poing5

COLLABORATORS			
	TITLE : poing5		
ACTION	*NAME*	*DATE*	*SIGNATURE*
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Chapter 1

poing5

1.1 Poing5 manual

Poing 5 manual

Introduction

Copyright and Disclaimer

Installation

Main Menu

In-game keys

Commandline Options

Stuff & Bits

The Level Editor

History

Future

Enjoy!

Paul van der Valk
poing@luna.nl
http://www.luna.nl/~poing

1.2 Introduction

In short, Poing5 is a horizontal breakout clone.

Summary of changes from poing4:

```
- Built in editor.
- Configurable cosmetica (fonts/colors).
- Endgame-random-digit-match-extra-ball-chance :P :)
- New blocktypes (mobile, exploding, magnetic).
- A new levelset (18 levels).

Look
                here
                for a complete list of changes.
```

1.3 Copyright and Disclaimer

1.4 Installation

```
               Typical installation procedure:

  - Create a directory/drawer somewhere on your harddisk. A floppy will do
    too. It fits.

  - Extract the contents of the poing5 archive to this location.

  - Make the assignment POING: to this location, preferably from your
    startup-sequence.

    Note: the poing5 executable doesn't need to be in the POING: directory.
    The POING: assignment is needed for leveldata and highscores. You can
    split up program and data directories if you want.

That's it. Click the poing5 icon to start.

The first time you run the game you'll get a message informing that
the highscore-file isn't found. Don't worry, just skip this screen
with a keypress to make it to the
                Main Menu
               .

If you want to play a levelset other then the default one (poing5.levels)
you must start the program from CLI. For example:

   poing5 -fPOING:something

launches poing5 with the levelset named something.levels.
```

```
See also
                Commandline Options
```

1.5 In-game keys

```
 S         toggle AI  music.
 L         toggle audiofilter.
 Esc       abort game.
 numpad -  pause and scroll screen up.
 numpad +  pause and scroll screen down.
 numpad *  screen to back / to front.

Any other key (un)pauses.
```

1.6 Commandline Options

```
 -o     No ai-music music.
 -ao    No sound at all.
 -ad    Audio dirty: use sound even if audio.device locking failed.
 -an    Audio nolock: don't lock audio.device.
 -0     Disable bottom screen line art. Saves some CPU cycles.

 -fFilename
        Specifies the path and filename of the levelset. Example:

           poing5 -fWORK:data/mypoing

        will use the levelset WORK:data/mypoing.leves (and the highscorefile
        WORK:data/mypoing.scores and optional keyfile WORK:data/mypoing.key).
```

1.7 Stuff & Bits

```
                Eyes

                Energy

                Balltrap

                Star Bonus
```

1.8 Future

This is officially the last version in the poing series. There might be some minor updates, but this is basicly it.

At least the poing 4 levelset will be released one day. The format can easily be converted to poing 5 format. Unfortunately this isn't true for poing 1 upto 3.

I thank those who sent in their ideas for poing 5. Please don't send in further ideas for future poing versions. I already have a long todo list, but most of these ideas are scrapped. Poing5 consists of about 750 Kb handcoded assembly sourcefiles, some files being 7 years old. Implementing - for example - Cybergraphics or AHI afterwards is sheer impossible, and implementing other seemingly simple things is pretty adventurous as well. I might implement some more blocktypes, or configurable setting for a future version, but not much else. Thanks for your understanding.

1.9 Eyes

The game has virtual spectators in the form of eyes. When some relevant action takes place the eyes will open and follow the action. If a lot is going on the eyes become amused (they flash) and will reward a bonus after the ball has gone.

- There are four eyes, and a maximum of 4 simultanious balls in play. Each eye is especially amused by a certain ball. In addition:

- Top-left eye is especially amused by frequency of bat hitting bat, and by top-info display.

- Top-right eye is especially amused by right scoreboard, and by top-info display.

- Right eye is especially amused by the bonus counter, the scoreboard and by hitting the right border.

- Bottom eye is especially amused by the bottom score counters.

