

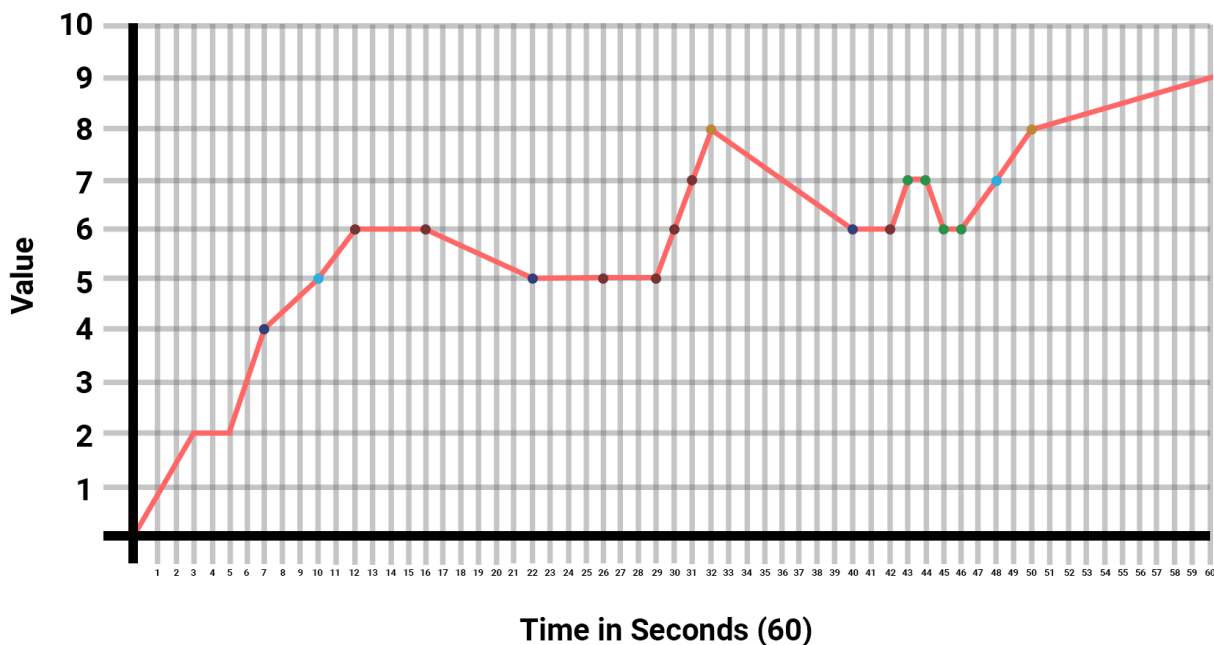
## Design Document - Downhill Jam Jungle Level Design

### Initial stages

Downhill Jam is a racing game where the player is riding on a hoverboard through a race track. The player's aim is to collect pickups and complete track in the fastest time possible. I came on board to the project as a level designer, my main task was designing a jungle based level.

As this was a new IP I started off by getting references to what the game would look and feel like. Mario Kart was the number one mentioned thing so that's what I started with.

Excitement graph based on the reference a Mario Kart 8 level. Excitement graph measured by changes in gameplay or visuals. For example, the environment changes this will increase the excitement level and or the gameplay changes for example the character is now gliding instead of driving.



I then had to sit down with the rest of the team and we discussed exactly what gameplay features would be in each level. For example, in Mario Kart there are speed boosts and ramps would we have something like this in Downhill Jam. The main design considerations mean the team came up with where.

## Gameplay features

- Ramps - Ramps will give the player a speed boost and the opportunity to do tricks.
- Jump Pad – This is like the ramps; it will give the player opportunity to do tricks.
- Grind rails – There will be default prefab grind rails and the rails that are bespoke and built into the map.
- Bus stop – These will act a checkpoint so if the player dies, they will respawn at their last bus stop.
- Pitfall/Holes - The player will have to jump over these, or they'll die.
- Pickups – These won't give the player any special abilities they are a simple scoring system.
- Alternate routes

But on top of the gameplay features each one of the characters in the game will have special abilities.

## Characters

- Cat - Average stats, well rounded character.
- Crocodile - Slides on belly after falling off hoverboard.
- Turtle - Slower but can take more hits.
- Bird – Can jump higher the other characters.

## Mood boards

These are the main aspects of the game that I will need to consider when designing my level. I had been tasked with creating a jungle level loosely based on a Mario Kart 8 level. Below is my first mood board.



