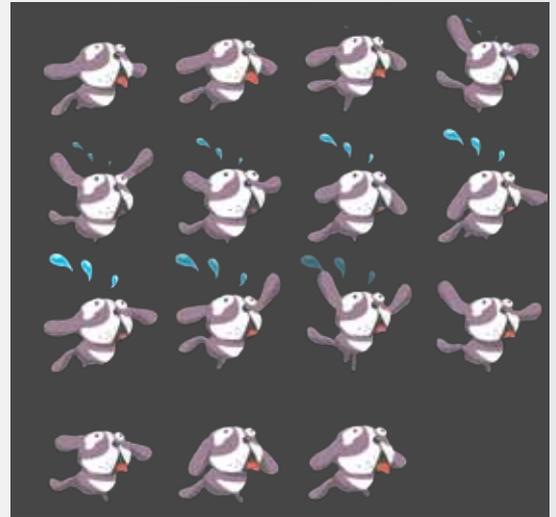


Animation and Parallax

This week we added two running animations for Seven, one when he is on top of the snowball and one where he is in danger of falling, the latter of which is shown here. As you can see, we've made Seven highly expressive. Aside from his larger eyes and the sweat drops, we use his body to create follow-through motion since his legs are so small and we use his ears to create a flailing motion similar to that which a human might make with his arms when losing balance.

We've also added parallax scrolling to the background. Parallax scrolling is a technique where the background is split into several layers (as shown in the bottom right corner). These layers move at different speeds as the camera pans to the right. This is a common way to give an illusion of depth in 2-D games, as objects further in the distance move more slowly according to the rules of perspective. The effect obviously can't be seen in a static screenshot, but it looks great in motion!



Bringing It All Together

For our halves demo, we've brought together all our existing features, the new art mentioned above, as well as a temporary ad, UI, and scoring system. Lastly, after several test levels and iteration over the previous weeks, we've created a new level for halves that is closer to the feel and variety of slopes that we would like to have in the final game. Level iteration is something we fully expect to continue for the next several weeks, and of course we have many more levels to create. However, we feel that this week we hit an important milestone in terms of having a level that was both easier to assemble and more fun to play than our initial attempts. In many ways, level design is the heart of a game like this, so we're looking forward to finding slope shapes and arrangements that maximize the fun out of both our existing and upcoming game mechanics.

Halves Prep

On Friday we had our halves presentation for faculty, clients, and fellow students. Halves represents the midpoint in the semester and is an important opportunity to reflect on everything we have done to this point--our design decisions, playtest results, accomplishments, and challenges --as well as what we will be doing moving forward. We presented a live demo of Seven's Wild Ride projected from the iPhone onto a large screen, which helped us to explain our basic gameplay mechanics. We also tried to convey the attention we have paid to good "game feel" in balance and speed. Our presentation was well received, and we had a couple enthusiastic guests come by our project room after it was over. We got great questions from the faculty during Q&A, and we will have more detailed feedback from them to consider over the course of next week.