1.10 Energy

The right side of the screen contains an energybar. Whenever the field is open (i.e. right border is hit 10 times) the energy level will slowly raise (there is some radioactive radiation involved or something - include you favourite class-B movie script here). The energy level will also raise a bit whenever the right border is hit, and will raise a lot whenever you lose a ball and degrade to the previous level.

When the energylevel reaches maximum, and the ball hits the bat with a certain minimum speed, the bat will explode and be out of

service for about 2 seconds.

The purpose of this energy-mumbo is to prevent longthreaded loose-and-recover-ball sitations that sometimes occured in poing 3 and before.

High-energy has the side-effect of releasing energy-bolts when the ball hits something. This has no particulair function besides looking cool.

1.11 Balltrap

- When a ball is trapped in a trap-block during multiball, that ball will be trapped until the other ball is gone. During this balltrap, a continious bonus (5 pts) is rewarded every 'tick' (~0.7 seconds).

1.12 Star bonus

The star bonus is rewarded when the last ball is lost, or when a star-bonus block (double arrow up) is hit. The bonus collected is 100 for the first star, and 20 more for each succesive star. For example: 3 stars = 100 + 120 + 140 = 360.

1.13 The Level Editor

Introduction

Overview

Tutorial (sort of)

Advanced Options

1.14 Editor Introduction

The poing 5 level editor is relatively easy to work with, but not exactly a polished application. Some knowledge of hexadecimal data is required for example. If you're uncomfortable with this: sorry.

1.15 Editor Overview

The level editor allows you to create your own (surprise) levelsets.
This levelset will be protected by a keyfile, which is generated
each time a levelset is saved.

The keyfile is a permit to modify a levelset. You typically distribute
*.levels and keep *.key for yourself.

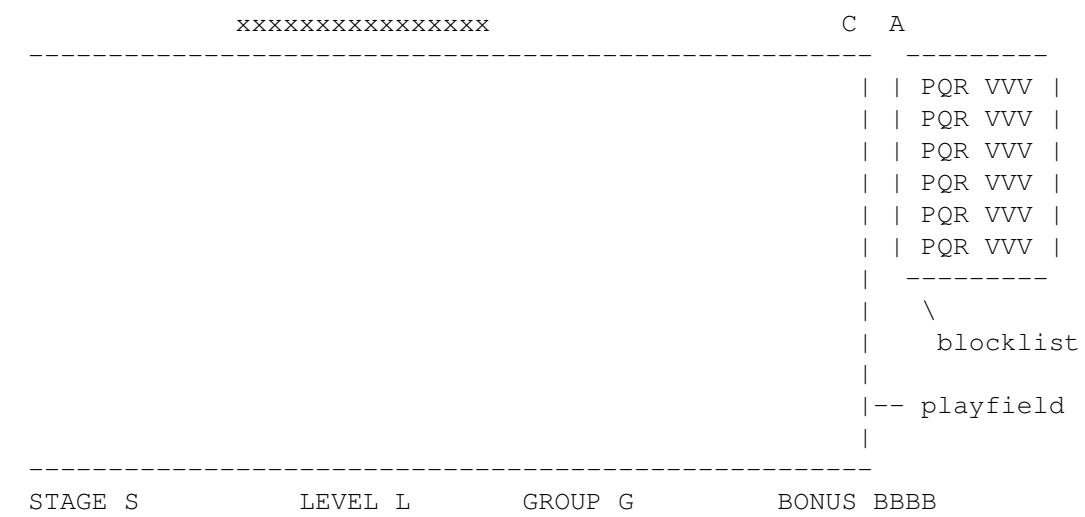
1.16 Editor Tutorial

To begin with, you cannot edit the default poing 5 levels, or any other
levels that you don't own the keyfile of. For this tutorial we'll use a
new levelfile. Start poing with:

```
poing5 -fMyLevels
```

This will create MyLevels.levels (and MyLevels.scores & MyLevels.key) in
the current directory. Pressing E from the main menu will take you to the
editor.

