



PS3 Fighting Game  
1-2 Players

## Concept Doc

**BACKBONE**



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## HIGHLIGHTS:

- Features the amazing martial arts of Tony Jaa in a competitive fighting game
- Unique combat system including 1vs1, 1-vs-group, and group-vs-group fighting
- Martial arts movie feel; the game involves the making of a fictional Tony Jaa action film
- Interactive destructible environments
- Simple control scheme similar Soul Calibur's and Bushido Blade's
- Online play, rankings, tournaments, and recording/sharing gameplay movies
- Substantial tutorial mode teaches you how to become a champion

## INTRODUCTION

Tony Jaa is Thailand's international action star. His break-out performance in the film Ong-Bak proved that his Mui Thai is just as beautiful and deadly as the martial arts of Bruce Lee, Jet Li, or Jackie Chan. Like Jackie Chan in his prime, Tony refuses to use wires or special effects; he performs every stunt and fight sequence himself, the old-fashioned way. In that spirit, we will motion capture moves from Tony (and his team) so that our game is just as authentic as Tony's films.

A fighting game is the perfect showcase for Tony's talents and brand name. Rather than make another 1-on-1 3D fighting game emphasizing only close fighting with high/low attacks (Tekken, Virtua Fighter, Soul Calibur, Dead or Alive), we'd like to better capture the feel of martial arts movies and do something new....

## THE MANY VS. THE ONE

In this game, the player can control a group of characters at once! One player might play as Tony Jaa while the other might pick a pack of 5 ninjas. Or a team of 10 stuntmen could fight the Monkey Lord and her 20 small monkeys. When controlling a group, you can think of each character as another part of "you." Hold forward and the group generally moves forward (not in exact lock-step, but with a little crowd AI). Rather than having attacks tied to your limbs such as "low kick" and "high punch" you have attacks tied to your guys, such as "make the outer-most guys dash-punch toward the enemy from both sides" or "make the front two guys do sliding kicks."

## MAKING A MOVIE

There are many possible story concepts we can use to present a compelling scenario for the game, and we're interested to hear Eidos's suggestions here. For this document, we've prepared a story concept revolving around the creation of a fictional movie, as it gives us great freedom to present various compelling scenarios.

The current story premise of the game is that a dubious director is making a questionable action film starring Tony Jaa called Super Action Battle 2: Knee of Legend. Fights are staged as scenes of the movie, and training mode involves doing several takes before the eccentric director is happy with your performance. The main single-player mode has the player film a series of (mission-based) scenes that are related to this crazy action movie. After fighting packs of ninjas, flying watermelons, legions of monkeys, a beat-up car, and fighting through other seemingly nonsensical situations, the player is rewarded with an intense (and customizable) movie trailer for his own version of Super Action Battle 2: Knee of Legend.

# THE CAST OF CHARACTERS

Tony Jaa, Thai Warrior

The star of the game, the Mui Thai master himself.

Tony Jaa, Elephant Keeper

A different persona of Tony Jaa, more defensive and tender, but with a medium-sized elephant to help him fight.

Jungle Adventure Girl, Treasure Hunter

This world-famous treasure huntress needs no introduction.

Jungle Adventure Girl, Tiger Wrangler

This version of Jungle Adventure Girl has a fierce tiger by her side.

8-armed Buddha Statue

This living statue is adept at fighting multiple enemies. He can grab several enemies at once with his many arms, and smash them together for big damage. Also, it takes several hits to knock the statue out of one of his attacks.



Mui Thai Sisters (2 person team)

Character designs still in progress, but meant to add some sex appeal to the game. The sisters both have a similar fighting style, but each has her own twist on the moves. The player can switch (at any time) which sister is the main fighter and which is in the assist position.

Zangief-like group of 5

Character design still in progress, but this group of 5 characters is capable of doing high damage throws if they can get close enough to the enemy. Generally bad long range attacks.

5 Ninjas

The ninjas are acrobatic and versatile. They are meant to fight from mid-range where their "human projectile" attacks are most effective, as well as their smoke bomb toss.

10 Stuntmen

This is the mass of stuntmen seen in every martial arts movie. They're all dressed the same and have relatively ineffective moves, but their numbers make up for it. These particular stuntmen are adept at setting traps that immobilize enemy characters.

