FREELANCE · GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT & UI

Herd

A one-versus-one rhythm battle RPG for mobile. Freelance assignment in three steps: starting from an existing client prototype, I wrote the game design document that turned the idea into a playable system, then designed the interface that applies it — a full set of near-final screens covering battle, collection, crafting, deck building and ranked progression.

TYPE
Freelance assignment — game design document & UI design (Figma)

ROLE
Game design, system design, UX, UI, documentation

STARTING POINT
Existing client prototype (shown for context, not my work)

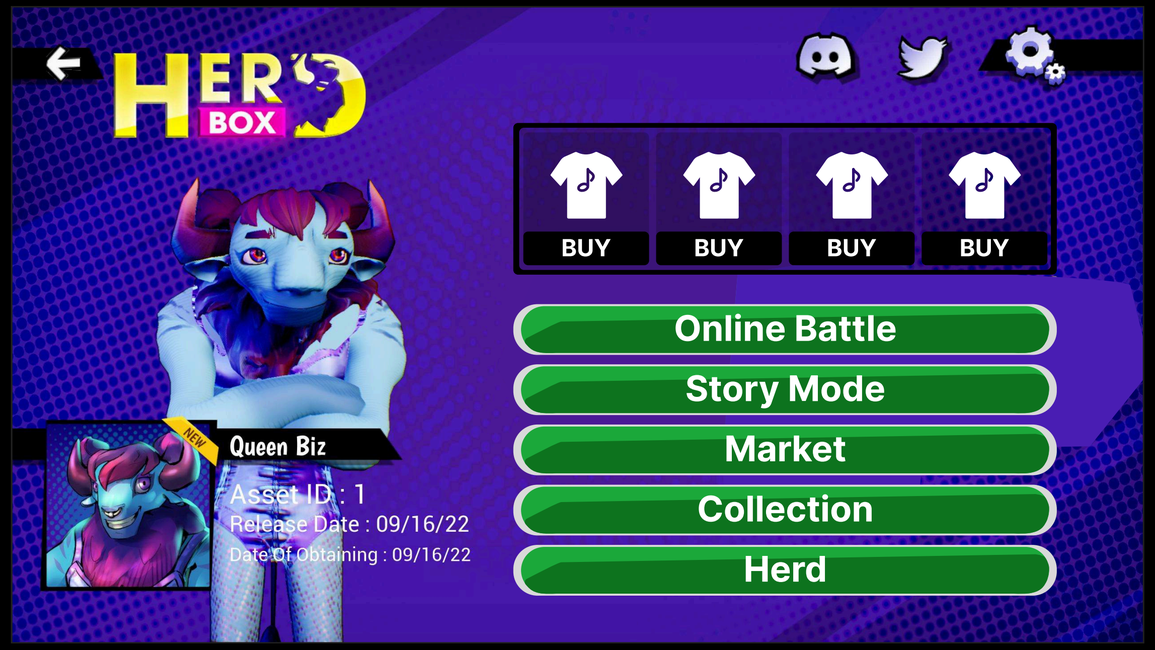
SCOPE
~240 screens, landscape mobile

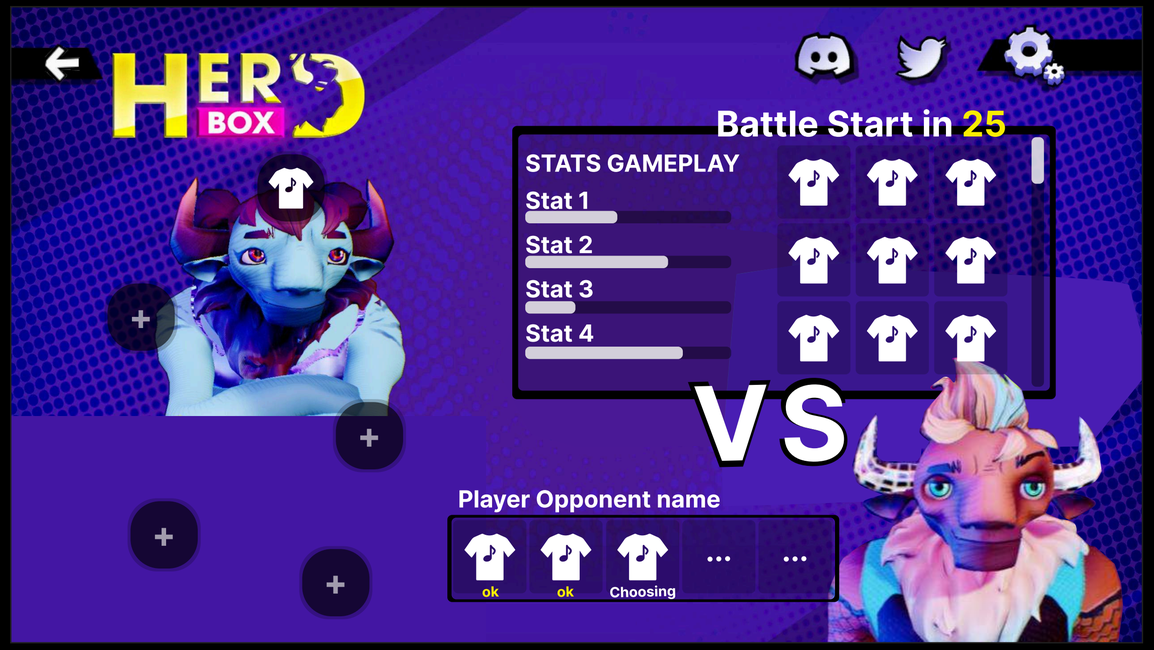
CURRENT STATUS
The project was later rebooted and now ships on Steam. The screens in this document are the mobile version as it stood then.

