Battle Tinker - Play Testing Report

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1   Setting

We held two play testing sessions, one in Zürich with two participants and one in Bern with three participants. All participants were between 20 and 26 years old, all male, all students and all had a little up to a lot of gaming experience. Since the on-game help is not available at the moment, we introduced the basic game objectives as well as game controls. Unfortunately, we didn't implement any ships to start with. The participants were thus asked to build a ship from scratch and then shoot each other in the Battle Arena.

2   Results

Below we summarize the answers to the questionnaire:

What was your first impression? Fun, complicated in the beginning, creative game, challenging, cool idea

How did that impression change as you played? Less complicated as soon as able to control the ship

How did the controls feel in the Editor? Did they make sense? Descriptions needed, need time to understand, need time to get accustomed, unintuitive, parent/child relation difficult, colors needed

Was there anything you found frustrating? Some errors in the game, game crashed, respawning at the same place, parent/child selection, steering

Did the game drag at any point? In the beginning when you don't know what to do. needs predefined ships

What was missing from the game? Instructions, tutorials, more enemies, missions, predefined ships, ramming structure, missiles, more starting points, vampire devices to absorb enemy energy, more obstacles in space, high scores

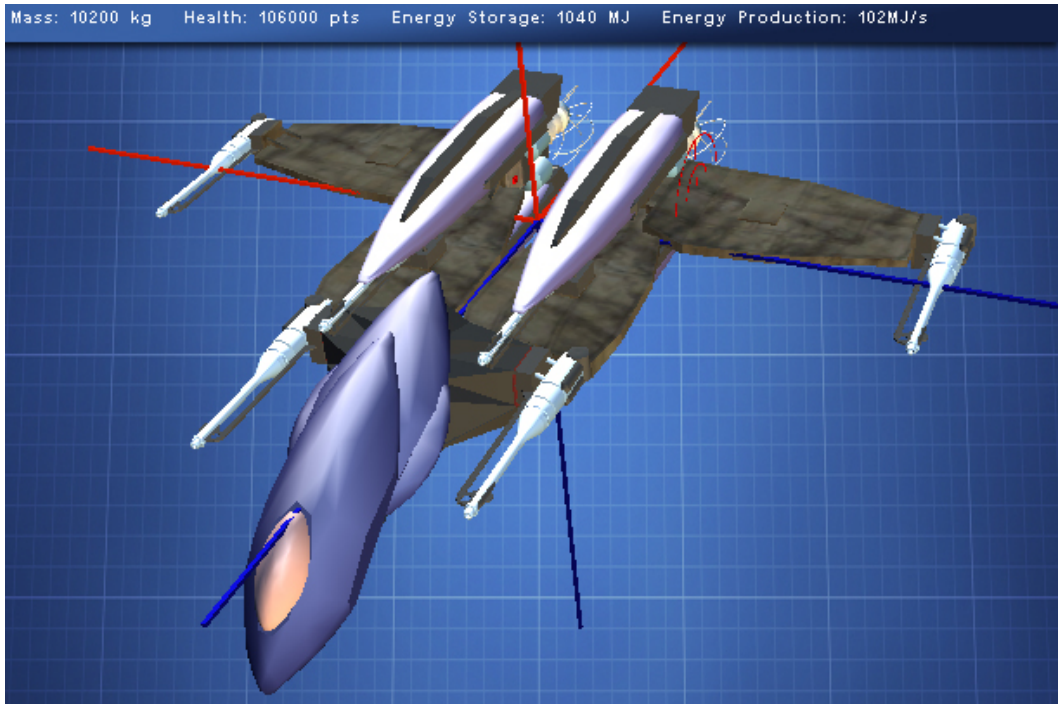**If you could change just one thing, what would it be?** Instructions, predefined ships, massive cockpit

Figure 1: Silvio's Ship: Exposed Cockpit but fast and many guns

Was the objective clear at all times? Yes, so so

What types of choices did you make during the game? Build big ship with lots of guns, ramming din't work out, symmetry!, quick light ship, try to get components together, good steering

What was the most important decision you made? Lots of guns, fire all engines at same time

What was your strategy for winning? Lots of guns, symmetry, control engines carefully, hit him before he hits me, be fast

Did you find any loopholes in the system? Respawning at same points, more guns means better, first hit generally decides the battle

What elements could be improved? Random respawn points, more structures, background story, changeable color and appearance, light guns are too weak, space station too simple, less physically demanding, more big structures, direct mapping of buttons to menu items in editor, limit number of guns

