NEED.MOAR.SHEEP

Background

Story

For years, little Jimmy has watched sheep jumping over a fence every evening. Counting them, over and over, until finally falling asleep. But one night, just counting sheep wasn't enough. He wanted more sheep and he also wanted them faster! So he went on a journey to find the source of all sheep. Will he find them? Can he make them jump over his fence? Is he asleep already? Nobody knows…

Theme

The game takes place in the transition between being awake and falling asleep. The player is still aware of the fact that everything is happening in his own mind, but he starts losing control. The sheep he imagined are getting more and more stubborn and the dream starts defining its own rules. And suddenly there are other people, trying to steal all the sheep. What's up with that?

The game is our interpretation of a dream that resulted from the mundane practice of counting sheep.

Mechanics

General setup and goal

The world is limited by walls which contains fences. Each player owns a fence. There is a herd of sheep strolling around. The goal of a player is to drive the sheep and make them jump over the fence during night. The night time is limited and the players must try to make as many sheep jump over their fence as possible within the given time.

If there is more than one player, they can compete by disrupting others and trying to take over

their sheep. The player who got the most sheep wins.

Camera and HUD

The camera will point at the player in bird view. It will follow the player from a given height only by translation.

There will be a heads-up display showing the collected power-ups, the energy level and the remaining time.

Controls

Driving a sheep works the following way: in general, a sheep runs away from a player, depending on how close it is to the player. So the player must find a way to direct the sheep to his fence using this principle. The exact behavior of the sheep will have to be evaluated experimentally.

The player will control the movement of his avatar with the left joystick of the gamepad. The right hand will be used to trigger additional mechanics.

Power-ups and special abilities

Different power-ups will appear randomly on the map and disappear after some time if not picked up. They are picked up by the player that first moves over them and will be stored in his inventory.

After collecting power-ups, the player can select them in his inventory and activate them. Their effect will fade out after a certain amount of time. The player can also cancel the effect manually. Only one power-up can be active at a time.

There will be at least 2 different kind of power-ups:
● camouflage: the sheep will ignore the player, allowing him to move past them without scaring them away.
● goodies: instead of walking away from the player, the sheep will walk towards him.

Additionally, the player will be able to run for a limited time. Running will drain his energy. Once the energy ran out, the player can't run anymore. The energy will regenerate while not running.

The power-ups are selected by pressing the right or left shoulder key (cycling through the inventory). It will be activated by pressing the A button and deactivated with B. Running is enabled while holding X.

"Big Idea" Bullseye

Core Idea: control a herd of sheep
Supporting Element: competitive multiplayer

Development Schedule

Functional minimum

- singleplayer
- multiple identical sheep
- sheep can jump over fence
- sheep walk away from player if player close, otherwise stay where they are (no free-will movement)
- goal: end game as fast as possible, making as many sheep as possible jump over the fence
- end of game: no more sheep / all sheep jumped over fence
- simple world (flat plane), simple fence
- static camera
- no character animation

Low target

- competitive multiplayer mode, each player tries to get as many sheep as possible
- refined sheep (randomised) movement
- collision detection

Desirable target

- camera follows target
- character animation
- improve level design by adding obstacles
- improved graphics
- extra abilities for players (e.g. "invisibility", goodies for sheep)
- sound effects / theme song

High target

- extra creatures that distract the sheep ("evil" creatures such as wolves, black sheep)
- additional constraint e.g. for time between sheep jumps
- achievements/points for players

- different "levels" - different fences, worlds, obstacles
- different "difficulties" - speed of sheep, different behavior of sheep
- character selection (different looks - same abilities)

Extras

- custom map editor
- kinect integration
- characters with different abilities
- networked multiplayer

Schedule/Timeline/Milestones

TODO

Assessment

We want to build a casual game that is easy to play but hard to master. Controlling the sheep should be fun, but controlling them fast, precise and many of them at once will require some excellent shepherd skills.

The world will be friendly and a little bit dreamy. An inviting place where not only the players but also the sheep enjoy themselves. Nice music and fun animations that would make everyone happy even if there wasn't anything to do at all.