01

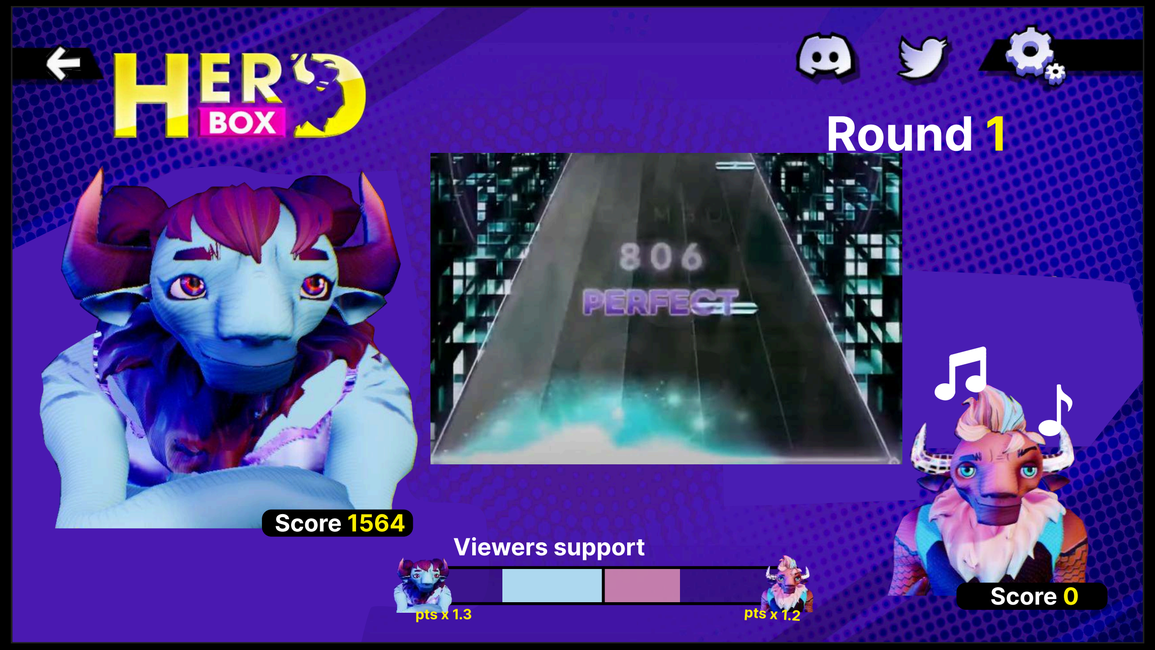
Starting point — existing prototype

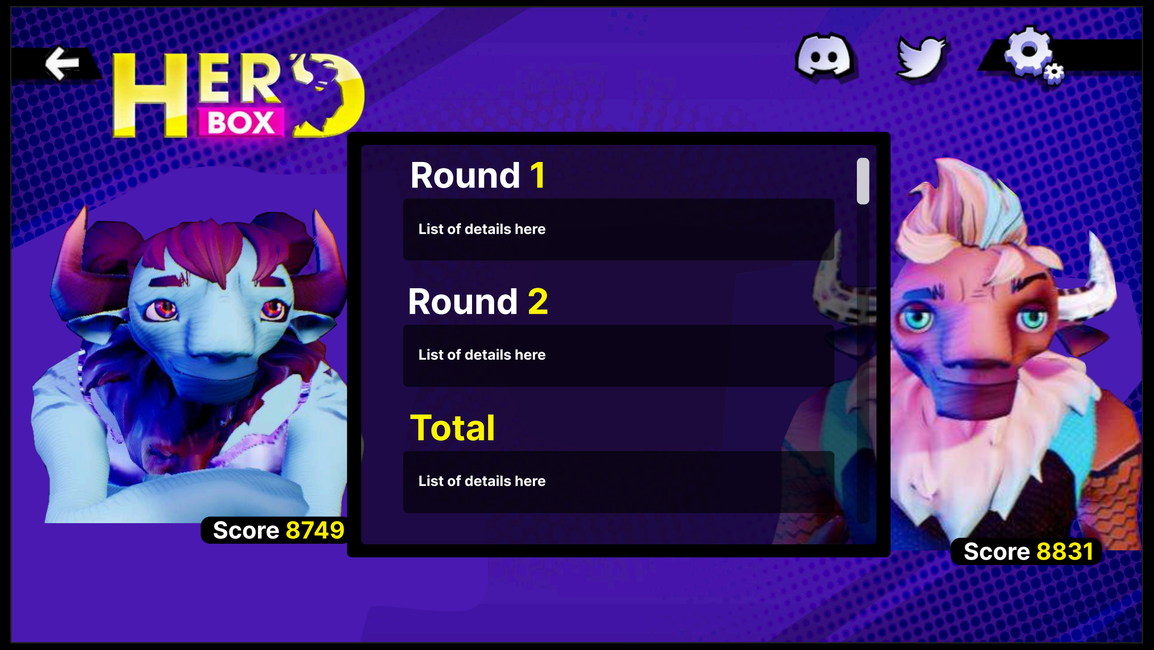
The client arrived with a working prototype of the battle client. These screens are shown for context: they set the constraints the design document had to work within.





Prototype — main menu and the pre-battle screen with both players' sample loadouts.



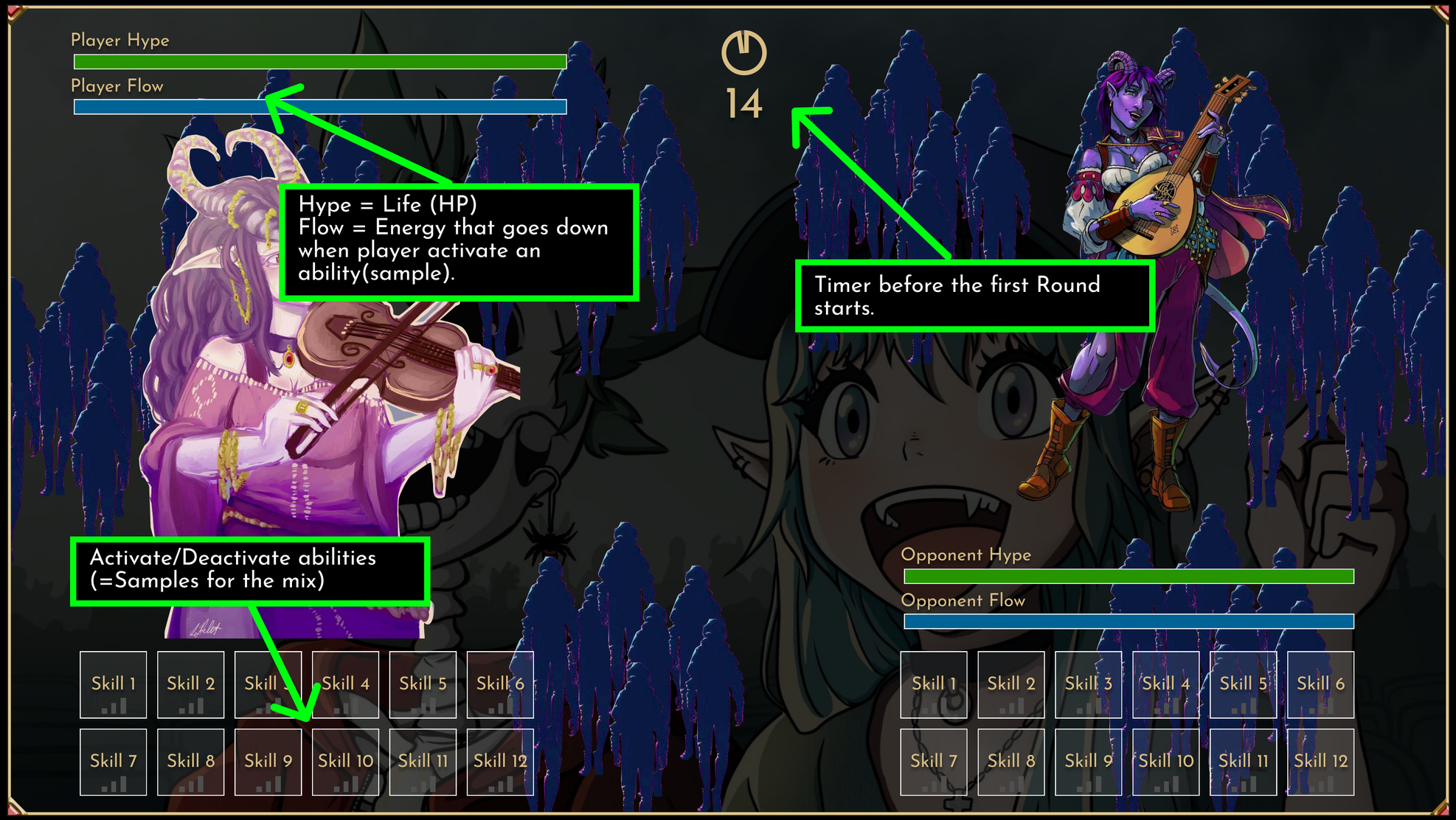


Prototype — a round in progress with the viewer-support bar, and the end-of-battle results.