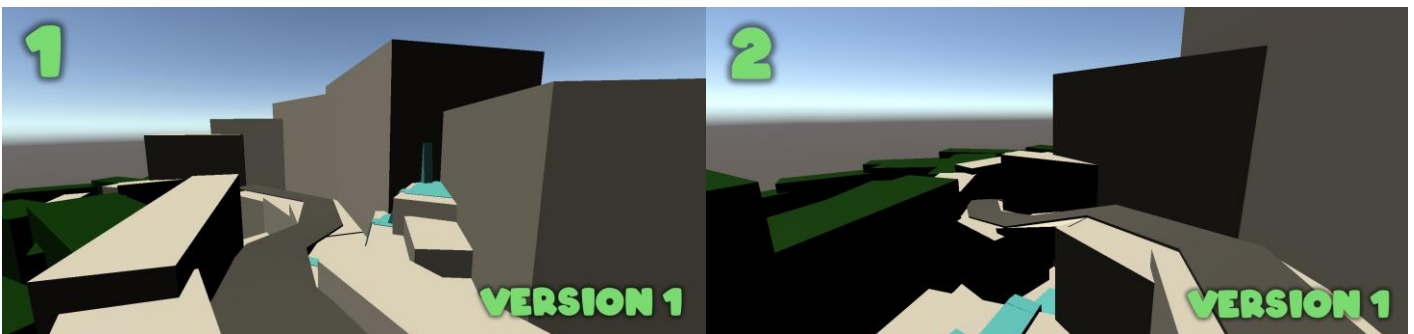
This is my second mood board I wanted some references too jungle civilizations and temples. I was keen to direct the track according to the different temple shapes. For example, the tops of the buildings and the sides of the pyramid could be used as grind rails.

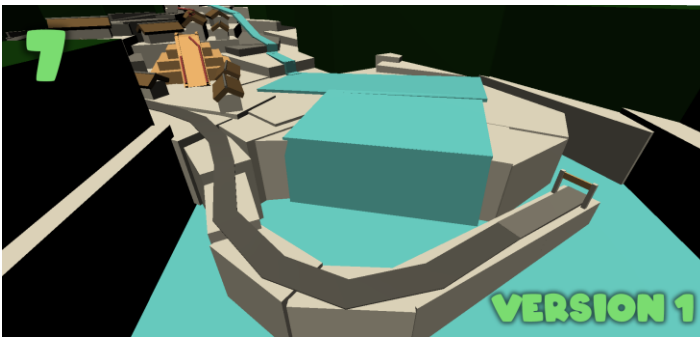
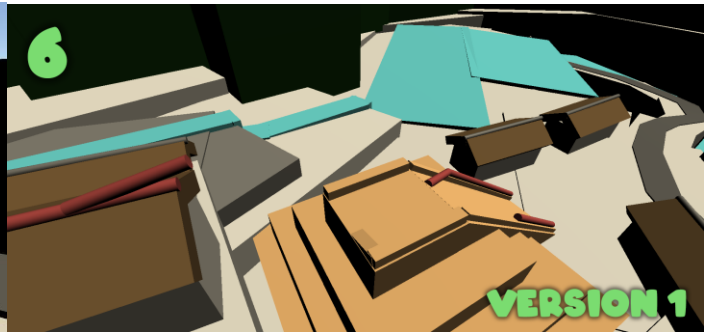
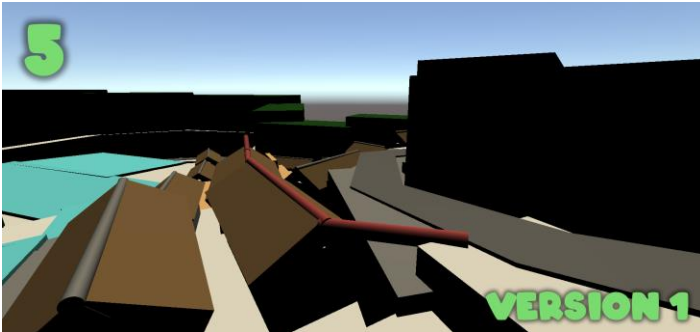
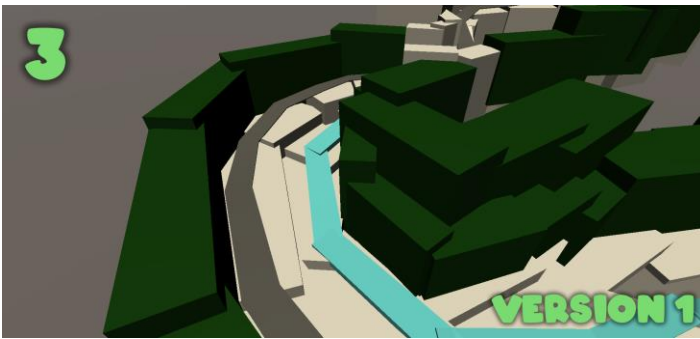


**White box**

**Version 1**

My initial white box was created to get the main flow and length of the level. As you can see in the images below.