The editor screen looks something like:



Legenda:

xxxx	Message display.
C	Current block for drawing.
A	Armour (number of hits required) of grey blocks.
PQR	3 blocktype (plus 2 hidden) in 6 colors.
VVV	Scoring value associated to a block of this color.
S	The current stage (A..H).
L	The current level (1..8) within this stage.
G	The current group within this level (A..P).
B	The bonus value associated with the current group.

-=-= Drawing Blocks =-=-

To draw a block simply select a block from the blocklist with the left mouse button (LMB). Click anywhere in the playfield with the LMB to place the block. Use the right mouse button (RMB) to erase a block.

* Note: the leftmost column can't be used. The editor will display blocks here, but they won't be stored in the level database.

-=-= About Groups =-=-

When you put a block in the playfield you'll notice a black spot on the block. This is the group mark. When - during play - all the blocks in a group have gone, the group will re-appear and a bonus will be rewarded. This bonus can be defined from the editor screen by pressing B followed by a 4-digit value (use leading zeroes if needed, i.e. 0250).

There are 16 groups per level, named A upto P. To select a group press G followed by the groupletter. As an alternative use '>' to select the next, or '<' to select the previous group.

-=-= Block Values =-=-

The value that a block scores depends on it's color. There are seven colorgroups (actually 6 + 1, the 1st color is always grey). To associate a score value to a color, click the desired colorgroup in the blocklist and press V followed by a 3-digit value (use leading zeroes if needed).

-=-= Colors =-=-

To modify the block colors click on the desired colorgroup and press C. Numeric keypad 4 and 6 will select the previos/next color out of a palette of 64. As an alternative you can enter the character associated with this color. This character is shown in the message display, and consists of the ascii value of the color (0..63) + 64. Numeric keypad 8 and 2 will select the previous/next color group.

The first color can't be altered, it's always grey.

-=-= Storing a level =-=-

To store the fruits of your work press S to store the level. This will store the level in memory only. Use Shift-S to actually save the levels to disk. This will create/update <file>.levels and <file>.key, where <file> stands for the name specified with the commandline option -f.

NOTE: make regular backup of your levelsets (including the keyfile) prior to editing them. If anything goes wrong (tm) during the datasave with EITHER the data- or keyfile, you can start over again. Needless to say that I won't respond to "my keyfile is corupt - help!" emails :)

If you make a fatal mistake in a leveldesign, you can go back to the previous stored version by pressing U (for Undo, naturally).

-=-= Da Bugs =-=-

If you play around with groups and stuff a bit, you'll notice that certain blocks appear to be something else. Don't worry, this is a bug by yours truly. This is a visula bug - the data is still intact.

-=-= Block Types =-=-

Ok, take a deep breath before reading on because the following section is boring :-)

There are 3 columns of blockts visible in the blocklist.

Basic block #1

The leftmost block is the plain simple hit-and-disappear block.
It is however one of the most important blocks, because this is the only block that can cover option blocks (like [S]low, [B]all, etc.)

Exception for grey block here (colorgroup 1): this block needs to be hit several times before it disappears. How many depends depends on the armour settings. To define the armour setting press A followed by 1-9.
Also, the grey block never covers option blocks.

Basic block #2

This one needs two hits before it disappears.

Exception for grey block (colorgroup 1): this block is indestructable!

Note
Basic block #3

Score a bonus instead of a direct score.

There are two more basic blocktypes (added in poing 2). The first can be selected by clicking on the first digit of the block value, the second one by clickin on the second digit.

Basic block #4

This block is initially invisible. When hit it will appear as a normal block (#1).

Basic block #5

This brick-wall alike block needs several hits. It does however break neighbour-bricks when hit. The intensity of this domino effect depends on the number of stars that a player has collected.

From poing 3 on, more blocks are introduced. They can be selected from witihin the editor by pressing Tab, followed by the appropriate letter.

Special block #1 - Mobile Block (Tab-A)

This block will move depending on the side on which is was hit. If it can't move any further it will explode.