02

Game design document

Written to turn the prototype into a system: what each resource does, what the player decides on every bar, and how a round resolves. Annotations sit on top of the prototype so every rule is anchored to a screen.



Hype is life, Flow is the energy spent to activate a sample. Twelve slots hold the abilities the player mixes with; a timer runs before the first round.



Before the round starts the player has a few seconds to arm the samples they want to open with.



During their turn the player switches samples on and off; each change plays or stops from the next measure.

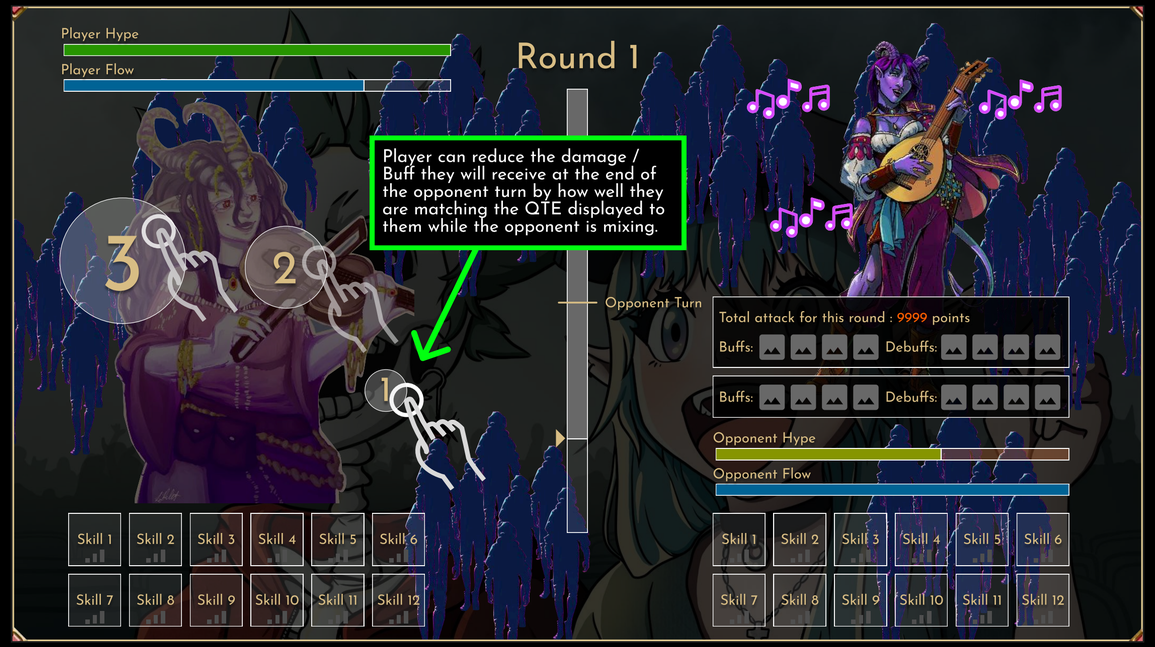


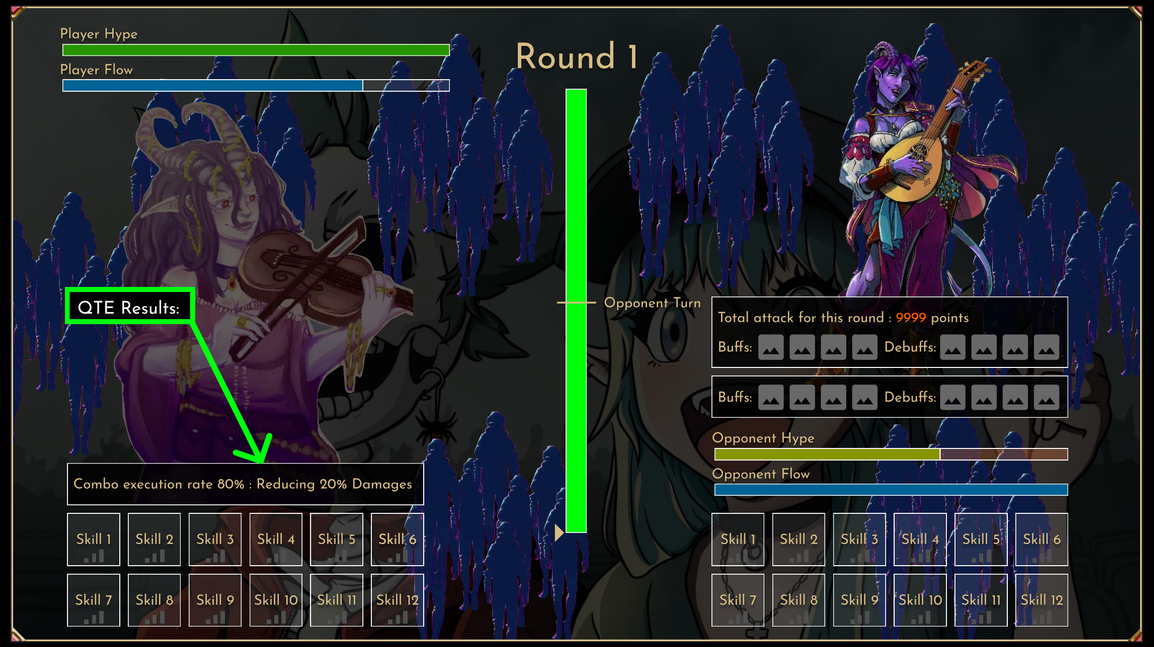


Swipe up to intensify a sample — a richer musical layer at a higher Flow cost; swipe down to simplify it and recover Flow.

