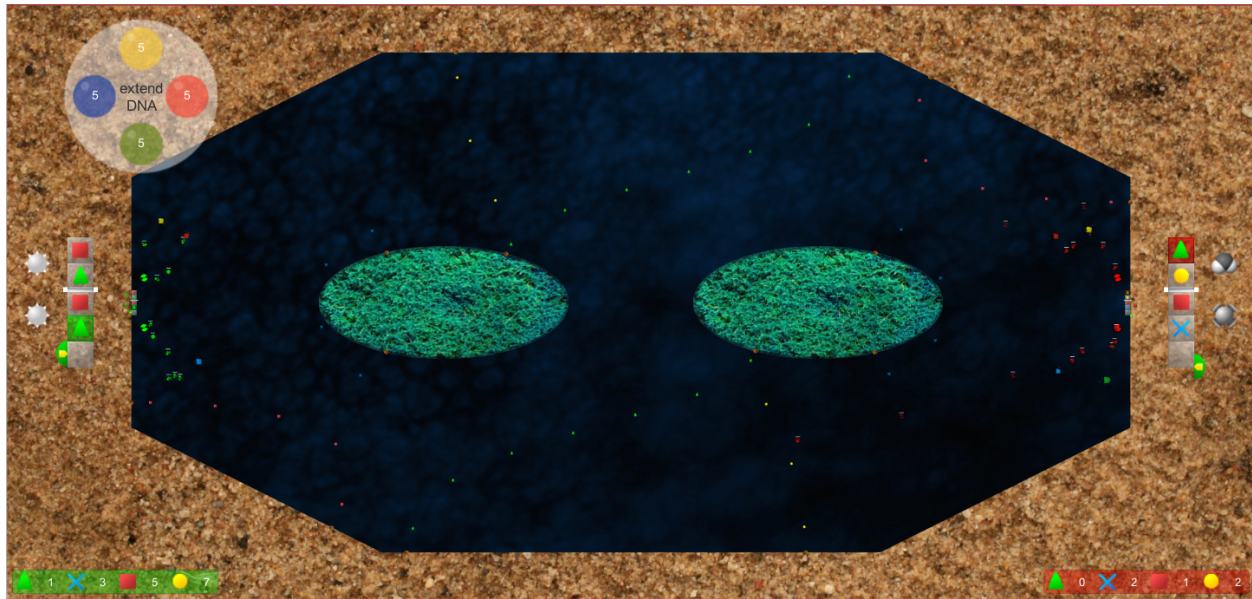


# MicroWar

*Playtesting Chapter*

Team 4

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## *Introduction*

We had five of our friends play the game. A few times in multiplayer mode, and a few times in singleplayer mode against the artificial intelligence bot we programmed.

As the hardest part about our game is understanding the control mechanics, we gave them no advice nor explanations.

We were however open to questions without answering them, in order for us to understand the concerns and difficulties our audience might have.

We were positively surprised about them understanding the concept.

However we did realize that the mechanics are not trivial.

## *Impression of the game*

		Skill	Chance
Mental Calculation	Physical Dexterity	Go Chess Civilization Warcraft Starcraft Tetris	Poker Backgammon Blackjack Chutes and Ladders
		Unreal Halo Basketball Football Dance Dance Revolution	Operation Kerplunk Pin the Tail on the Donkey Whack-a-mole Tag Twister

The first impression of the game was that it is difficult to understand what is going on. Also the controls seem to be hard to understand for users that do not play with controllers very often (for example that the A button is often used for selection).

Since most users had difficulties to understand the controls and what is happening exactly, most of them mentioned that they would appreciate a tutorial where the basic controls can be learnt instead of just having a screen where the controls are explained.

Things that we thought would be helpful, such as the unit tree which could be used to see what the units do, were confusing for some players and need refinement to be a support for newer players. It was also suggested to have a textbox, where players get more information about what is happening, such as when they do not have enough resources to produce a unit.

The objective of the game (destroying the enemy players DNA, killing the enemy, killing the enemy units) was clear for most of the playtesters.

The playtesters liked the music, the unit design and the overall concept of the game but also mentioned that the graphics need some refinement and, additionally to all the difficulties with the controls, unit balancing.

## *Further attempts*

Although it did not help us a lot, we still would like to mention that we tried to collect user data during games concerning the produced units per team and the winner. Unfortunately, we did not take in account the fact that files get overwritten every other game; we corrected that by adding a timestamp into the file name. But the results are not really conclusive or useful.

## *Conclusion*

The result of this game testing is a list of TODOs concerning not the creation of new features or gameplay elements, but the polishing of existing ones and most of all, the refinement of the user interface in order to give the user hints about his options.

We came across new ideas of how to make the user possibilities clearer.

We were very happy to realize that the impression of the game being a strategic one requiring mental calculation and skill matched our intentions as developers.

## *Appendix*

- Feedback form
- Our TODO list

## Questions

*What is your impression of the game?*

*Make a cross in the play matrix, where you believe MicroWar belongs to.*

		Skill	Chance
Mental Calculation		Go Chess  Civilization  Warcraft Starcraft Tetris	Poker Backgammon Blackjack Chutes and Ladders
		Physical Dexterity	Unreal Halo  Basketball Football Dance Dance Revolution

*What do you like?*

*What do you dislike and how would you improve it?*

*Was the objective of the game clear?*

*Was it intuitive, how to use the game controller?*

*What would you change of the game and how?*

WHO does it?	1) WHAT should be done?	
	(*?) means you may remove paranthesis and question mark and do it or remove everything but question mark for everyone else to know they may do it	
Marcel	When unit is selected in tree: append with empty OR push seperator down UNLESS end is reached	
(Marcel?)	Add upgrades description	
?	Unit description in menu	
?	When ingame pressing start should pause the game and there should be buttons to display controller layout and unit documentation	
?	Extend option: SHOW it exists! (a + at the bottom of dna and image of LB button)	
Dave	Extend option: make sure player understands COST	
?	Lane separator: image that explains it separates lanes!	
?	DNA lifepoints display (healthbar sideways OR transparency 0.5 - 1)	
?	DNA lifepoints reduce pleeeeeease!	
?	DNA attacker increase hitpoints pleeeeeease!	
(Jonas?)	Single player: MOVE CAM, ZOOM etc (splitscreen mode with one screen)	
Jonas	Single Player: add difficultyies easy, medium and hard (giving player more starting resources, same, or more to bot)	
Marcel	Resources: Place very HUGE resource blocks on Map	
?	Resources: flows (closer then blocks) DECAY over time	
(dont touch)	Resources: keep the small start resource blocks (do add and move everything else, just dont remove those)	Done
?	coded unit Display: add transparency if not enough resources	
?	Map: islands please same texture as border so that player understands it is nothing	
Gaetano	Winning conditions: maybe more intelligent? just a though: for example if no more resources nor units	
?	bigger units, aura? some way for players to know who's winning... the more units the biger aura? dunno	
Dave	AI should trade	
	2) Additional QUESTION and THOUGHTS (translate into a TODO above)	
	EXPLAIN THAT A SEPARATOR (or lane splitter) IS NEEDED TO GET NEW UNIT	
	make lanes clear (player should at least understand they exist)	
	playing field not clear	
	too many gatherers?	
	game duration?	
	empty slot separator concept	
	(navigation buttons ? user should understand how to move, zoom)	
	tree should be help, not struggle	
	unit images should give a hint of what they do (ie area)	
	bigger units	