Tanks, Zack Cecere

Tanks

Platform: flash

Description: A classic flash game in which multiple players (some of them bots) attempt to sink the tank of the other to the bottom of the screen. They do this through the use of varying artillery. Once a player's tank reaches the bottom of the confined area, that player is eliminated from the game.

Genre: Turn Based strategy == This game is perhaps the classic example of this genre. Each player may only move during his or her (or its in the case of a bot) turn. During this time, the player prepares both his shot (through the selection of angle, force of shot, and weapon) and his defense (position with respect to the other attacking players).

Game Interface: The player uses the left and right keys to situate his tank on the landscape. The player adjusts the firing angle by rotating the barrel (the angle that is used to determine the parabolic flight of the artillery is the angle between the barrel and the flat bottom of the tank). The game uses a scale bar that the user manipulates with the mouse in order to determine the force of the shot (influences how far the shell travels).

Goal: The goal of the game is to sink all of the other tanks to the bottom of the prescribed area (effectively destroying them), while maintaining a decent enough defensive position to maintain a surface position for one's own tank.

Challenges: The main challenge of the game is to maintain a common enough position on the landscape so that minimal adjustments can be made to the firing angle and the firing force in order to hit the enemies while adjusting the position enough to evade enemy attacks. More specifically, it is advantageous to maintain a common position relative to an enemy because only minimal changes need to be made to the firing variables (angle, force, and weapon) in order to follow the movements of the enemy, creating higher percentage attacks. However, maintaing this common position allows the enemy to narrow in on your position as well, making his attacks higher percentage.

Complexity of the Rule Set: The basic controls are very simple. The firing angle, firing force, and starting position of the tank are plugged into a quadratic function that determines where the projectile will land and removes a given amount of surface area from the landing location. However, with the addition of new weapons, the firing formula becomes increasingly complex. Some weapons are deployed in a different manner than the basic projectile and all of them produce a different effect on the landscape.

Competition: The user must destroy other players while working to avoid his own destruction.

Fun?: 4 == As a fairly simple game, it is easy to pick up and have success. However, with the added complexity of different artillery and more difficult bots, this game has the ability to keep users engaged.

Learning Curve: 2 == The learning curve is not particularly steep. The concept of the game is simple and fairly intuitive to anyone that understands flight patterns. Also, as a turn-based game, the user has all the time he or she needs to set up the his or her strategy, making familiarity with the controls non-essential.

Visual Quality: 3 == Just complex enough so that the user can tell what is going on. Also, the the different graphical results of the different artillery adds to the appeal.

Engaging: 3 == With higher difficulty of the computer opponents, the user must think through his or her strategy several turn in advance, keeping him or her engaged with all movements within the simulation. However, I feel that this game lacks the addicting quality seen in some of the quicker, level-based games.

Recommendation: 3 == It is an easy game to learn and has a design that allows for both early success and complexity of strategy. That being said, it does not have enough variable components to keep a modern gamer entertained for an extended period of time. The user would probably be better off playing a game like worms that has the same underlying theory but introduces more complexity with multiple figures at a user's disposal and more complex terrain.

Dan

Fun Rating: 3/5
Learning Curve: 2/5, only a few controls to be learned
Visual Quality: 3/5, enjoy the different terrains
Engaging Rating: 3/5
Overall Rating: 3/5
A good game that seems simple on the surface but actually has some intricate strategy worked in. It would be nice if the extra artillery had a description somewhere to see how it works. I also enjoy that you can change the amount of players in the game and add npc or human players into the mix.