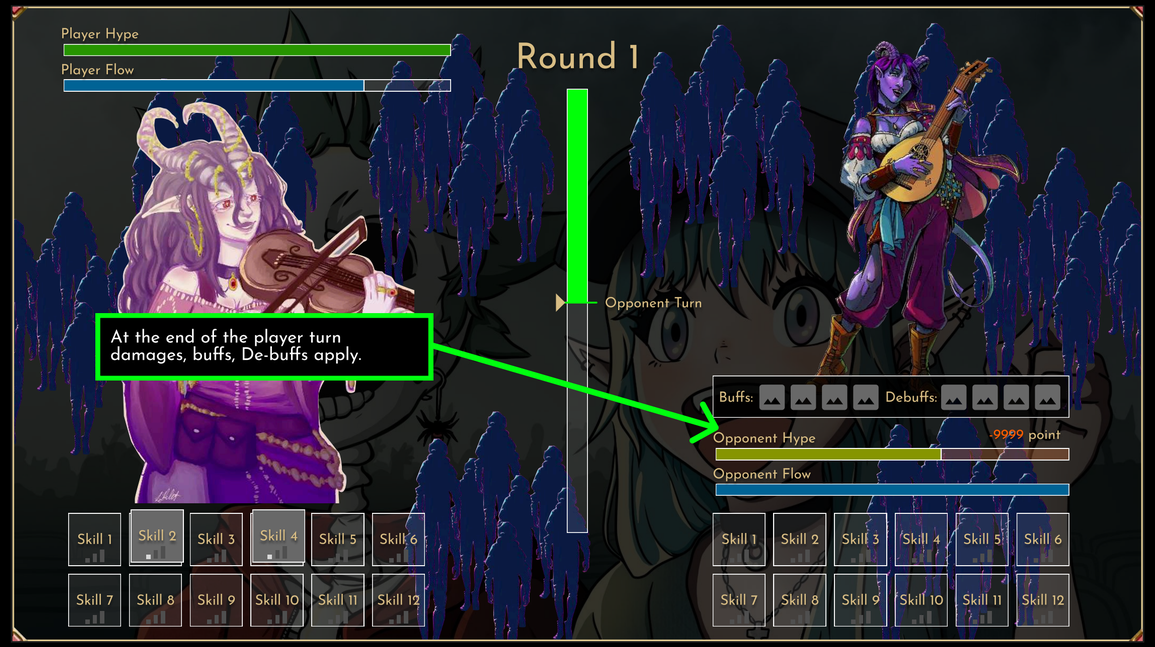


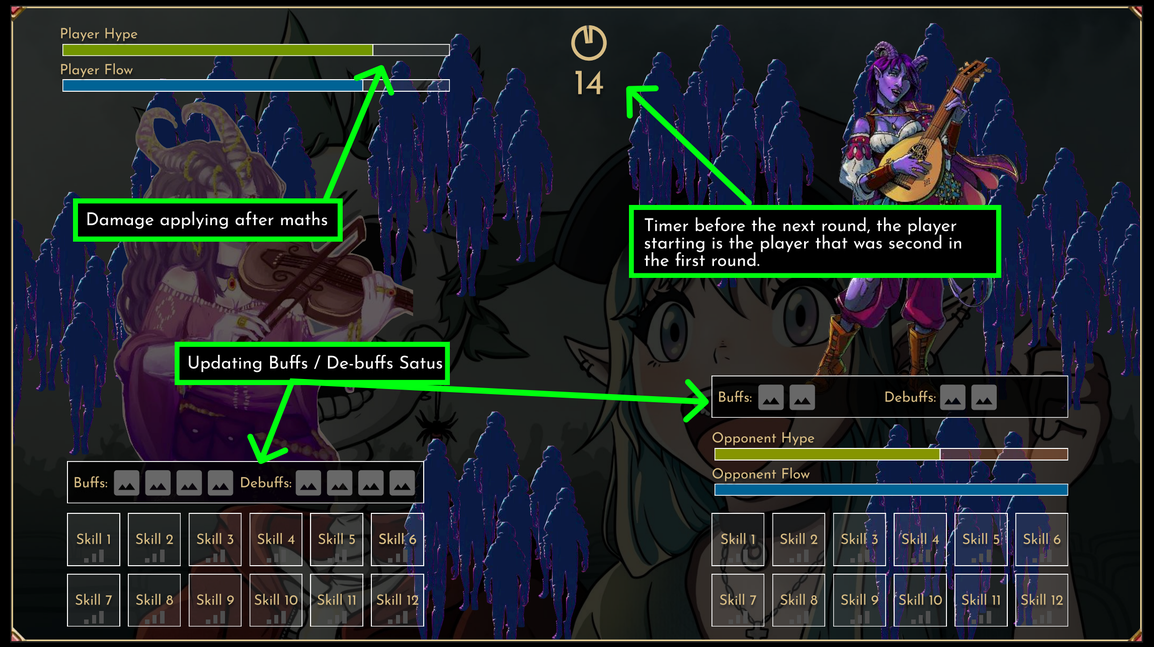
Mixing accumulates attack, buffs and debuffs, shown as a running total for the round.



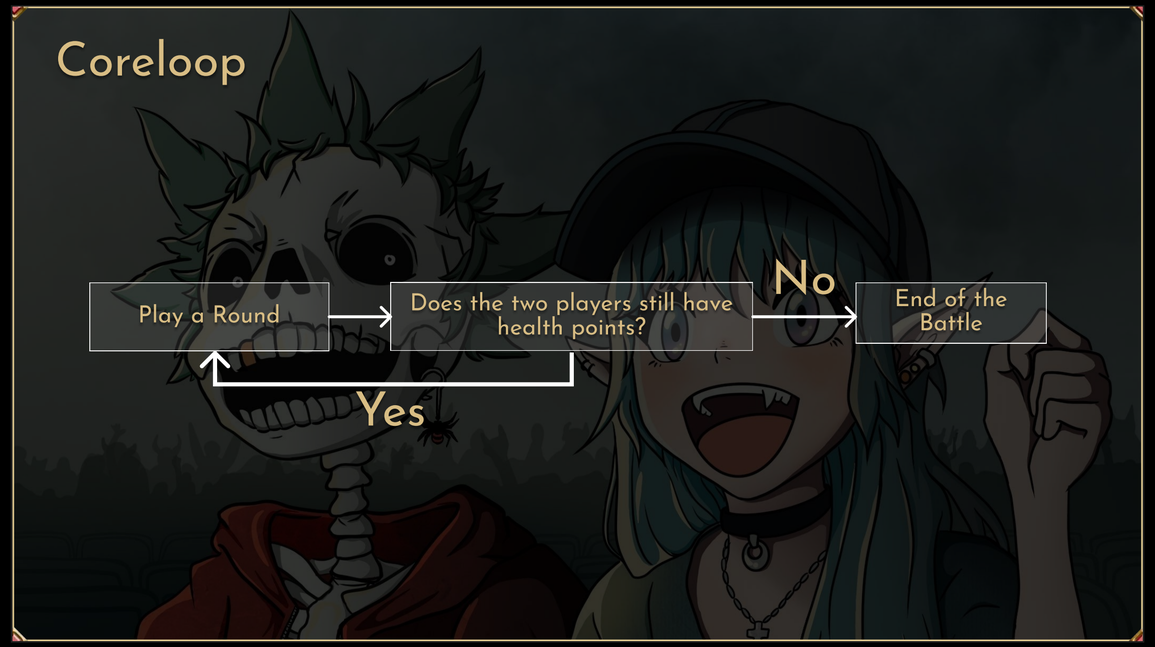


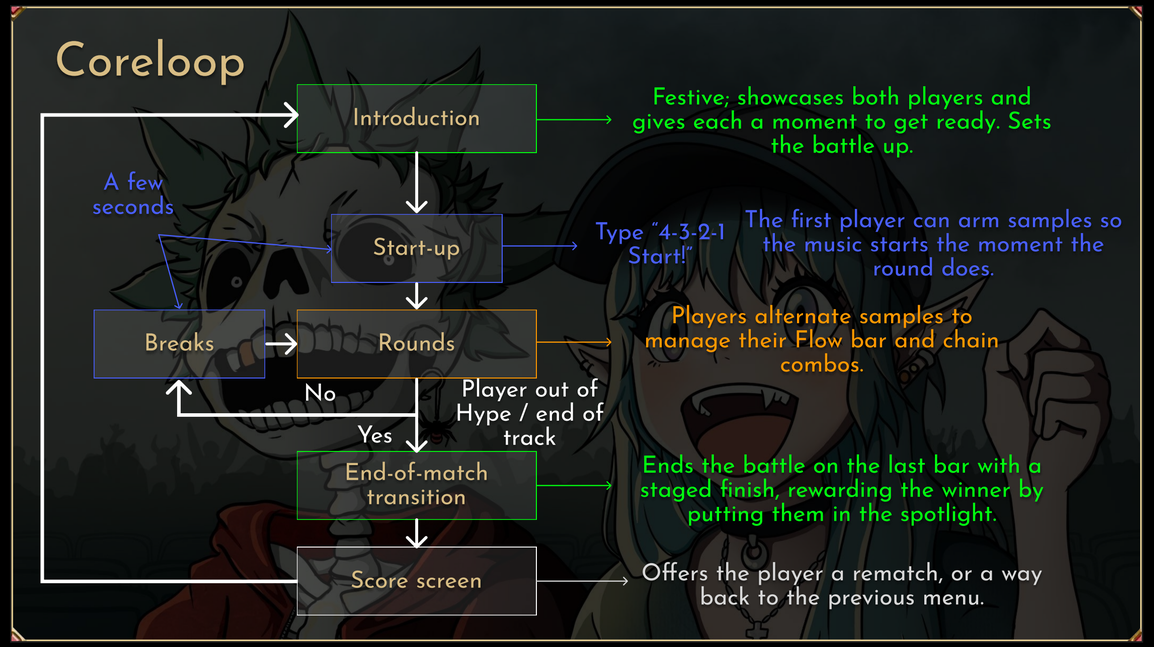
While the opponent mixes, matching the QTE reduces incoming damage and buffs — 80% execution here means 20% less damage.