Special block #2 - Ball Trap (Tab-B)

This block temporarily holds a ball and relaunches it in a random direction. If there are other balls in play the ball will be kept and score a bonus for as long as it's held.

Special block #3 - Accelerate (Tab-C)

This block temprarily accelerates the ball.

Special block #4 - Potential Accelerate (Tab-D)

This is the potential version of special block #3. Potential blocks don't appear until an entire group has gone. Potential blocks can be identified in the editor screen by having a darker bottom half.

Special block #5 - SwapXY (Tab-E)

This block swaps the X-speed of a ball with it's Y-speed, effectively changing the balls direction as if it hits a 45 degree angle.

Special block #6 - Potential SwapXY (Tab-F)

Potential version of #5.

Special block #7 - Diamond (Tab-G)

Diamonds are the only 'move-through' blocks. They score a bonus instead
of a direct score.

Special block #8 - Potential Diamond (Tab-H)

Potential version of #7.

Special block #9 - Expander (Tab-I)

When hit, this block expands diagonal in 4 normal (Basic type #1) blocks.

Special block #10 - Closed Trap (Tab-J)

This is a closed-balltrap block. Normally unused, although it may serve
as an indestructable wall.

Special block #11 - Indestructable (Tab-K)

This block can only be killed by sparkles from nearby explosions. This
block itself explodes, usually generating a snowball effect.

Special block #12 - Power Bounce (Tab-L)

Accelerates and bounces the ball back in a random direction.

Special block #13 - Potential Power Bounce (Tab-M)

Potential version of #12.

Special block #14 - Potential Balltrap (Tab-N)

Potential version of #2.

Special block #15 - Potential Expander (Tab-O)

Potential version of #9.

Special block #16 - Potential Invisible block (Tab-P)

```
Potential version of basic block #4.


Special block #17 - Potential Mobile block (Tab-Q)
--------------------------------------------------

Potential version of #1.


Special block #18 - Potential Brick block (Tab-R)
-------------------------------------------------

Potential version of basic block #5.


Special block #19 - One-way block (Tab-S)
-----------------------------------------

Can only be killed by being hit from the right.


Special block #20 - Magnet (Tab-T)
----------------------------------

This block attracts the ball. Upto 8 magnets may be defined per level.


Special block #21 - Bomb (Tab-U)
--------------------------------

Explodes heavily when hit. Can usually be found near 'indestructable'
blocks (#11).


Still reading this? On to the
                 Advanced Editor Options
                .
```

1.17 List of changes between poing 4 to poing 5

```
 * Builtin level editor.

 * New level set.

 * 4 builtin fonts, selectable by the level designer: old font (poing 1-2-3),
   poing 4 font, and 2 new fonts (bold & italic style).

 * Extensive error checking with appropriate error/warning screens.

 * Endgame-random-digit-match-extra-ball-chance thingy. (remember pinball?)

 * Info display (top of screen) made adjustable: old style (single height),
   poing 4 style (double height bars) and new style (double height solid).
```

* Solved a bug in the bonus reward: points above 10,000 were not added
  to the score in poing 4 !

* Titlescreen completely rewritten, being subject to text/font/color
  choice of leveldesigner. Also multithreads :)

* User-option screen rewritten from scratch.

* Added several configuration screens to the editor.

* Variable title screen font/colors/text.

* Variable in-game font/colors.

* Variable number of stages (1 upto 8).

* Variable number of levels (1 upto 8).

* Variable stage bonus (0 upto 1590)

* Variable level-shuffle method (poing 2 or poing 4 style).

* Mobile block type.

* Indestructable/exploding block type.

* Exploding bomb block type.

* Magnetic block type.

* Less solid looking energy bar.

* Trapped ball now generates a peak-shape in the line-art 'lasershow'.

* New titlemusic.

* Removed a bug in the audio code that could produce an enforcer read-hit.

* Removed a bug in the audio handling resulting in short dropouts.

* Reworked some of the audio instruments.

* Several small code optimizations.

* Eye-amusement factors have been slightly retuned.

* Acceleration of accelerating blocktypes is slightly dimmed.

