conclusions:

- Moving the shooting to the bumper was a big improvement however it is a temporary fix, moving forward changing our input to use the triggers should be a priority
- In this early stage we hadn't considered allowing controls customization such as inverted look, but might be a good early investment to accommodate more players for playtesting
- Another priority should be focusing on making the hookshot more useful, so far people seem to like the idea of it but are discouraged to use it because all its issues
- We need to continue fine tuning the stomping mechanic to find the right balance as well as implementing the last mechanic, dodging
- Finally as suggested in the presentation we need to pay special attention to the attention to the level design of our arenas to find the ones that highlight all of our mechanics and not only few of them