

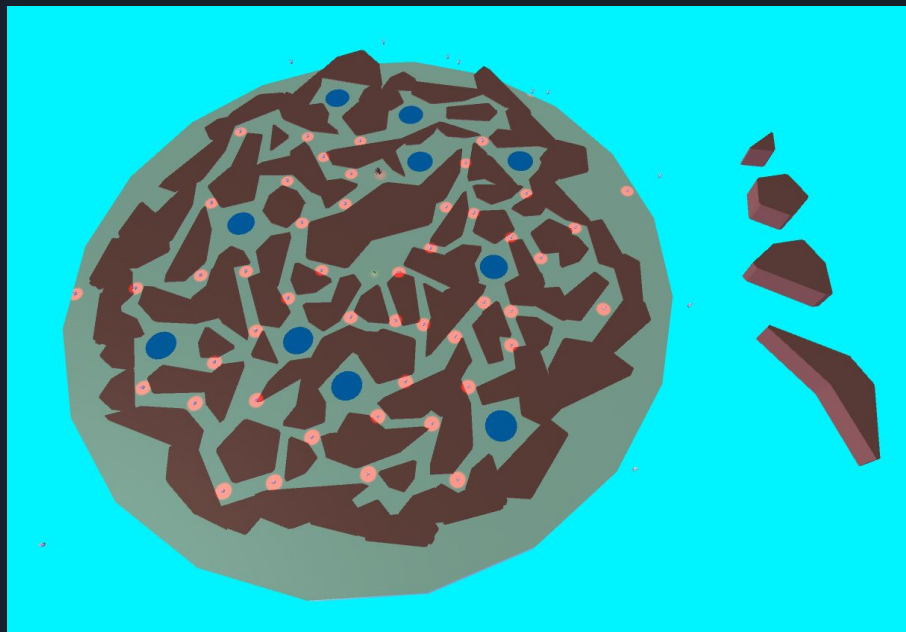
# Follow The Track

*Post Mortem*  
*September 2016*

During my final year at ETPA, the school organized a Game Jam. The theme was "La Trace" (The Track).

It was the first Jam for my two colleagues and myself, and we made a common mistake : we spent too much time on conception. We had **48 hours**. We first began to think about some experimental concepts with potentially incredible experience, and a storytelling dimension, and awesome sounds, that could be sold to hundreds of players... Wait: we all are **game designers**, our goal is to give players an experience (preferably a good one). Let's focus on pure gameplay first. It finally took us 6 hours to decide that **our first idea** was worth it, and that we were able to produce an advanced prototype. We liked the concept, **all of us**, this was very important.

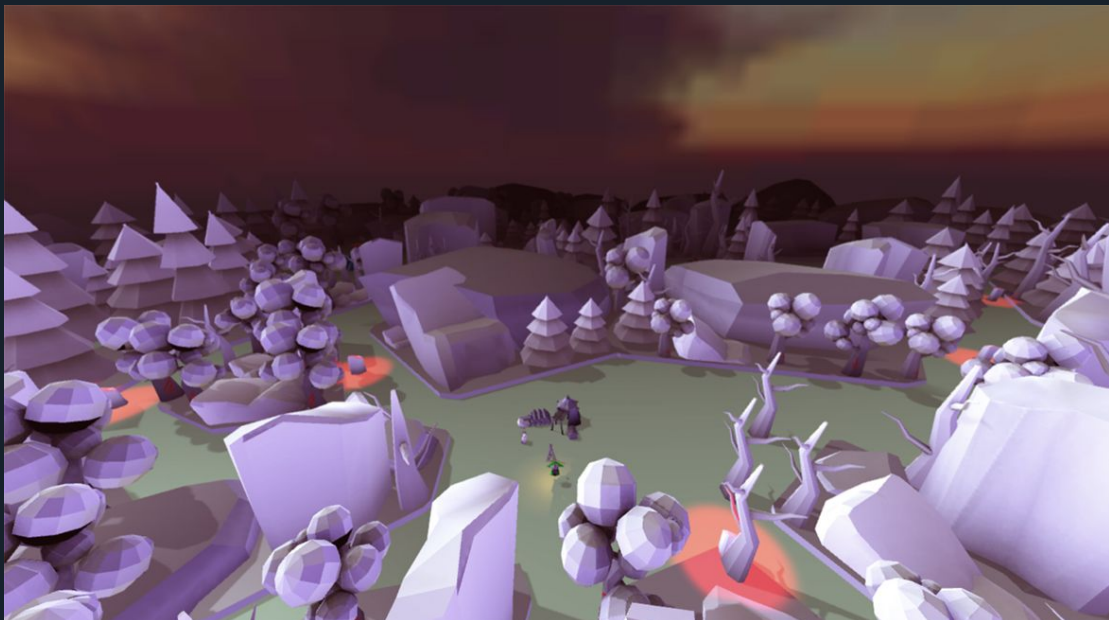
The good part of this project was actually that we made a playable game concept **from A to Z within a given time**. We were aware of the importance of rest so we slept 8 hours, leaving a total of 40 hours for production and playtesting. And it allowed us to live (once again) an entire, condensed game production process.



*White boxing for level design*  
*Red dots represent the hints*  
*Blue surfaces are enemy spawn areas*

The most time-consuming part of the project, for me, was the implementation of the **route calculation** to the next enemy. First I thought of a node tree to store all "hint points" (the tracks we actually must follow to find the enemy) and manage them within a graph. I knew it was the most flexible and optimized solution, but I rapidly got lost in my own design (lack of experience). In order to make it before the first half of the Jam (we wanted some good time to implement 3D, sounds and run **playtests**), I actually built an alternative, combining Unity3d powerful pathfinder and a dummy that simulated the route to the enemy, querying hints on its path by a simple distance check, every given step on the trajectory.

The most incredible thing I noticed is that despite the short time span, we did not argue. This is important because I believe it left us precious time to focus on the project development. We managed to work with efficiency, made the effort to defend our ideas and **always think in terms of feasibility**.



*Final level design given to Mathieu >>  
>> Mathieu's environment to **final integration***

Regarding the concept and the game, obviously a lot remains to be done and undone such as the growing difficulty system (decreasing time, stronger enemy), feedback, fine tuned battle system, and add more depth to the core mechanic: follow a track.

Thanks to our good work we came second and we would be very excited to pursue this adventure !

Louis Magron, 2016