* Time between natural ball speedups is slightly stretched.

* 'degradation' ball speed is somewhat slower.

* Amiguide documentation.

1.18 A note about indestructable blocks

NEVER place indestructable blocks in the rightmost part of the
playfield because this can lock up the game.

Indestructable blocks can also produce seemingly endless
situations, for example when an Y-option is hit. The game engine
however detects such 'loops' after some time, and will respond with
a new random ball angle in such cases.

1.19 Advanced Editor Options

Pressing 'O' within the editor screen presents a menu with mostly
options new to poing 5.

1. Global visual settings

2. Game visual settings

3. Game functional settings

4. Text

1.20 Global Visual Settings

You find color and font settings here. Colors apply mostly to the
titlescreen and are pretty self explanatory. Note that the menu
text and option colors also define the in-game label & digit
colors.

Click here for an explanation of the
fonts
.

As with all/most menus, the data-entry is in hex. Numpad 8 and 2 move
the cursor up and down. Numpad 6 and 4 increment/decrement the value
by 1. You can also enter a 2-digit hex number manually. If this doesn't
work you probably have the CapcLock enabled ;)

Values of 00 will result in internal hardcoded substitutes. Some of
these 'factory setting' may change in a future version (if any), so
don't rely on them completely.

1.21 Fonts

```
The following fonts are available:

 01   The original Poing 1-2-3 (sounds like a spreadsheet no? :)) font.
      Thin and square.

 02   The Poing 4 font.

 03   A new font for Poing 5: bold, with 'tech-digits'.

 04   Another new font for Poing 5: italic.
```

1.22 Game Visual Settings

```
The font settings do what you expect. The Info Display Mode need
some explanation:

 01   Poing 4 mode: double height horizontal bar display.
 02   Poing 5 mode: double height solid display.
 03   Poing 1 mode: single height.
```

1.23 Game Functional Settings

```
 * Levels Per Stage
   Since Poing 5 selectable from 1 upto 8.

 * Number Of Stages
   Since Poing 5 selectable from 1 upto 8.

 * Stage Bonus Value
   This is a tricky hexadecimal/bcd value. Treat this value as a
   'binary coded decimal value', with the addition that the leftmost
   digit may be above 9. Multiply the result by 10 and you have the
   stage bonus value :)

   Examples:

   01 -> 10
   0A -> Illegal!
   12 -> 120
   A2 -> 1020
   F9 -> 1590, the maximum bonus value.

 * Level Randomizer Method.
   Selects whether the shuffle is global, i.e. applies to all levels,
   or apllies only to the levels played so far.

       00   Global
       01   Up to played
```

1.24 Text

LEVEL NAME and AUTHOR are editable text that appear in the titlescreen.

1.25 Main Menu

S - Starts the game.

R - Randomizes the levels, then starts the game.
Note: this randomizing is permanent. If you play a normal after a random game, the levels will be in the last played order.

O - @{ "Options " link mainopts}.

E -
Editor
. You need a valid keyfile for this else no go.

1 - Highscore table for skill level 1.

2 - Highscore table for skill level 2.

3 - Highscore table for skill level 3.

4 - Highscore table for skill level 4.

5 - Highscore table for skill level 5.

6 - What those blocks do...

7 - What those blocks do part 2.

8 - Score history.

Q - Quit game.

1.26 Main Options

M - Mode. Toggles between one and two player mode.

A - Player 1 skill. Basicly defines the initial speed. Setting ranges from 1 upto 5.

B - Player 2 skill.

1 - Player 1 control. Mouse or computer controlled.

2 - Player 2 control.

Space, Enter or Esc to leave this menu.

1.27 History

```
* 17-aug-97   Poing 5.02
  - fixed a keyfile issue.
  - levels included (this was accidently forgotten in the 5.00 archive ;))
  - made some changes/additions to the manual.

* 14-aug-97   Poing 5.00

* 01-jan-97   Poing 4

* ??-???-??   Poing 3

* ??-???-94   Poing 2

* ??-???-92   Poing 1
```