



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Intercollegiate competition drives teams of college students to develop eight unique and fully playable video games in just 48 hours.

On February 9th, Wolverine Soft held its fourth annual 48 Hour Game Development Contest.

This year's contest had a record 24 participants, divided into eight teams. For the first time, students from Michigan State University participated in the competition along with students from the University of Michigan in a truly intercollegiate effort.

The theme for this year's contest was "Fight!" Given such a generic topic, teams were challenged to tackle the theme from an original perspective, but each team was able to produce a unique game that pertained to the theme.

- The winner was a two-player, 3D, side-scrolling game called *Debugger*. The object of the game was to control the robot character and kill all the invading bugs in each level.
- Placing a very close second was *Granicus*. This three-player game had two ships shooting each other, while the third player tried to stop the attacks by drawing barriers.
- In third place was *Tube Fighter XII*. This dungeon-style game had players trying to complete randomly generated mazes while fighting monsters and avoiding traps.
- In fourth place was *Fight of the Kraken*. In this game, players controlled a giant squid through several levels while catching food and fighting enemies.
- In fifth place was *Double Shot*. In this side-scrolling shooter, players had to control their ship through jagged tunnels and destroy oncoming enemies.
- In sixth place was *Stranded*. In this game, players had to collect and combine items in order to fend off bears and survive on a deserted island.
- In seventh place was *48 Fight!* This turn based fighting game used a rock-paper-scissors format, only with nine different options.
- In eighth place was *Tango*. In this game, players fight intergalactic dogfights, and must use Nanobots to help them survive.

Wolverine Soft is especially grateful to Dr. John Laird and Jonathan Voigt, of the U of M, and Dr. Brian Magerko and Dr. Brian Winn, of MSU, for giving their time to judge the games at the end of the competition. In addition, Electronic Arts, Microsoft, and Wolverine Soft alumni once again graciously donated prizes for the competition, ensuring that all participants were well rewarded for their efforts. Prizes ranged from games, including Gears of War, Fable, Final Fantasy XII, and The Sims, to hardware, including optical mice and a Microsoft Wireless Optical Desktop set. Funding for the event was provided by the University of Michigan Engineering Council and the Michigan Student Assembly.

All games, contest details, and contestant contact information are available online at <http://entity.eecs.umich.edu/~wsoft/events/48hourcontest4/>

About the 48 Hour Game Development Contest

The 48 Hour Game Development contest is a challenge to student game developers to create a video game within 48 Hours designed around a theme given at the beginning of the contest. Contestants range in ability from experienced coders, artists, and musicians to game enthusiasts with little or no experience in game development.

The contest has been called a game development trial by fire by past participants. It is one of the few opportunities for budding game developers to put their skills to the test and determine just how effectively they can work with others to create a playable video game. The nature of the contest also offers an introduction to the valuable skill of prototyping game design ideas, a skill widely used in the game industry

The contest begins with the announcement of the theme. Teams then have 48 hours in which to plan and develop a game that they feel best reflects this theme. Participants may sign up with one other teammate, and a third member is assigned in order to allow less skilled contestants to get a feel for game development and prototyping.

All games and artwork must be made during the 48 hours, but existing game engines and libraries are allowed, provided they are available to all students participating. Teams must also submit periodic work logs and sample builds of their games during the 48 hours to ensure a fair competition. However, the competition itself is of a friendly nature, and teams are often willing to help each other test and debug.

The games are judged on several factors, including game mechanics, artwork, sound, and incorporation of the theme. In addition to the judges' evaluations, the participants must complete peer evaluations of the other games. The final scores for each game are based on all of these evaluations, with the peer evaluations carrying the same weight as one judge.

Most years, there are a few games that are not entirely finished by the end of the 48 hours. However, most of these games are completed soon after the contest, and many of the completed games are polished and expanded in the following weeks.

It is Wolverine Soft's hope to continue this tradition of intercollegiate competition and to nurture the student game-development community in Michigan.

About Wolverine Soft

Wolverine Soft is the video game development student group at the University of Michigan. Founded in 1998, the organization has grown considerably in recent years. Its mission is to ensure the continued success of the game development community on campus, and the success of U of M students in the video game industry. The members strive to be the primary video games resource for any developers, artists, programmers, musicians, and game enthusiasts at the University.

For more information about Wolverine Soft, please visit <http://www.wolverinesoft.org>
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