At the end of a turn damage, buffs and debuffs apply; after the maths a timer runs and the player who went second now starts.





The loop as state machines: the minimal version, and the detailed one — introduction, start, rounds and breaks, end transition, score screen.

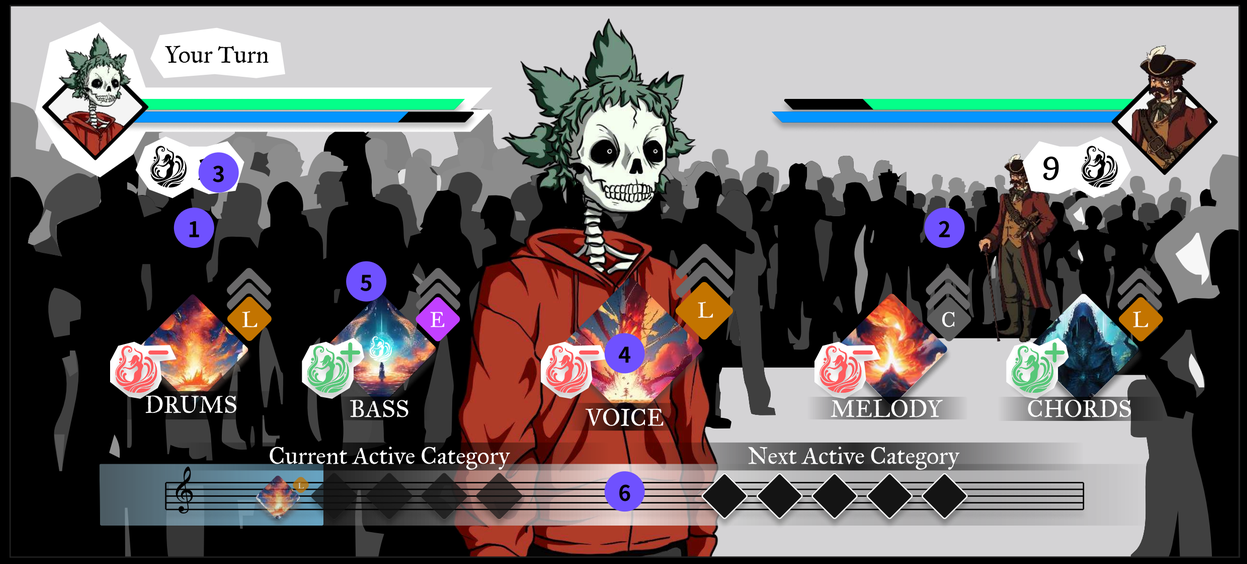
03

Applied UI — the battle

The document turned into an interface. Landscape mobile, near-final: every rule written in part 02 has a place on screen, and every state the loop can be in has a screen of its own.

Battle HUD — anatomy

1. Player Hype and Flow — life above, energy below. Flow drains as samples are activated and intensified, and is the reason a player cannot simply switch everything on.
2. Opponent Hype and Flow — mirrored, always visible, so the decision to push or hold is taken against a readable enemy state.
3. Turn indicator — "Your Turn" or "Enemy Turn". The same HUD serves both; only this label, the lighting and the input rights change.
4. Sample slots by musical category — Drums, Bass, Voice, Melody, Chords. Categories rather than a flat list, so the mix stays musically coherent whatever the player owns.
5. Rarity and cost badge — L / E / C / S on each slot, the bridge between the collection economy and the battle.
6. Currently Playing / Playing Next — the bar timeline. Any change the player makes applies from the next measure, so this strip is where the whole game's tempo is read.



One screen carries the resources, the turn, the loadout, the economy and the tempo at once. Nothing is behind a menu during a round: the entire decision space is visible while the music plays.

Entering a battle

1 · INTRO



2 · SELECTION TIME



3 · ROUND 1 !



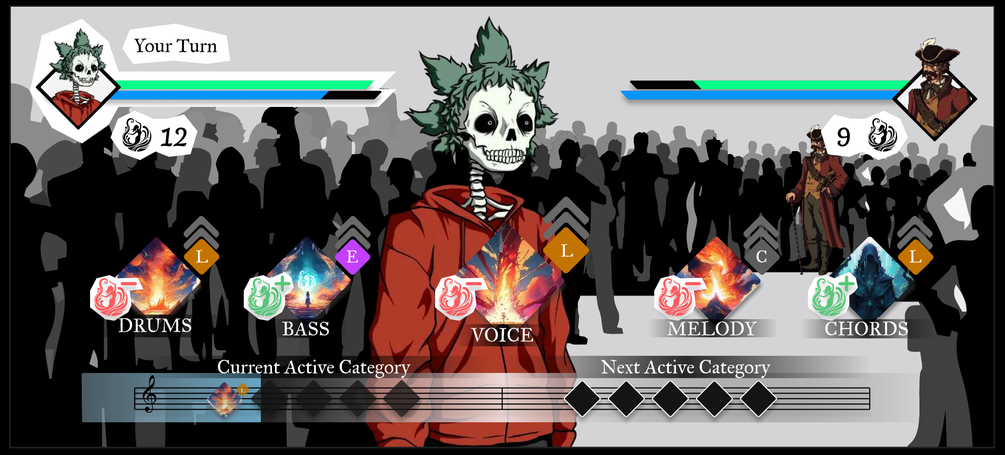
4 · YOUR TURN



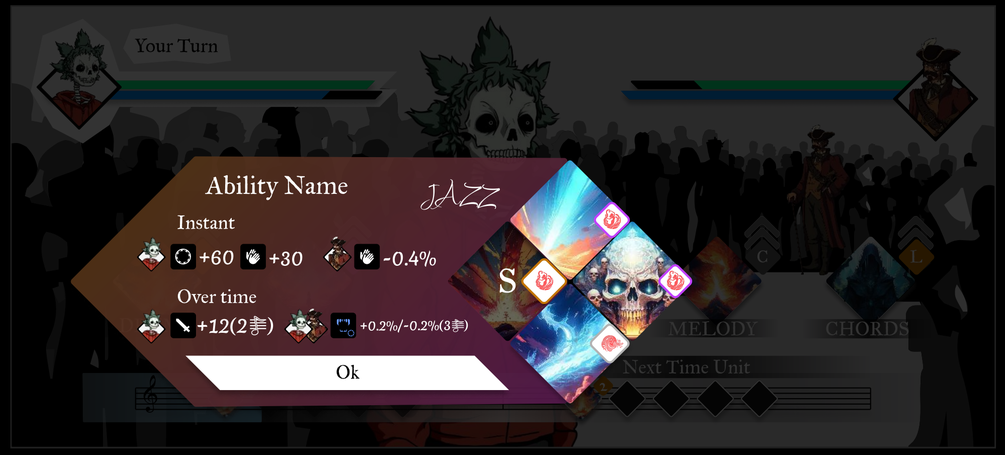
Entering a battle. The intro presents both fighters in front of the crowd; selection time gives 30 seconds to arm the six sample categories, with a "1st Round Autoplay" fallback for players who do not decide in time; the round is announced full-screen, then the HUD takes over.