Shapeshifter (can be 1, 2, 5 guys)

The shapeshifter is a magical creature that can shift between 1 entity, 2 entities, and 5 entities.

Boss with minions

This is a classic martial arts boss character who wears elegant red robes, surrounded by his 5 lower skilled minions who wear black. The only way to defeat the Boss is to kill him directly; the minions are just an obstacle. Each minion can die individually if it takes enough damage, eventually leaving the boss all alone.



### Monkey Lord with 20 monkeys

The Monkey Lord serves the Monkey God, but delved too deeply into mysticism. She controls a horde of 20 small monkeys, each one very weak, but powerful as a pack. The individual monkeys cannot actually die, but they are easily injured and must return to the Monkey Lord and rest before re-entering combat.



## CHARACTER TYPES

All the characters fall under one of these general character types.

Character Type	Characters of this Type	Lifebar for this type
Single	Tony Jaa Jungle Adventure Girl 8-armed Statue	Single lifebar
Single with assist(s)	Tony Jaa, Elephant Keeper Jungle Adventure Girl, Tiger Wrangler Monkey Lord	Only the main character has a lifebar
Duo	Mui Thai Sisters	Share a lifebar
Group of X	5 wrestlers 5 ninjas 10 stuntmen	Share a lifebar
Boss with Minions	Boss with Minions	Only main character has a lifebar
Shapeshifter	Shapeshifter	Single lifebar, no matter which form

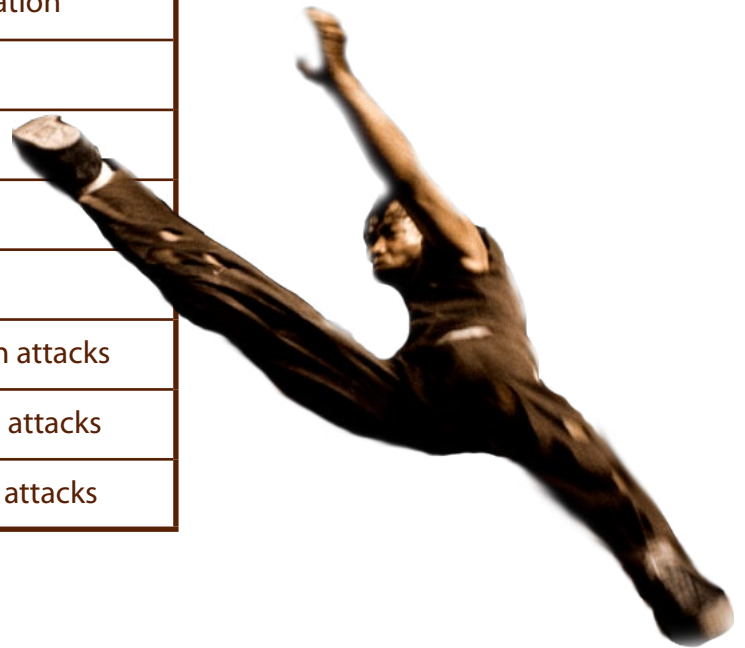


# FIGHTING SYSTEM DETAILS

The core concept is that the player can choose to control a single character (like a normal fighting game) or two characters, or five, or 10, or a girl with a pack of 20 monkeys. The camera angle and basic mechanics of the game are similar to Soul Calibur (high/low blocking, high/mid/low parries, 8-way run), but the ability to control or fight against a group of characters has never been truly explored in the fighting game genre.

## CONTROL LAYOUT

Button	Function
X	Guard
Square	A attack
Triangle	B attack
Circle	C attack
R1	Free run
R2	Switch stance or formation
L1	Not used
L2	Not used
X+Sq	Throw
Cir+Tri	"Burst" attack
ub+X	Reverse incoming high attacks
b+X	Reverse incoming mid attacks
db+X	Reverse incoming low attacks





# WHICH WAY DO YOU FACE?

## DEFAULT MOVEMENT

Like most fighting games, your character always tries to face the enemy character. The so-called 8-way run movement system means that up/down on the d-pad move into/out of the screen. Basically, the player can hold any direction on the d-pad to move along the ground plane in that direction while still facing the enemy. The camera attempts to keep a low side view as much as possible.

