

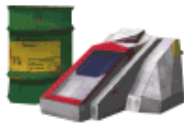


by Harald Radke
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About the author:

Harry studies computer science at the University of Technology in Aachen, Germany since 1994. He came to Linux in 1995. Since then he plays around with it, always surprised about what a great piece of software it is. He programs a little under X, likes graphics and of course playing games. Other hobbies are: playing board games, reading SciFi, playing guitar (bad!), cooking and practicing Ju-Jutsu.

Game Review - Barrel Patrol 3D



Abstract:

Barrel Patrol 3D is a cute little 3d game, based on *Ripoff*, a classical arcade game from the early 80's.

Introduction

For all of you who have never played Ripoff (just like me): your mission is to protect barrels from being stolen by enemy tanks. You yourself also control a tank equipped with a gun. Basically you have to shoot down those tanks in order to avoid your barrels being taken away while not being hit by the enemy tanks which are also armed. In this article version 0.90 of Barrel Patrol 3D will be reviewed.



Standard View, you are the nearest one

Getting Ready to Play

Barrel Patrol 3D is available for several platforms, including of course Linux. You can get it from the Fathom Entertainment Website (clicking at the screenshot thumbnail). There is no source code package, just a zipped tar-ball with a precompiled binary and the data file. The archive file has a size of approx. 1 MB, so no big deal to download it even with a slow connection.

After having saved it onto your harddisk you can extract it with `tar -xzf <ARCHIVNAME>`, a new directory containing the game files will be created. Simply change into this directory and enter `./barrel_patrol_3d`. Besides the binary and the data file, there is a README with some nodes.

Requirements

- X window system
- Simple DirectMedia Layer (SDL)
- OpenGL
- a 3D graphics adapter (recommended)

Note: I had some problems to get the game running with SDL 1.2.0, basically it crashed. After upgrading to SDL 1.2.3. however it worked without a flaw

Playing the Game

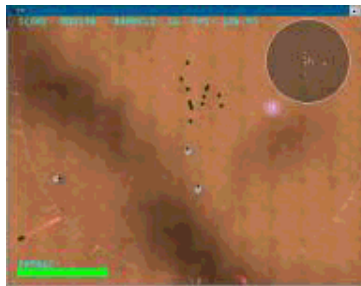
The game takes place inside a circular arena. The game field is bounded by a forcefield which you as the player cannot pass. You control a futuristic tank, equipped with a gun to shoot down those marauding enemy tanks which try to take away your barrels and carry them outside the arena. The enemy in turn can also shoot at you (and other tanks), so it's not only hunting them down but also trying to avoid being hit. From time to time add-ons appear and can be collected to improve firepower. However these add-ons count for *all* vehicles, so enemy tanks are also able to get better weapons. All add-ons are functional till the tank gets torn into pieces. Additionally they are cumulative.

The game is quite easy to play, you can accelerate your tank into the direction it currently heads to,

slow down and turn around. The gun is mounted to fire always forward and there is no special support to point it at a target. Add-ons appear as different big letters and vanish after some time so be quick or they are gone, either after time has expired or, even worse, collected by the enemy.

The game consists of several levels, with a fixed number of barrels and enemies. After all enemies have been destroyed you proceed to the next level. After each level you get points for all barrels remaining inside the arena. From level to level the game becomes more difficult, the enemy aims better and remaining in one place from which you shoot at those tanks will surely result in being hit. One hit is enough to destroy an enemy tank. Your vehicle on the other hand is a little bit tougher and can take more damage. If you have been hit too often, your tank explodes. However, the only consequence of this is, that you lose all your add-ons and some kind of time penalty (a few seconds), in which you have to watch those other tanks moving around and maybe taking barrels away without you stopping them. There is no level restart or any "life" taken away every time your tank was shot into pieces. Collecting add-ons improves your firepower, for example your missiles fly faster, let them rebound off the forcefield or gives you homing missiles. Do not forget, same applies for the enemy! Besides the gameview itself, your actual scoring, the number of remaining barrels, a radar screen and a damage indicator are displayed.

The game ends if all of your barrels during one level have been stolen and taken outside the arena



Top View, like a 2D version

Options

Pressing `ESC` during the game will bring up an options menu where you can modify graphics and sound issues as well as changing the game view between the standard view where you can see your tank, view from inside the tank or from the top. Additionally you can toggle between window and full screen mode and change tank controls. By default you move your tank with the arrow keys and fire with `SPACE`. Graphics options include displaying debris, shadows and radar as well as the level of detail smoke is displayed.



Tank View, the first person shooter version

References

- The website of Fathom Entertainment
- The Linux Game Tome entry of Barrel Patrol 3D featuring several comments of linux gamers

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