Turn states

YOUR TURN



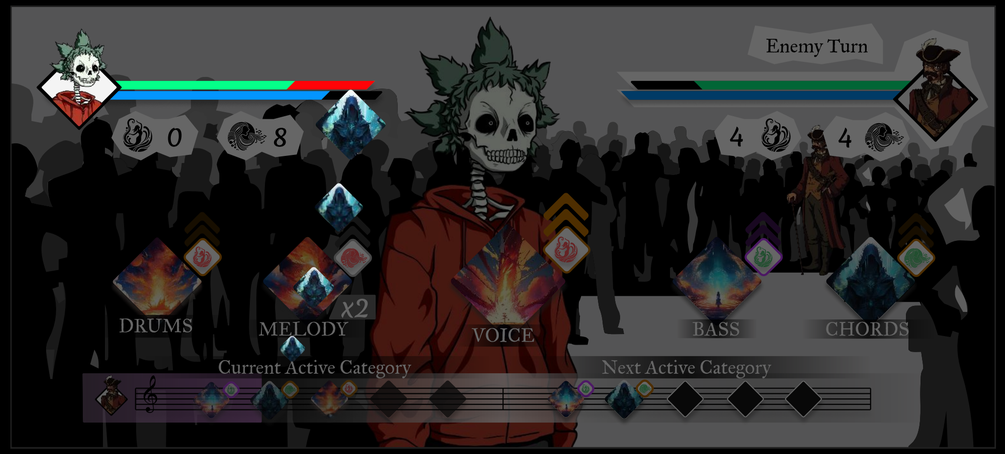
ABILITY DETAIL



SWITCH PANEL — UNAVAILABLE SAMPLES



ENEMY TURN



The states a turn can be in. Selecting a slot opens the ability detail — name, genre, instant versus over-time effects and their exact values. The switch panel lists the six categories and greys out what the player cannot afford, so the Flow constraint is learned rather than discovered. On the enemy turn the whole HUD dims and input rights move across.

Inside a round

MIXING



BUFFS / DEBUFFS



BREAK



ROUND 2



Inside a round: the mix builds up with multipliers on the active categories, buffs and debuffs accumulate on both sides, the break resolves them and hands the first turn to the other player, and round 2 starts from the new state.

Closing a battle

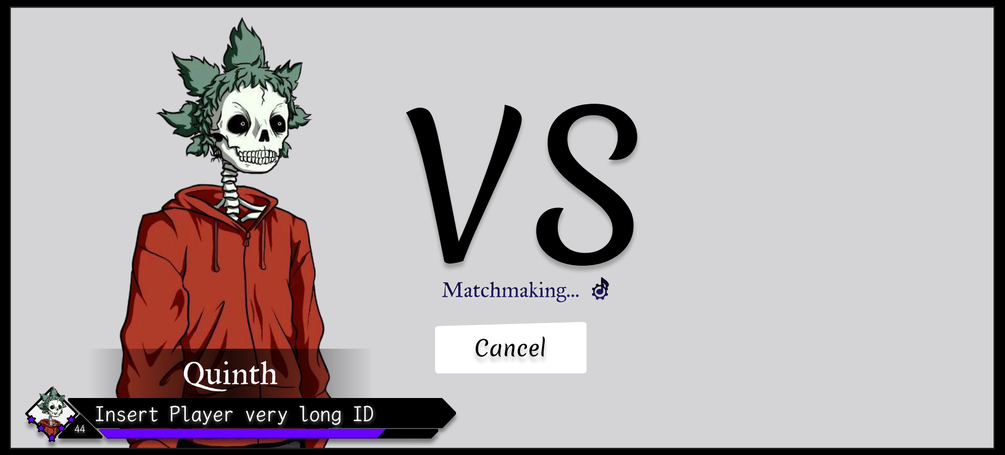
OUTRO



SCORE SCREEN



PLAY AGAIN



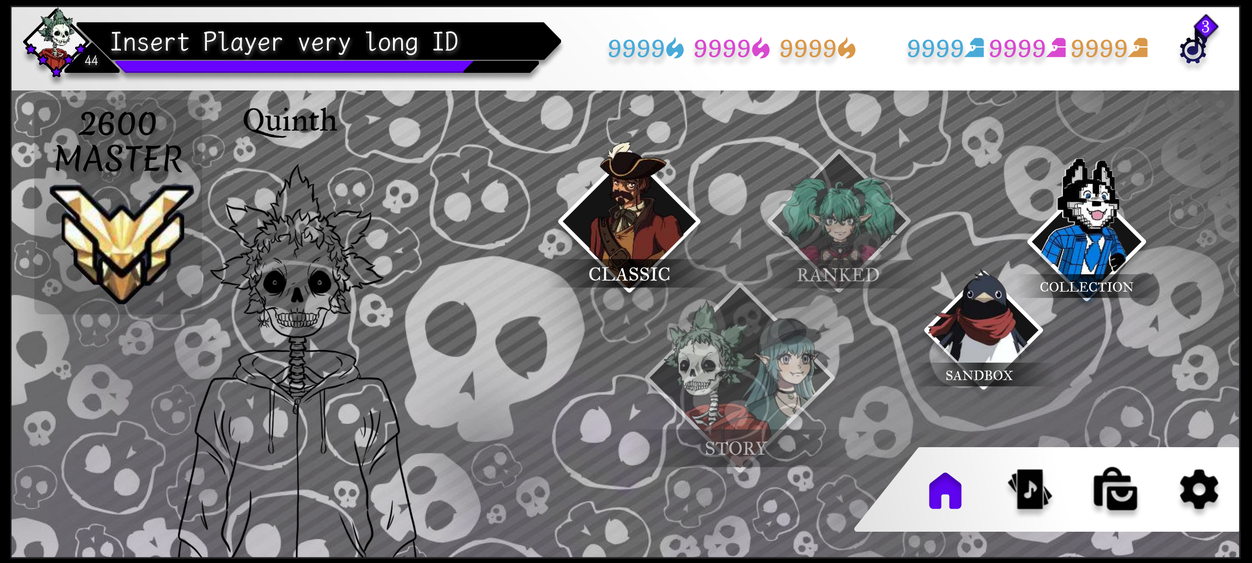
Closing a battle: the outro stages the winner in front of the crowd, the score screen awards experience ("Winner! +503 exp"), and the player is handed straight back into matchmaking — the loop closes without a trip through the menus.

04

Applied UI — meta & progression

Everything around the battle: where the player picks a mode, reads their rank, browses what they own, converts it and builds the loadout they will fight with.