Here is how character facing would work in different situations:

### One Character vs A Second Character with an Assist

(E.g.: Tony Jaa vs Jungle Adventure Girl, Tiger Wrangler)

In this example, Tony Jaa usually auto-faces Jungle Adventure Girl, not the tiger. Some of Tony's moves will always target Jungle Adventure Girl, but most of his moves will target "the nearest enemy," whether it's Jungle Adventure Girl or her tiger. A few attacks are designed to only target the main enemy (in this case Jungle Adventure Girl). Furthermore, during chain combos such as punch, punch, kick, the player can hold the d-pad toward either enemy and the remaining chain attacks will go in that direction.



### One Character vs Many Identical Characters

(E.g.: Tony Jaa vs. 5 Ninjas)

In this example, Tony Jaa auto-faces the general center of the enemies (or possibly the single enemy designated as the lead). All attacks auto-target whichever enemy is closest, but can be redirected by holding toward a different guy with the d-pad. The rules about which enemy the player's character attacks/faces are very similar to the rules in Ninja Gaiden (Xbox).

### Many vs Many

(E.g.: 5 Ninjas vs. 10 Stuntmen)

Each group faces the general center of the enemy group. When one of your group members attacks, he will auto-face and attack a nearby enemy, or if there isn't a nearby enemy, he'll attack the general center of the enemy group.

The whole business about who faces who and who automatically attacks who is critical to the feel of the game. This will definitely take experimentation and attention to get right.

## FREE RUN

While holding the free run button, you can face any direction you want, allowing you to attack any enemy you want in case "auto-targeting the nearest enemy" was not meeting your needs. Like in Bushido Blade, the camera moves to keep as much of a side-view as it can. Unlike Bushido Blade, the free run mode won't let you move faster.

The player isn't intended to free run the entire time: he can't duck and has fewer moves in this mode. On the other hand, the free run does make interacting with the environment easier, it allows for a better single player mode where the player progresses through an environment, and it is a pro-active way to solve problems with targeting multiple enemies that are sure to come up.



## STANCES/FORMATIONS AND DIFFERENT CHARACTER TYPES

Pressing the Stance/Formation button changes the formation of your group. Your characters have different attacks and properties when they move to different formations. To use a Street Fighter analogy, if the 5 ninjas are similar in spirit to the character Ryu, then changing their formation would make them similar in spirit to Ken. That is, the other formation might be faster, themed with fire attacks, and have a few improved moves, but might also be more risky to play, and have inferior versions of a few other moves.

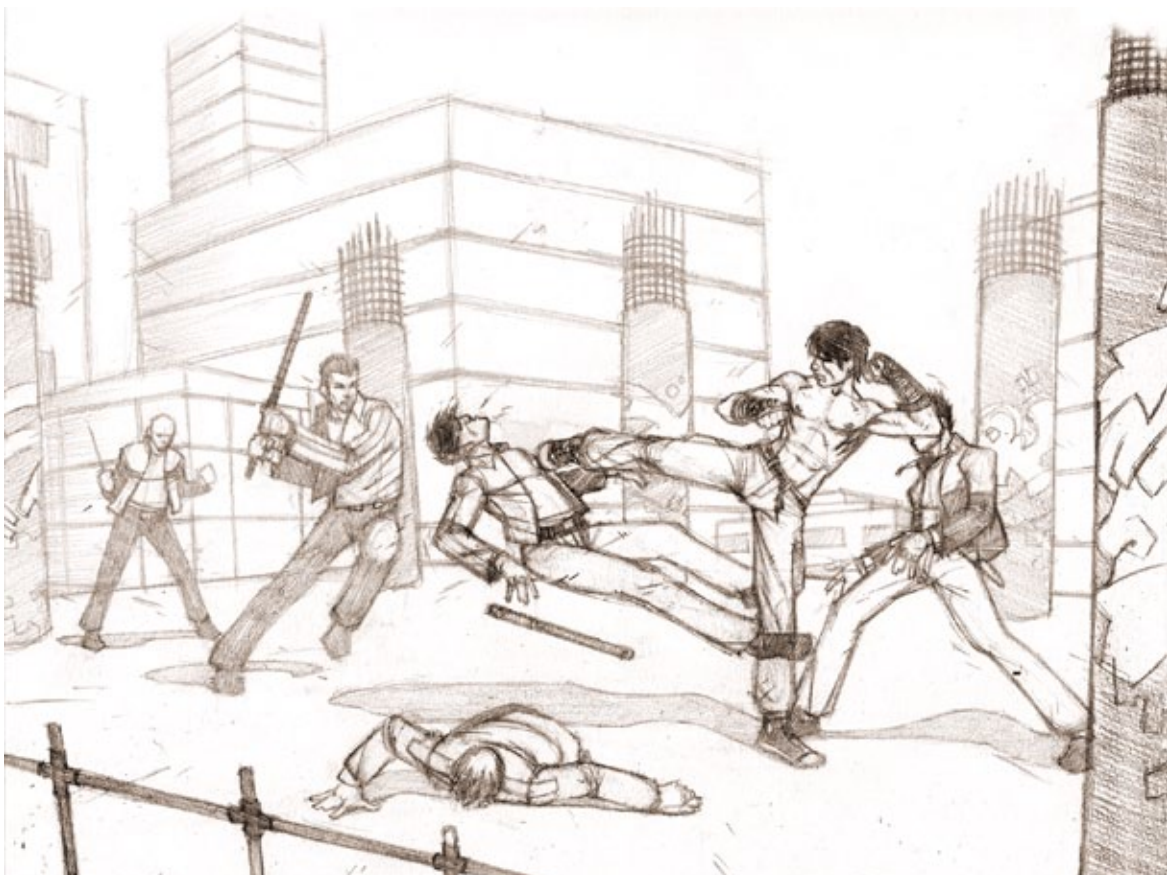
When playing a single character such as Tony Jaa, the Stance/Formation button switches fighting stances like in many other fighting games. A new stance just gives the character a new set of moves that could be more useful in certain situations.

