

Battle Tinker - Play Testing Report

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1 Setting

We held three play testing sessions, two in Zürich with two and four participants and one in Bern with three participants. All participants were between 20 and 29 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, only space station and ships

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, hard to navigate on the junctures, too complicated

Was there anything you found frustrating? Some errors in the game, game crashed, respawning at the same place, parent/child selection, steering, too small hud signs, losing of space ship after crash, controls in the editor

Did the game drag at any point? In the beginning when you don't know what to do, needs predefined ships, annoying to wait for other players

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, hiding spots, team play, steering assistance

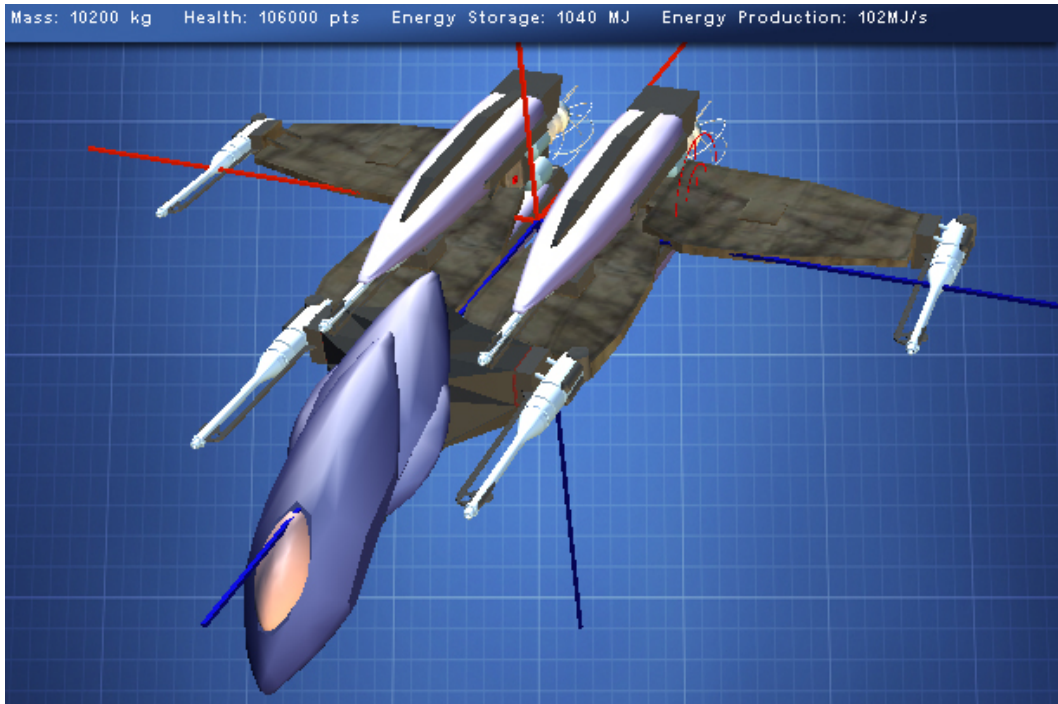


Figure 1: Silvio's Ship: Exposed Cockpit but fast and many guns

If you could change just one thing, what would it be? Instructions, predefined ships, massive cockpit, sensitivity of the gamepad, racing, AI players

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 didn't work out, symmetry!, quick light ship, try to get components together, good steering, change engine configuration, suicide

What was the most important decision you made? Lots of guns, fire all engines at same time, suicide or not, arrangement of the engines

What was your strategy for winning? Lots of guns, symmetry, control engines carefully, hit him before he hits me, be fast, to just shoot, small ship, build steerable ship

Did you find any loopholes in the system? Respawn 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, enemy indicator in all views, effects of the buttons should be scalable

