

User Experience Research Report

Kylie Sengpiel

BATTLE MASCOTS - UXRR

Table of Contents

Overview	3		
Participants	3-4		
Key Takeaways	4		
Feedback & Changes	5-6		
Appendix	6		

=== Overview ===

Battle Mascots is a *Tabletop Simulator*-based board game centered around college football mascots duking it out to become the strongest around. User testing focused on the game's replayability, variation, and willingness of users to engage with the game mechanics. Testing was conduced with the following measures:

Task Checklist to Measure User Engagement

Ten-Question Pre- and Post-Game Surveys

Product Reaction Cards

Clean

Dated

Comprehensive

Overbearing

Accessible

Relevant

Inviting

Approachable

Effortless

Compelling

Fragile

Creative

	I felt that there were sufficient opportunities to sow chaos and sabotage opponents.								Simplistic
Task	Strongly Disagre	. 0	0	0	0	0	Strongly Agree		Not Valuable
Have all users upgraded	Subligity bisagre	e U	<u> </u>	0	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Salaryy Agree		Boring
their Leader with a Bench 9. How likely would you say it is that you would consider returning to this game?									
	Unlikely	0	0	0	0	0	Very Likely		Organized
space at least once?	Cilikely	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	0	0	very Likey		Fresh

The driving question of this research was, going in:

"Do the players want to play the game again?"

If the answer is "no", then there is some failing in the game's mechanics. Additionally, if the rules are unclear, that not only could create further confusion, but reduce the user's desire to come back to the game.



This study garnered a total of six participants who played in three different games. Three of the participants played twice, while the others played only once.



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Due to the limitations of recruitment, the sample ended up not representing the target demographic particularly well – there were no true card game novices in the sample, and the average age was higher than my target of 21. Most participants understanding card games meant they had greater insight, however.

=== Key Takeaways ===

Each of the testing sessions was observation-rich and exposed different issues for each.

"I'm not really understanding this trying to read it."

- Users found the notebook generally ineffective, and understood the game quicker when it was put into action. It's worth considering a visual guide instead of a text one.
- Gather and Battle Phase quickly proved to be unevenly balanced, necessitating some on-the-fly changes.
- Users exposed some oversights in the game design in particular, the consequences for defeating other players were, in the current draft, rather flimsy, leaving room for some game-winning exploits that had no counterplay.
- Game length was approximately *81.33 minutes*, which is just about in the sweet spot of what I was aiming for.
- Mechanics are generally working properly. Abilities and Units had a 100% engagement rate throughout all games as decided by the task table; Items and Traits were slightly lower, at an 88.8% and 66.6% engagement rate respectively.

"I can just keep all my cards and play them all at the end."

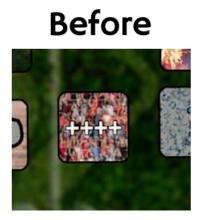
• On a scale from 1-5, the six users across nine responses rated their likelihood to return to the game at an average of *4.5*, above my target goal of 4. Most positive feedback expressed their desire to return once rule changes were put into effect.

=== Feedback & Changes ===

With the game finally put into action, many oversights were immediately discovered and changes made on the fly to patch up errors. Here are a few of the bigger changes that have been made so far:

• In the initial version of the game, only the "Trap" space automatically activated as you passed over it. More space types, such as Crowd and Sun, have been updated to have this mechanic, and the relevant spaces have a new outline to denote this. This change generally improved the balance of the game, according to the players;

"Now that we had massive amounts of units this time thanks to the Crowd Square rule change, they felt a lot more useful as it was harder to simply take down the few rare units players acquired." –[Anonymous]



After



• The length of the game has also significantly changed. In the initial draft, there were 10 turns each of Gather and Battle Phase – now, most players suggested a different pace, and the game is played with 12 Gather and 4 Battle rounds, with a Battle happening after 3 of the Gather rounds.

"battles per every 3 turns with 12 moves seems to be the correct pace" –[Anonymous]





After



• Future updates on the docket will be creating a visual guide to replace the Tabletop Simulator notebook, detailing the gameplay loop and space types ala an instruction manual; as well as a more concrete "darkness line" mechanic for the Sudden Death phase – as the users found especially the latter rather confusing and ill-defined.



The Appendix for this report can be found at <u>this link</u>. It includes the following:

- This project's User Experience Research Plan.
- All notes taken and the task table filled out for each of the three games.
- Pre and post-test surveys and product reaction cards for all participants.
- All consent forms signed by the participants.
- A document detailing the target market and recruitment of this project.
- The form that was used to gauge testing interest.