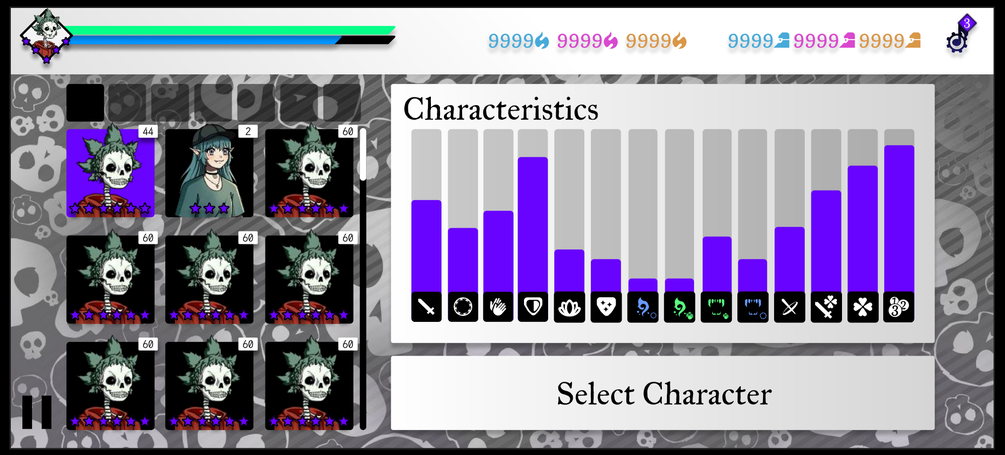
Hub & modes



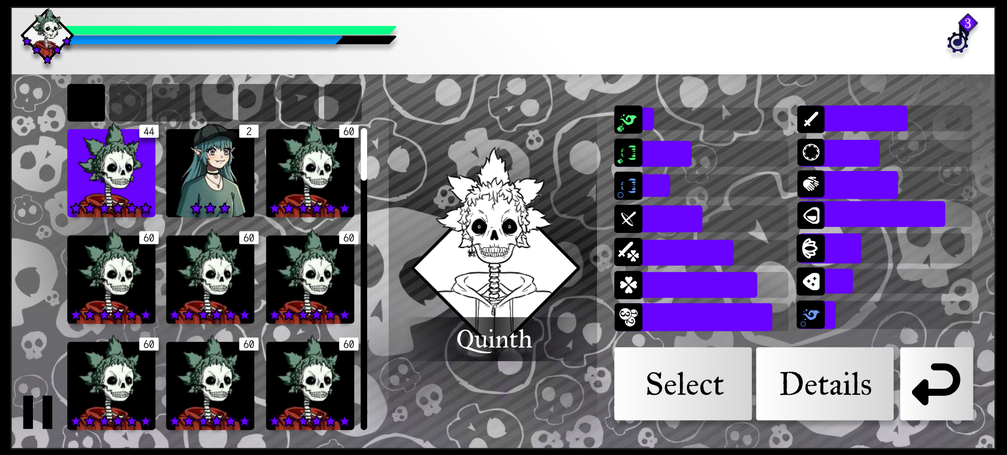
The hub leads with the rank badge (2600 MASTER) and lays the modes out as diamonds — Classic, Ranked, Story, Collection, Sandbox — with a persistent bottom bar for home, deck, shop and settings. Currencies sit in the header on every screen, so their cost is legible wherever the player is.

Collection & characters

COLLECTION — CHARACTER GRID



COLLECTION — DETAIL



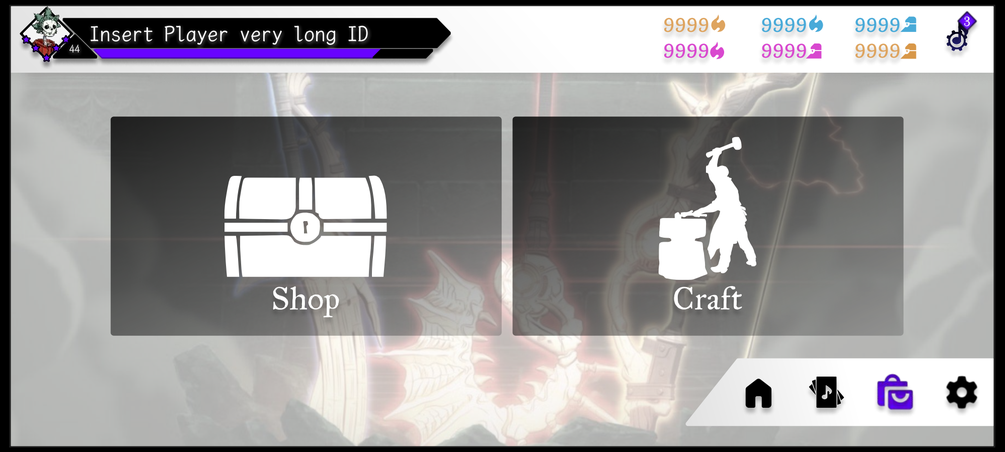
The collection pairs the owned-character grid with a Characteristics read-out: twelve stat bars per character rather than a single power score, so a pick is a shape rather than a number. "Select Character" is the only action, kept full-width at the bottom.

Crafting & conversion

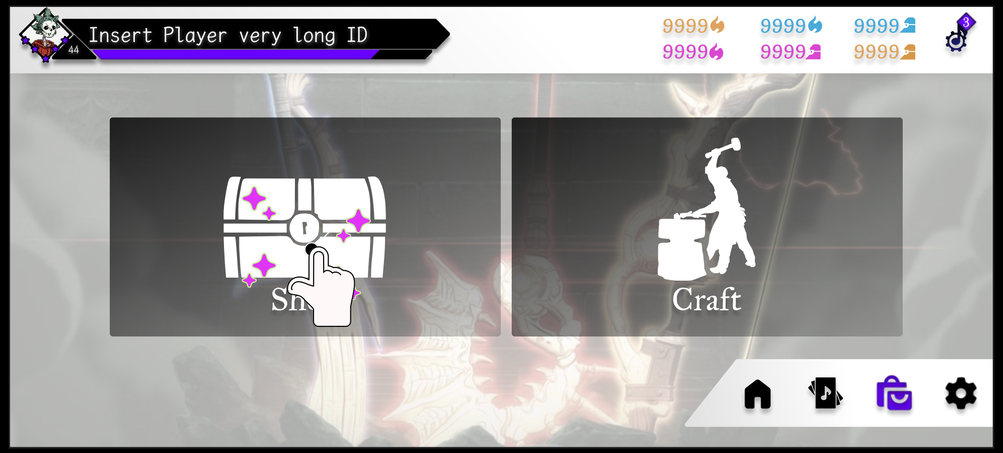
CRAFT — CONVERTER



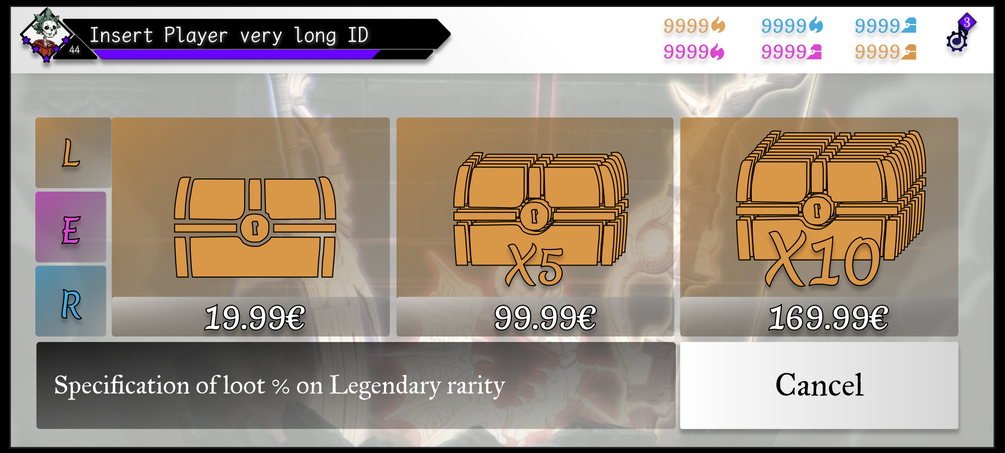
CRAFT — ESSENCES



CRAFT — PARTS



CRAFT — RESULT



The crafting economy: Essences of Soul, of Character and of Abilities, plus Parts of chest, all feeding one Converter. Grouping four resource types around a single verb keeps a deep economy on one screen instead of a menu tree.