When playing the Mui Thai sisters, the Stance/Formation button switches which character is your "main" and which is your "assist." Most of your attacks cause your current main character to do something, while just a few operate the assist character.

When controlling either Tony Jaa (Elephant Keeper) or Jungle Adventure Girl (Tiger Wrangler) the Stance/Formation button causes the pet to attack.

When controlling the Monkey Lord, the Stance/Formation button changes the formation of the 20 monkeys, giving them different attack patterns.

When controlling the shapeshifter, the Stance/Formation button toggles him among these modes: 1) Single Character, 2) Two Characters (similar to the Mui Thai Sisters, but he can't switch which one is "main" and which is "assist"), and 3) Group of 5 (generally similar to the group of 5 ninjas).



## RAPID DEFLECT SYSTEM

This is a “mini-game” that can occur during the course of a match. Its purpose is to give the game even more of a feeling of a martial arts movie by allowing the players to take part in a very rapid back-and-forth sequence of attacks and deflects.

When a player performs a “reversal” on another player, he grabs the enemy’s incoming arm or leg. Rather than throw the enemy to the ground (like most games would do), we will zoom the camera in and start this Rapid Deflect mini-game. A time meter (or hourglass) comes up, showing how long the mode will last—probably just a few seconds. During this time, both characters are mostly fixed in place, close to each other. The attacker (the one who performed the reversal) has extremely fast attacks in this mode. The victim gains the amazing ability to deflect any high/mid/low move, knocking it to the side. The catch is that the victim must still guess high/mid/low as he can only deflect one of those levels at any one time.

Basically, the person who performed the reversal can now attack easily with very fast attacks. Most of these attacks will probably hit and do damage, but the victim will be able to deflect some of them. Even when the attacker hits the victim, the victim can still continue to deflect subsequent hits. We’ll tune this so that the total damage the attacker usually does is similar to the damage done from reversals in other fighting games; our method has the players actually take part in the action rather than watching a canned animation.

Note that the victim could attack if he wanted, rather than deflect the entire time. It’s generally not a good idea for him to attack because the attacker’s moves are so fast and good in this mode. A sneaky attacker might choose to stand there and do nothing though, hoping to draw out an attack from the defender. The attacker could then reverse that attack, and reset the entire mini-game (he’d get a full hourglass time-meter in this case). Although the usual sequence will be a rapid series of attacks and deflects, it is possible for advanced players to psyche each other out.