The game should be played with friends and enjoyed by everyone who loves casual gaming. Even if it might be called a party game, we hope to achieve enough depth so people try to master it and will spend hours playing. Highscores, achievements and different levels will help keeping the users excited.
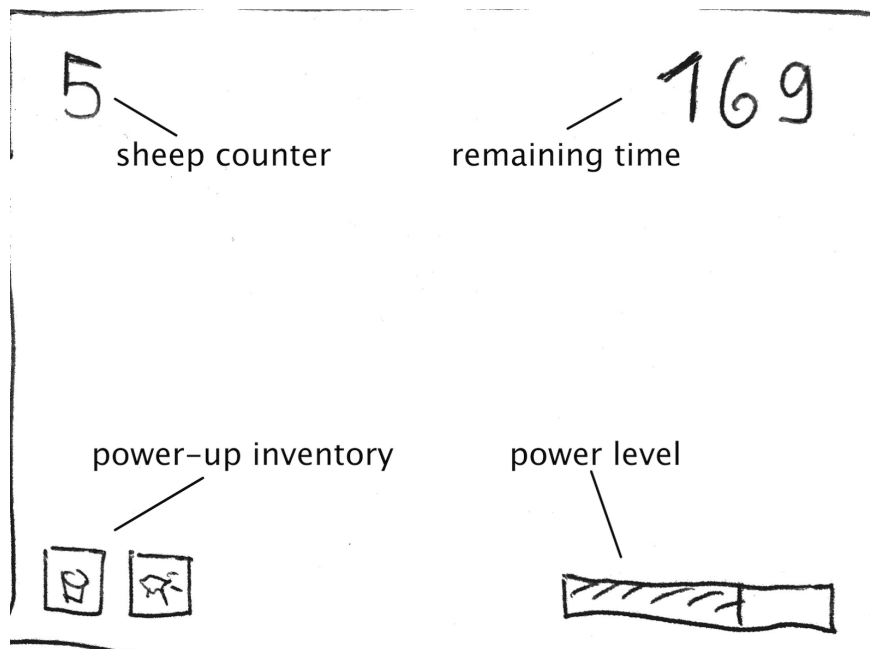
The success of the game will be measured by how long the players keep playing before they are getting bored and whether they want to play the game again after already knowing it.
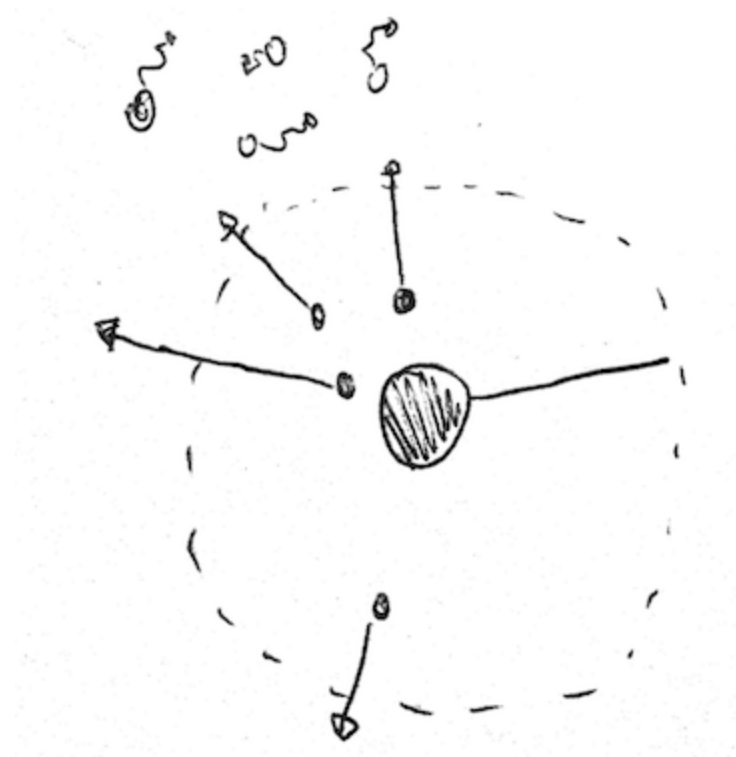
Sketches

Basic level for 2 players

HUD

5 — sheep counter   169 — remaining time

power-up inventory   power level
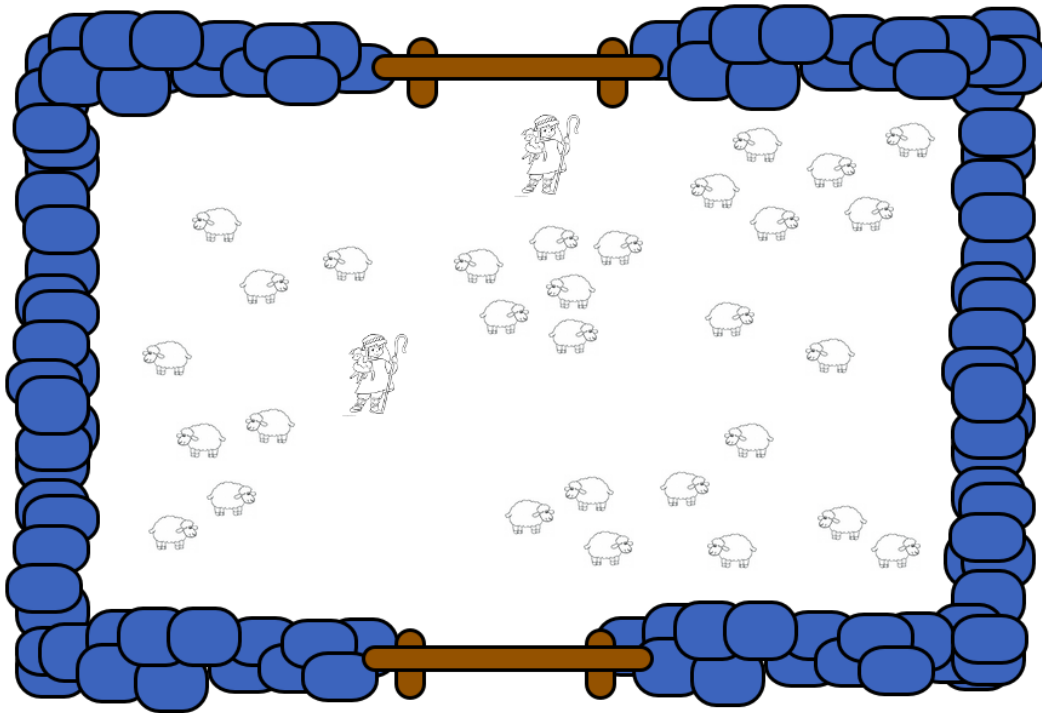
Mechanics: sheep walking away from the shepherd once they approach him within a certain radius; moving randomly otherwise.

Hot zone: once the sheep enter the hot zone, they will jump the fence.