Deck builder

BUILDER — CATEGORIES



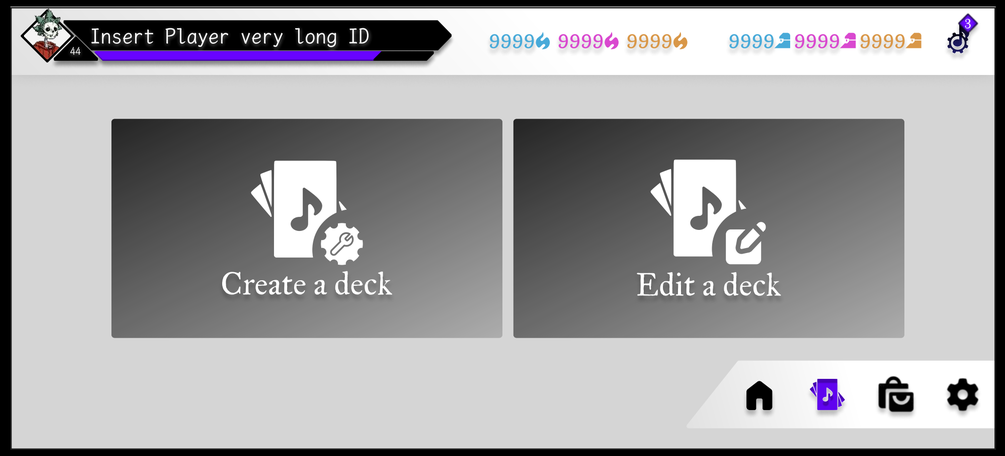
BUILDER — SWAP



BUILDER — PLAYING NEXT



BUILDER — SAVE BUILD



The deck builder mirrors the battle HUD on purpose: the same six categories, the same Currently Playing / Playing Next lanes. What the player arranges here is exactly what they will read under pressure during a round, so the two screens teach each other.

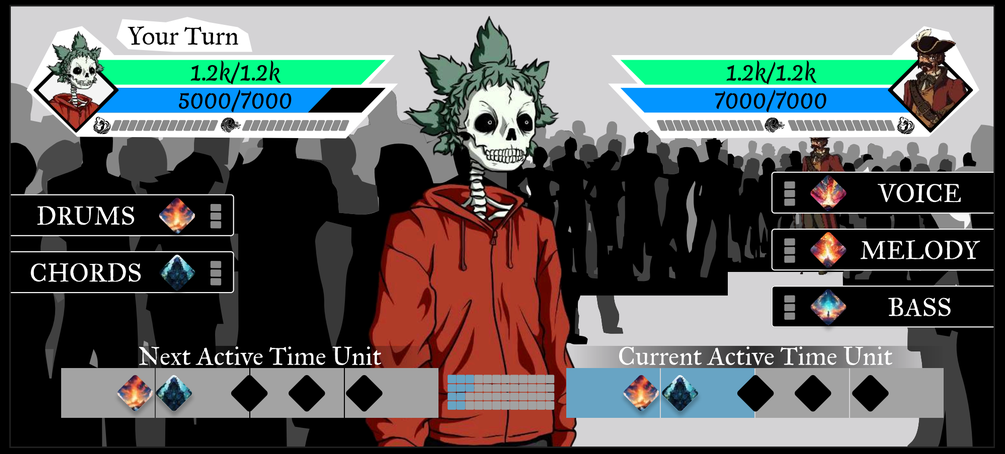
05

Iteration

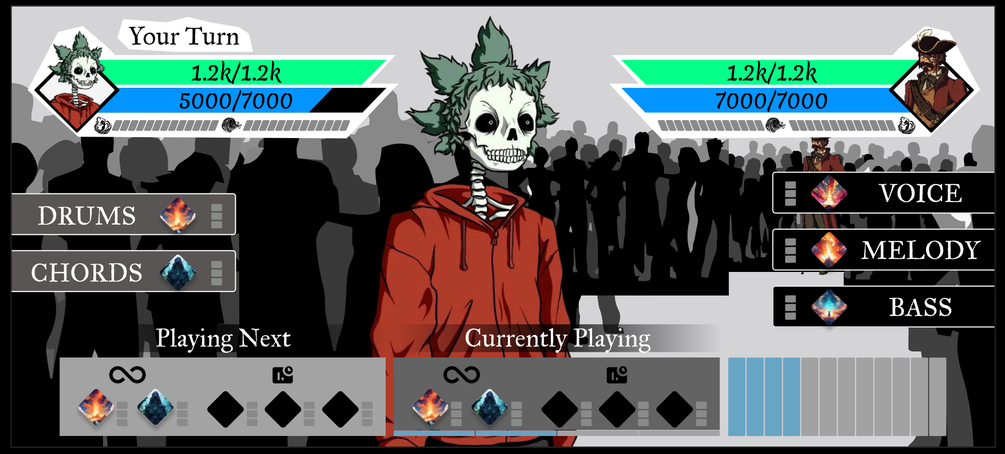
The interface was not found in one pass. These are the alternative directions kept in the file — the same screens re-cut until the battle read at a glance.

Alternative directions

RENEWAL TEST A



RENEWAL TEST B



RENEWAL TEST B — VARIANT



Renewal passes on the battle HUD: the same information re-laid out to pull the sample slots and the timeline closer together, and to make whose turn it is unmistakable at a glance. The version kept in part 03 is the one that survived these tests.

Screen inventory

What the file contains beyond the boards shown here.

Group	Screens	What it covers
Battle — entry	~20	Intro, selection time, battle start, loading, round announcements
Battle — turn states	~45	Your turn, enemy turn, ability detail, switch panel, unavailable samples, buffs & debuffs, in-game touch
Battle — round & break	~20	Round progression, breaks, multipliers, end-game transition
Battle — closing	~12	Outro, score board, winner, play again / matchmaking
Hub & navigation	~25	Main menu, start screen, map / character / arena selection, matchmaking
Collection & craft	~35	Character collection, characteristics, crafting, converter, chest parts
Deck building	~25	Retake Builder, classic mode, freestyle, swap and save flows
Ranked progression	~9	ELO ranking system, rank badges, ladder
Iteration & tests	~30	Renewal tests A and B, TestV series, alternative builder layouts
Total	**~240**	**Landscape mobile, near-final fidelity**

The document shows one board per state family. The full set is available on request.