Finally, if the defender manages to deflect every incoming attack, the defender will be rewarded with a very powerful automatic counter-attack that does tons of damage. Guessing right every single time in this long series deserves a big reward. This feature exists mainly so that amazing tournament footage such as the “Daigo Parry Video” will be possible. (<http://video.google.com/video/play?docid=2056054542448453224&q=daigo> Note that this video was created at the Evolution Fighting Championships, co-run by the writer of this very concept doc! The video was the #1 Google Video for at least one week.)

## PROTECTIONS FROM INFINITE COMBOS

The ability to attack in parallel with a group of 5 guys is going to be extremely fun and allow for creative play. It also creates the potential for game-breaking “infinite” combos against a single fighter such as Tony Jaa. For example, the group of ninjas might have these three moves: left guy dashes forward and strikes, center guy leaps forward like a human projectile, right guy dashes forward and strikes. Even though each move has recovery, the player could alternate between these three attacks to keep a single enemy locked-down and permanently combo’d. It’s not such a problem if the ninjas are fighting another pack of ninjas though; the other pack would still have several characters left to fight even if one was locked down.



## DEAD OR ALIVE-STYLE REVERSALS

This weird feature of Dead or Alive actually makes more sense in this game than in DOA itself. Unlike most fighting games, DOA lets the player perform “reversals” even while stunned. A reversal is when the player predicts whether an incoming attack is high, mid, or low, and grabs the attacker’s limb, then throws them to the ground.

Many hits in DOA cause something called “critical stun” which causes the victim to double over or stumble around so that the attacker can continue his combo. Because the victim can still perform reversals (but no other types of moves) during critical stuns, it eliminates the problem of infinite combos. The victim can always try to do a reversal to get out. When a victim is being batted around by 5 ninjas at once, this feature would be a life-saver.

## GUILTY GEAR-STYLE BURSTS

The “burst” is a special move in Guilty Gear XX shared by all characters. The burst is the only move in the game that can be performed even while you are in hit-stun. Unlike reversals in DOA, the victim doesn’t have to guess right about incoming attacks being high/mid/low; the burst is an invulnerable attack that knocks away everything nearby. The burst has two drawbacks: 1) it can only be done about once per round because it’s tied to a slowly-filling meter and 2) if the opponent expects the burst, he can just not attack into it and the burst has enough recovery time that the attacker can start a new combo on the desperate victim.

The game Urban Reign (which often has multiple enemies attacking a single enemy) uses both of these solutions: ability to reversal out of certain stuns and ability to do a big, invulnerable attack (tied to a meter) while in hit-stun. Even Capcom’s original Final Fight used a similar solution to burst but Final Fight’s version drains the victims own health, rather than using a special meter.

Either through Dead or Alive-style reversals or Guilty Gear-style bursts (or both), we will ensure that the crazy combos inherent to this game do not become game-breaking infinite combos.

# STANDARD FIGHTING GAME MECHANICS

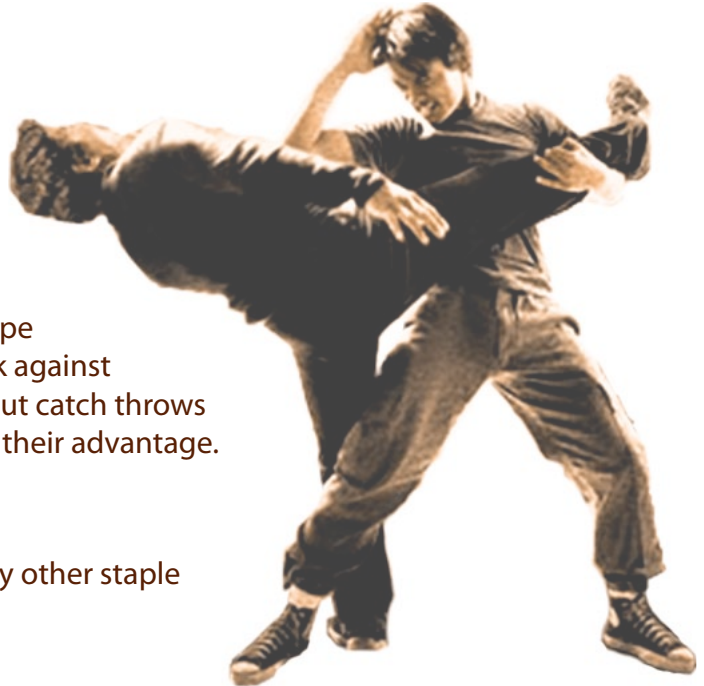
## ATTACKING AND BLOCKING HIGH/LOW

Like nearly all 3D fighting games, there are two levels of block (high and low) and four levels of attacks (high, mid, special mid, low). High attacks can be ducked, low attacks must be blocked low, mid attacks must be blocked high, and special mid attacks can be blocked high or low.

