Battle Arena Drones Combat

The combat system a attempts to make dog fighting it's primary focus. Attempting to reducing battles of attrition.

Besides the weapons and specials you can read about on each drones page the drones each have the following characteristics.

Name	Description
Shield	This is a regenerating shield. Each drone has it's own statistics on the shields size, regeneration delay and speed.
Shell	This is the shell strength of the drone. It's a design choice that shells can never be repaired by in game mechanics. In essence damage to the shields will recover (if enough time passes) but hull damage remains [1]. This allows players of a significant difference in skill to still be able to impact other players (assuming they manage to whittle the shields down). Shell's are lost a piece at a time the specific pieces hold the hit points. When they are cleared a line of fire is opened to the core. The pilots need to try turn and adjust to hide exposed parts. The shell need not be completely destroyed when a drone is. In fact that seams to be the least likely possibility.
Core	The drones core is it's functional pieces. This when reduced to zero means the drone will be destroyed.
Maneuverability	This is how fast a drone can turn and adjust it's trajectory. This doesn't change the drones inertia only the max rotational speed.
Inertia	Inertia is a quality of all drones, it's part of the core design and can not be adjusted. Inertia is typically higher in drones that have more shell strength or core hit points.
Weapons	Each drone starts with a basic weapon loadout. Either an energy or a concussion weapon. These weapons can be swapped out in game but on respawn they are the default weapons. All default weapons draw from the ships core to recharge. When a player finds and equips a new weapon that remains available for left or right fitting until he dies and respawns. When that happens he is set back to his initial starting weapon.
Ammo	The game has two kinds of ammunition, concussion and energy. Some weapons draw there power from the ships core to recharge. This means that the amo weapons are far more effective in combat but force the player to hunt for amo. While the rechargeable weapons require less effort but leave your power user split to recharging.
Special	Each drone has a special set of characteristics, passive and active.
Boost	All drones are equipped with a boost, boost allows your drone to fly at faster speed then usual. Turning remains the same as at slower speeds this leaves the drone less maneuverable considering it's speed. Boosts are triggered and continue until the boost ends. After that boost needs to be recharged. Boosts are for all directions so moving in directions other then just forward is still effected by boost.

Skills

Combat skills should be easy to learn but difficult to master [2]. Some of the choices in game are to facilitate the easy to learn.

The lists below highlight the expected goals of the design for easy medium and hard to achieve levels.

Easy Skills

- Flying and shooting.
- Damaging shields enough to reach the shell.
- Using the core recharged weapons as apposed to ammunition based weapons.
- Random use of the specials to sometimes gain advantage.

Medium Skills

- Targeting the same side of a drone to work down a specific area to reach the core.
- Switching between energy and concussion weapons as you are targeting different areas of the drone.
- Using your specials timed in such a way as to achieve maximum impact.
- Basic adjusting of drone's configuration to fit your playstyle well.
- Having a better hit miss fire ration so you don't waste as much power or ammunition.
- Flying in more complex patterns and using boost to create opportunities or avoid conflicts when you are in a bad position.

Hard Skills

- Switching weapons in combat between energy and concussion as you switch from breaking shields to hull, then back to a combination when attacking core.
- Coordinated use of various specials to create huge team advantages.
- Adjusting your drones configurations to better take advantage of it's strengths against some of your opposition.
- Flying to keep your damaged side away from your enemies fire field.
- Switching between ammunition based weapons and rechargeable weapons to get the most firepower from both without loosing too much of your ammunition.

Piloting

Basic flight skills are navigation and the ability to think upside down forgoing the need for the terrain. The next level it spacial perception and being aware what beside you and behind you when piloting. Also the ability to manage the inertia when trying to navigate tight spaces. The last level is about movement angles and gaining advantages but adjusting the number of trajectories you moving on to move faster and in more difficult ways for others to follow you.

Strategy

There are a few strategies to be learnt in combat. First is NEVER stand still. Then the ability to lead your targets. Fight from good angles. Also to reload before combat try avoid damage when your shield break to let them charge. Also deciding when to get a refresh on your secondary and which one to take to best deal with your opponents.

Timing

Learning the best times to use your measures and countermeasures through the drones specials. Knowing the special of your opponent drone and even keeping track of when they last used it are a component of timing. Firing when you have the best line and are more sure you will hit to avoid reload from preventing you from having that advantage and lastly remembering when your secondary weapons will be more effective because the opponent has or doesn't have shields based on that weapons effectiveness in each circumstance.

Downtime

Player downtime is critical in the game especially when trying to give players a chance to recover neural energy. Early versions of the game saturated the same synapse too much and caused fatigue that made players hesitant to play again. For this reason combat should be short and decisive and in between combat players minds should move to in the case of victory a check on systems lost hull and what weapons they need again for their secondary (assuming they do) reloading etc. In the case of losing there is a delay to re-spawn and the player can then spend time reviewing the lost battle the drone they chose and the one they fought against. This is all part of the recovery mechanic and needs to be kept in balance.

In-between games player down time should be directed t stores and various game statistics this is in part to create further engagements but also to allow players a recovery period where they engaging more conscious mind and logical thoughts rather the instinctual and responsive thoughts.

This balance will determine how long players can and are willing to engage in the game before they become bored or fatigued.

[1)]
One exception to shell healing is a considered drone called the Ivan that may have regenerative Shell but no shields.
[2)]
This is a typical design goal after all

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