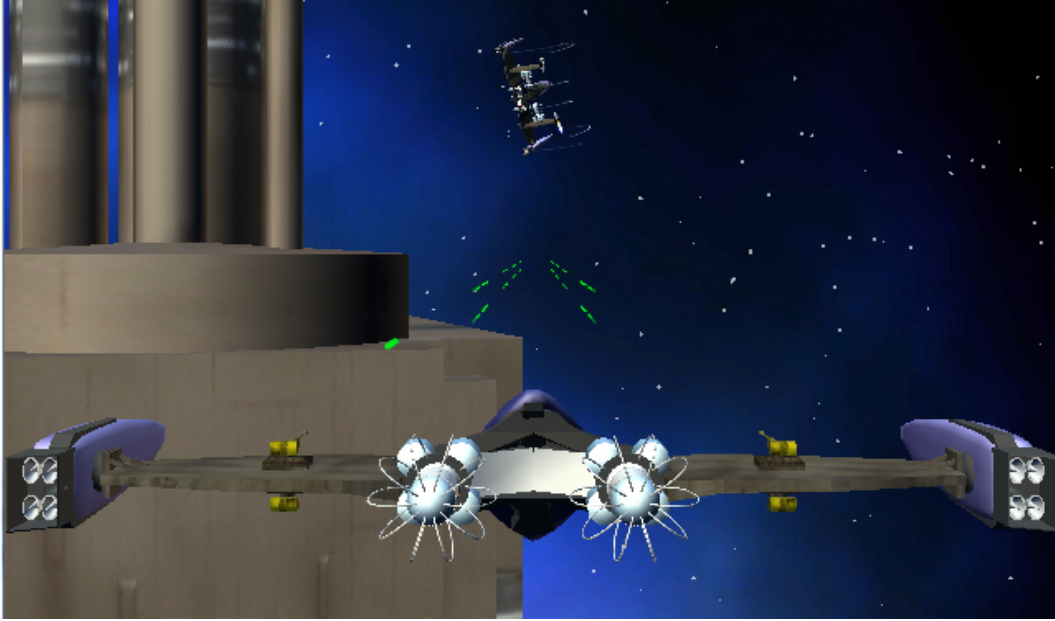


Figure 2: Pit's Ship (early): Very fast, not steerable in all axis

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, Marco, Stefan, Ben

3 Planned Changes

3.1 Editor

- Many predefined ships to begin with - Build ship from scratch 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

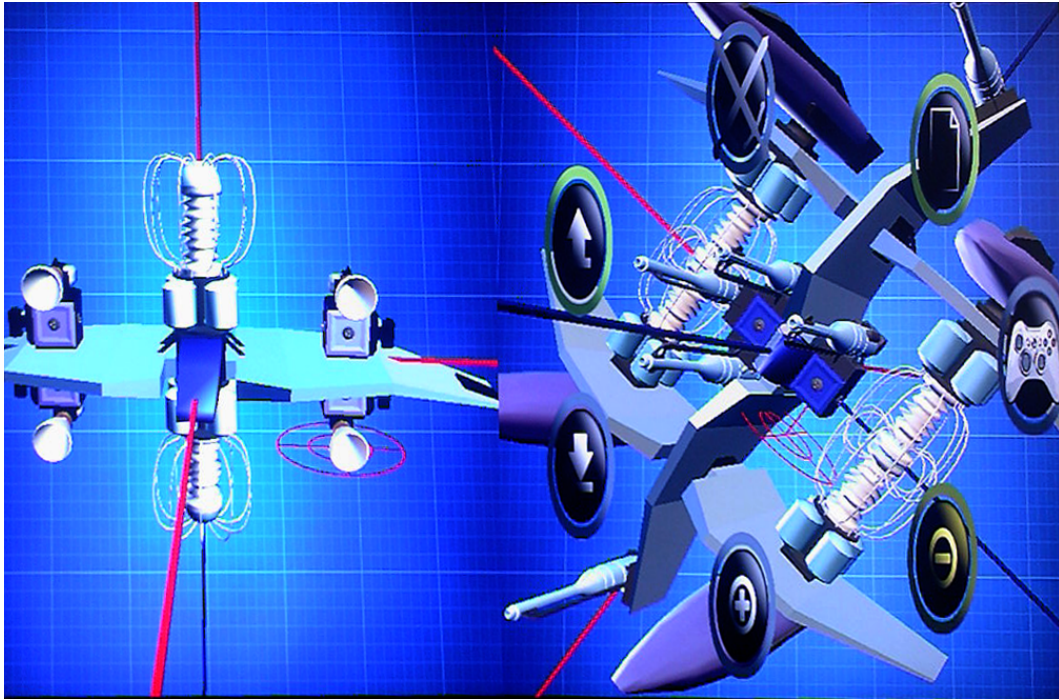


Figure 3: Pawi's and Pascal's Ship: Agile vs. Massive

- Randomized respawning points
- Arena bounds
- Maybe two space stations
- Reduce size of Energy Supply structure model
- Vibrating gamepad