To block high, hold down the block button. To block low, hold down the block button and hold the down direction on the d-pad or left analog stick.

## THROWS

Throws grab opponents and damage them even when the opponents are blocking. We will probably use the standard 3D fighting throw system where throws do not work on enemies who are executing an attack. A special type of throw called a "catch throw" does work against enemies who are starting up an attack, but catch throws have startup time themselves, offsetting their advantage.



## OTHER FIGHTING FEATURES

The fighting system will include the many other staple features of the genre such as

- Counter-hits
- Air juggles
- Staggers that the victim can shake out of
- Knock-downs and rising attacks
- And more...

We won't go into detail into all these fighting features, but with fighting game tournament champions on staff, we can provide more details on this stuff than anyone cares to read.



# THE ONLINE EXPERIENCE

At this point, online functionality shouldn't be something tacked on to a fighting game; it must be an integral component of the game and seen as one of the most important aspects.

Our main online mode is based on the concept of small rooms of 2-8 players, just like Dead or Alive 4's online mode. Players in the same room can all voice chat and watch each other's matches in a "winner stays, loser gets in line" system. This system does a great job of simulating the fun of arcade play at home, though could definitely be improved upon with better spectating features.

In our game, the player will choose whether to play in "ranked rooms" or "unranked rooms." While playing in ranked rooms, players' online ranking can go up or down, but only slightly. We believe that ranking systems that allow players to play an unlimited number of matches and to control who they play against are inherently flawed because players can "game" the system by avoiding the best players and win-trading with dummy accounts. Dead or Alive, Capcom vs. SNK2, and nearly every other ladder system we know of all suffer from these flaws. The solution is to integrate online tournaments.

A tournament is a regularly scheduled event that happens every week or two. Players cannot control who you fight in a tournament (very important to avoid cheating). Most notably, the best player in a tournament will usually win the tournament, regardless of whether or not he played as many ranking matches during the week as everyone else. Rankings will be mostly affected by tournament placing, and only slightly affected by the much less reliable measure of ranking matches.

Ideally, we could enable players to enter pay-tournaments and win real cash prizes, as well as view live matches and replays of exciting tournament matches. There are technical hurdles here, but they are definitely worth solving.

The nuances of designing an automated online tournament system are formidable, but design director David Sirlin is not only a multiple-time national tournament champion in Street Fighter, but an organizer of the annual Evolution Fighting Game Championships, the largest fighting game tournament in the US. He was also a consultant on APEX, [www.shoryuken.com](http://www.shoryuken.com)'s national fighting game ranking system. We'll get it right.

## SAVING AND DOWNLOADING MATCH REPLAYS

The ability to very easily save movies of matches is an important, overlooked feature in fighting games. Ideally, players could tell the game to record every single versus match they play and save it to the hard drive, or they could set the game to prompt after each match whether that recording should be saved. Dead or Alive 4 lets players save a movie of the game just played, but has no way to trade or show those movies to other players!

The players are really the content creators here; they will create movies of amazing combos and amazing matches long, long after our single-player content runs dry. Players love to learn from each other and to gloat about their wins by showing each other who they beat and how. If we create a mechanism that allows them to share their content with each other they will stay interested in the game far longer.

# THE MOVIE-MAKING THEME

As mentioned previously, there are any number of story concepts that will work well with the game, and we're open to input here. We also have a great deal of Hollywood writers we can draw on to concept and flesh out a story, thanks to our connection with Circle of Confusion, one of the industry's leading production and management companies for "genre" work, such as horror, action and sci-fi movies.

One way to go with the story of this game is the premise that the player is caught up in the filming of a ridiculous action movie lead by an outrageous French director. The name of that fictitious film is:

Jean-Luc Croissant's

## Super Action Battle 2: Knee of Legend

Featuring Tony Jaa

A premise like this would stand apart from the mostly boring and serious lineup of PS3 titles, and definitely differentiate it from other serious fighting games like Tekken and Virtua Fighter, even though the gameplay is meant to be every bit as solid as those games. (We are specifically aiming as far AWAY from party games like Kung Fu Chaos and PowerStone as possible and toward the tournament-quality fighting systems of Soul Calibur and Street Fighter).

