



News Letter

March 24 - 28, 2014

Returning from the Game Developers Conference and nearly two weeks without the full team, we turned this week to making improvements that move our "golf meets MC Escher" game from a rough prototype to an experience that reflects what we hope to launch with.

Some significant improvements came from a more advanced camera systems. One system follows the ball as it sails through the air, helping players appreciate their hits. Another shows the world turning as what was a wall becomes a floor when players land their ball on the wall. We believe this will help address the potentially confusing orientation changes inherent in our game..

Other improvements included an updated version of our gravity system, which now allows balls to stick on walls of arbitrary angles, rather than just 90 degree angles. We also wrote and recorded a rough version of a voice over explaining the course. Like the camera system, this should help players navigate and understand our strange and potentially confusing world. We'll use the sample to test the idea before we actually use any recording studio time.

Importantly, we also changed our art pipeline. While we had planned on baking light maps of our levels in Unity, we found the results to be too low quality to use. Consequently, we shifted to baking light maps in Maya. This demanded rebuilding courses that had been built in Unity in Maya, baking light maps, preparing these for placement in Unity, and re-importing these into Unity for gameplay. While this has set us back, we hope for the superior look of the game to be worth the time invested.

Amidst this work, we also presented at Halves, a half-way point presentation in front of our classmates and Electronic Arts' employees about the work we have done to date. For those who attended, we made one noteworthy mistake while answering questions during the Q&A that followed: HTML5 and our controller does not, as we stated, limit the gestures we can use for hitting the ball in our game. Rather, we are limited by the base version of the game we are building from, which recognizes simple mouse clicks and keyboard events only.

With only four weeks to go before our Soft Opening, in Week 11 we'll continue to realize improvements to our core features. We'll implement the improved art pipeline on the two courses that have been designed. An improved version of user feedback that should help players make more accurate shots. A series of playtest should let us know whether this and ideas we put into place last week are working.

WEEK 1

WEEK 2

WEEK 3

WEEK 4

WEEK 5

WEEK 6

WEEK 7

WEEK 8

WEEK 9

WEEK 10

We improved core systems for gravity and camera and changed our art pipeline to improve graphics

WEEK 11

WEEK 12

WEEK 13

WEEK 14

WEEK 15

WEEK 16