If you were to give this game as a gift, who would you give it to? Space simulation freak, friends at university, someone between 16 and 45 who doesn't have an interesting life, physically experienced people, Ben
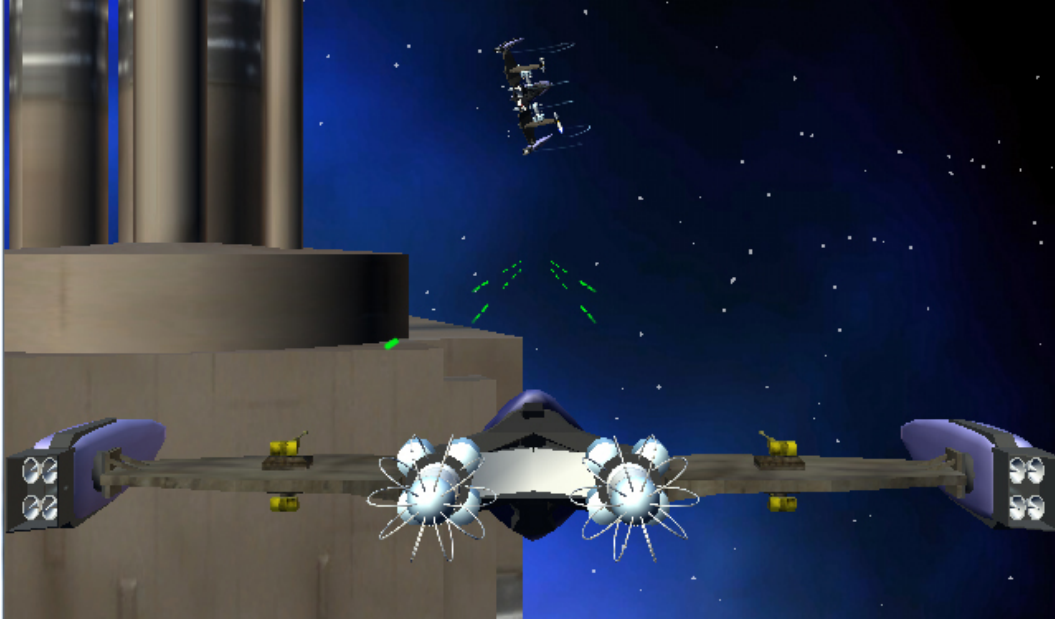
Figure 2: Pit's Ship (early): Very fast, not steerable in all axis

3   Planned Changes

3.1   Editor

- Many predefined ships to begin with - Build ship from scrath is only for advanced users

- Colored structures in editor to represent parent/child relation

- Rotate structures in both directions

- Display in editor if no guns, no engines, any not assigned structures, not enough energy

- Confirm if structure is to be replaced

- Maybe introduce ramming structure

- Slower camera movement

3.2   Arena

- Indication of velocity

- Energy supply less energy production

- Heavy Laser Turret slower shot, less damage

- Randomized respaning points
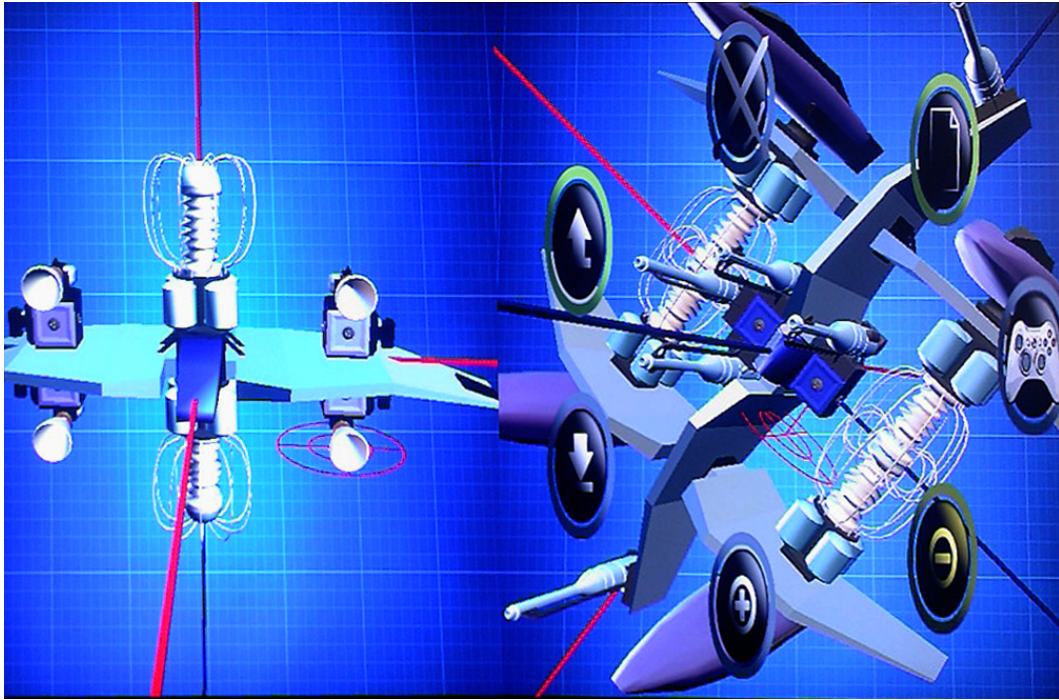
- Arena bounds

Figure 3: Pawi's and Pascal's Ship: Agile vs. Massive

- Maybe two space stations

- Reduce size of Energy Supply structure model

- Vibrating gamepad