The movie theme would be sprinkled throughout the various game modes:

### VERSUS MODE

Like in any fighting game, versus mode allows two players to play each other, picking their character (or group of characters!) before each fight. A few movie-trappings set the tone:

- 1) The round starts with "Ready...Action!" and a movie clapperboard clapping shut.
- 2) The director yells "cut!" when the fight ends.
- 3) When one player performs a "reversal" on another (grabbing an incoming arm or leg), the camera zooms in on a brief "rapid deflect" mini-game and the director yells "close up!"

### AUDITION MODE

This is similar to the Story or Arcade modes of most fighting games where the player picks a character and fights through the gauntlet of enemy characters with a couple lines of dialog and short cut-scene between each fight. The premise of the mode is that your character is auditioning for the movie by auditioning in various fights. For example, if you choose to play the Monkey Lord, you can "see if you'll be cast as the villain in Tony Jaa's new movie!"

## THE MAKING OF KNEE OF LEGEND (SINGLE-PLAYER SIDE STORY)

This is a single-player side story where the player plays as Tony Jaa on the set of an action movie. In the opening scene, the eccentric director tells Tony, "In this next scene, you'll be fighting a pack of 10 stuntmen." Tony asks what the scene is about, but the director just says "It appears somewhere in the middle of the movie; we shoot out of sequence. Your motivation is to beat up these guys, go!" Immediately, the player is thrown into the action.

After each of these "missions," the director sets up the next scene. "In this scene, watermelons will be flying at your head, Tony. Try to use high parries on them." Or, "In this scene, you'll be fighting 5 ninjas...who are on fire. The scene takes place in shallow water because that's what looks good on camera. Action!" And, "I want to see Tony Jaa fighting 10 other Tony Jaas in this next scene!" When various producers protest that it's impossible to simply create 10 Tony Jaas, the director says they better find a way or lose their jobs. The game then cuts directly to a fight where the player controls a single Tony Jaa versus a group of 10 Tony Jaas.

Toward the end of this side story, the director seems to have crossed the line from simply quirky to actually dangerous. In the final scenes, the director himself kidnaps Tony Jaa's leading lady and Tony confronts him in a back alley for the final boss battle. When Tony wins, the defeated director yells "Did you get that, camera two? Tell me you got that!" Cameras and crew reveal themselves and applaud Tony's amazing fighting skills. The scene transitions from their applause to the applause of the audience at the movie's premiere. The lights dim as we see the movie's title screen (Jean-Luc Croissant's Super Action Battle 2: Knee of Legend) and then an actual trailer for the "movie" that the player has been making all along.



This construction allows each mission to be just about anything, and the humor is that it's impossible to imagine a movie that includes all these scenes. Some missions take place in a single room (such as parry the watermelons) while others have the player progressing through an environment like in Final Fight or any other beat'em up. A caution though: this is only a side mode of what we intend to be mainly a two-player competitive fighting game. A full-fledged single player adventure game is an entire project to itself, so we intend this side-story to be fairly short and sweet.

## SUMMARY OF GAME MODES

### Single Player Modes

- Audition. Fight through opponents one at a time, with a short cut-scene before each battle.
- The Making of: Knee of Legend. Control Tony Jaa in a Final Fight-like side scrolling mini-adventure. Somewhat similar to missions in Urban Reign, but actually connected so the player can walk from one to the next.
- Single Match. Pick your character and the CPU's character, then play one match against them. Useful for practicing against a certain character.
- Survival. Choose how many enemies you will face (5, 10, 20, 50, 100, or infinite), then fight through the gauntlet. When you defeat an enemy, you gain a little health and the next enemy jumps into the fight immediately. (There must be no loading between fights for this mode to be fun.)
- Training. Free training against a practice dummy as well as directed training in beginning, intermediate, and advanced techniques.

### Versus

Online (includes casual play, ranking matches, automated tournaments)

### Manage data

- Achievements
- Versus records
- Misc records
- Saved replays
- Movie gallery
- Unlock log