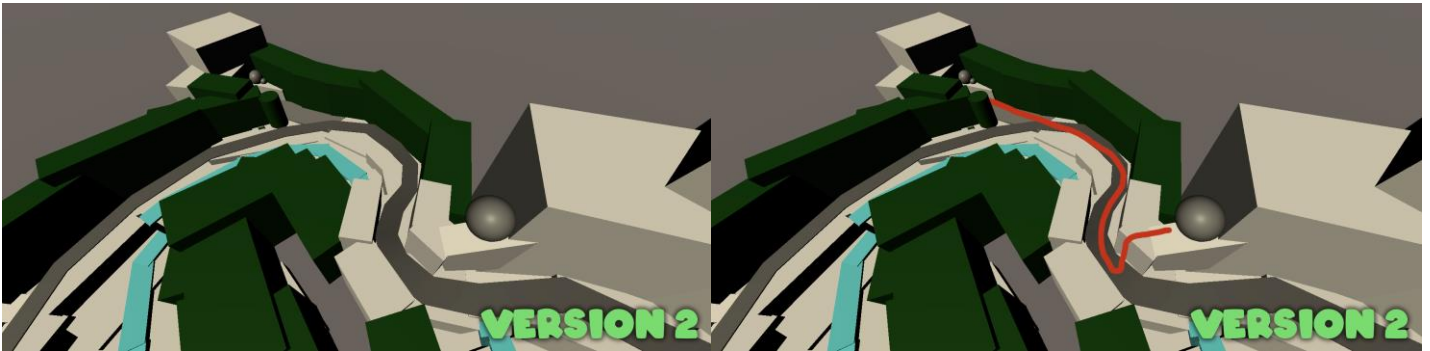
- 1 & 2 – This is the start of the race track. In these two images you will see a small stream which grows in size throughout the level and turns into a waterfall at the end of the track.
- 3 - I wanted the player to be able to notice the increase in the size of the river so I designed this piece of track so that the player would be next to the river so they could see it.
- 4 - The level is jungle themed so I wanted to have a Mayan village based somewhere in the level.
- 5 & 6 - I really liked the shapes of the roofs on a lot of the reference images I found so I tried to design a grind rail that would go on top the roofs.
- 7 - This image shows the end of the track where the fire will see the waterfall

## Feedback

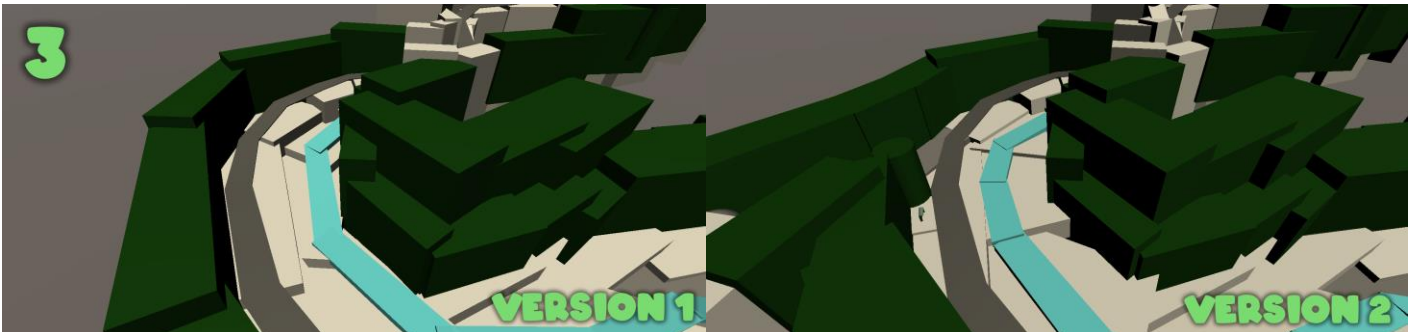
If you people play tested this level. One piece of feedback was that the length of the track was perfect. Another play tester mentioned that they liked the idea of the water starting off at a stream and turning into a waterfall but found it challenging to see the river some points during the level. The sizes of the huts in the village we're also too big compared to the character. A number of members on my team additionally said it would be great if there were some additional grind rail paths designed into the village.

Therefore, moving forward, I will decrease the size of the huts and make it feel more like a village. Additionally, I will edit the track so that the change in river size is more noticeable.

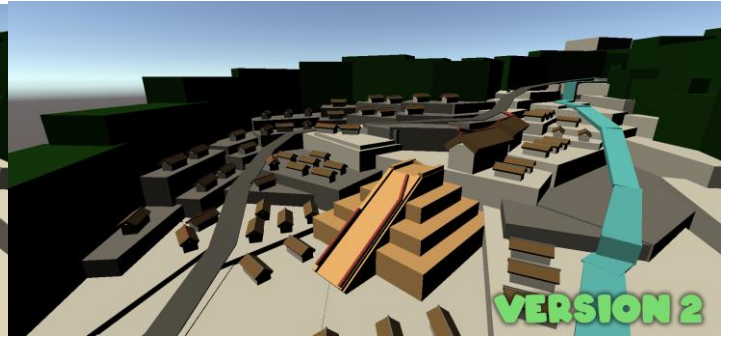
## Version 2



I added a boulder that comes down from the mountain and knocks down any of the players on the path. It's only on the main track for a short time before it goes off into a side alley after a few seconds it would then respawn again at the top of the mountain. In the second image you can see the path the boulder takes.



The feedback from the playtest of my previous version had shown that players we're struggling to notice that the river increased in size therefore in this section of the map I moved the river closer to the path so that players would be more likely to notice it.



Another point that the feedback brought up was that the village hearts were too large and it would be good if there were more grind rail paths. therefore, I decrease the size of the hut. And added a new grind rail route as seen in the images below. This particularly grind rail path will have the player jump over the track gliding from rooftop to rooftop.

