

Monster Mercs

Written by

Matthew Schnell

Full Sail University.

Executive Summary

Monster Mercs is a 3rd person action game for Xbox and the Playstation consoles. It will feature turn based, strategy simulations and 3rd person combat. It takes place in the fantasy world of Grün, and highlights the effects of weather on individual units; and the field of battle itself.

Audience Analysis

The primary target of Monster Mercs will be males over the age of 15, but will also contain elements that female teens, ages (16+) will also enjoy. Basically, fantasy nerds. While the primary theme and hook will be the chance to play as and command monsters in an action setting. The primary characters will have a level of characterization and humanity that will also appeal to female players looking for a protagonist with a stronger emotional connection, something a male audience might overlook.

Story

Gaist Greyskin is a draconian mercenary working for the City States of Middlestone.

After frequent skirmishes with a clan of orcs on their borders and trade routes, he has been put in charge of a small unit hired to help speed the offensive. The campaign goes well, until the end when another army attacks. Vantamir Elufall (primary antagonist), an elf king of a neighboring kingdom is invading the city states in order to annihilate the orcs completely. This is a lie. He's actually on a crusade to remove any presence not born of the 4 true races from the region altogether and occupies the city states under the premise of protection.

Gaist is separated from his unit after the attack and makes his way into a nearby mountain to escape. A large unit is sent after him, and Gaist will have to use the terrain as well as the weather to evade and confront his pursuers. After making his way around the mountain, he cuts through Ever Rot Swamp. He has lost his first set of pursuers, but now encounters a cavalry unit trying to pass through. He meets Flanglinston, the kobold and member of a cavalry also hired by the city states. Using Jig's beasts to maneuver through the swamp, they evade the elves. Flanglinston accompanies Gaist.

The two of them continue their escape and meet Alf, an imp who specializes in reconnaissance and who is also fleeing pursuit from the elves. Gaist instructs Alf to go back and gather as much information as he can about their unit and meet them at the neighboring city of Alston. Gaist and Flanglinston proceed through a canyon. They run into a division of elves and are cornered in the canyon until they fall through an abandoned mine shaft. They meet Aleesha, a Drow, who can see in the dark without any light, who they work together with to escape from the sealed tunnels.

After they leave the mine, they make their way to Alston, where they gather information about the occupation. Alifor Petricoat, a distant member of the ruling noble family in Alstone approaches Gaist about a counter attack. Alf returns to the city and informs them of the elven army's status. Their forces are having trouble quelling the remaining Alstone army and are spread thin. Alifor reports that his forces are too small, but Alf reports that a number of Alstone forces are still at large in the surrounding area. Alifor offers to supply them if Gaist can liberate and gather them for a counter attack. After gathering the scattered units, the player will be presented with a number of strategic moves, on how to counter attack. Flanglinston and Aleesha

will also contribute by taming beasts for a cavalry, and recruiting renegade drow as a night operations unit.

After launching the counter attack, Gaist will push to the capital, launch a flanking maneuver on the elven army to confront Vantamir Elufall. Vantamir falls in an intense confrontation with Gaist, and after being usurped by his nephew, Gaelin Elufall, is dethroned and taken into custody.

After the battle is over, the elves will sign a treaty with Middlestone and retreat back into their forest. Gaist and his companions will receive an adjusted payment, as well as official citizenship in all the city states for their service.

Flanglinston will take up a post training a permanent cavalry unit in the city, as well as train others in monster taming and hunting.

Aleesha will return to the Underdark and attempt to rebuild her house there with the connections and resources she gained on the surface.

Gaist will establish a small safe house in the city before moving on to his next job.

Alifor will be promoted to a viscount and be put in charge of a new city designed to guard Middlestone's borders and provide, swift, military action in case of more invaders.

Characters



Gaist Greyskin is a Draconian mercenary. Only a young pup amongst his race, he's still seasoned professional and skirt chaser. Not a typical mercenary only concerned with money, he's learned that being a freelance soldier means you can make your own rules and policies, even if they're not the wisest. He chooses to continue fighting for the city states because of a profound sense of right and wrong, rather than simple financial opportunity, though he does recognize that as well. Of course, there's all the ladies who (he imagines) will want to show their gratitude for his bravery. The gameplay and story elements will be based around him and his companions.



Flanlingston is a Kobold who's made his specialty in capturing and taming of monsters and using them as cavalry mounts. There aren't many creatures that he hasn't tamed and put a saddle on. His ambition is matched only by his plucky and bright personality. He will primarily come into play during the strategy sections of the game, enabling the player to go on hunting missions to help bolster your cavalry forces with creatures that fight in specialized terrain or weather effects. He will also open an optional mission to capture and tame a Cold Drake, a special mount for Gaist to use in the final battle to retake the city.



Aleesha is a fallen Drow matriarch who was exiled from the Underdark after a failed attempt to bring down another house. Initially hostile to Gaist and Flanlingston, she quickly warms up to the two of them, after they're proven how sincere they are. During gameplay, she will assist Gaist, helping him in combat by providing support or using her highly developed stealth abilities to wait in ambush.

Vantamir Elufall is the king of a nearby elven forest kingdom. He's a renowned hero from previous wars, and was considered to be just, and righteous. Until now. Few know that his daughter was a casualty of the war, and now he seeks to have his revenge on the creatures responsible for her death.



Alifor Petriccoat is distantly related to a king of a foreign nation and is the 21st in royal line to succeed the throne. He was sworn into office after the previous mayor died of illness, and elected to succeed him, following public opinion.

Gaelin Elufall is Vantamir's nephew. His father was second in line to the throne, and his father was killed in battle along with Vantamir's daughter.

Competition analysis

As of this time, there are very few RTS games that incorporate weather into the core mechanics. Any competition is already years old, such as Company of Heroes 2 which was released in the summer of 2013. There were the battles on the eastern front in Russia where the weather became so cold during snowstorms, players would have to fight for fires or buildings to take shelter in, and deal with the decreased field of vision. Persona 4, released in 2008, addressed rainy days as a mechanic, it simply barred the player from going outside, forcing them to resort to indoor activities, such as studying. While Breath of the wild made the player conscious of how the weather would affect some elements, such as torches, or having proper equipment to handle cold or hot weather, there was never any threat to their equipment at large. Swords never rusted, and Link was never weighed down by the rain or wind. Stealth did play a part in the gameplay, but the player was allowed to change gear at a moment's notice by going into the menu. This option will not be available. The player will have to choose his gear before he sorties, requiring the player to choose what equipment to bring wisely.

Strategy games have traditionally taken a mild approach to including weather in their mechanics. Simply taking up space on a certain terrain would yield bonuses or deficits to the outcome. Elements of War aims to take a malfunctioning weather machine and use weather, like tornadoes, like a command action. Right now, such a function will be used. Monster Mercs will take the concept to a depth that has never been used by incorporating weather and how it will affect the environment, as well as the player's equipment and range of tactics.

Gameplay

Monster Mercs will take a cue from the *Suikoden* series, mixing up personal 3rd person combat with large scale strategy battles from a bird's eye view. There's plenty of 3rd person action games out there, such as *God of War* or *Breath of the Wild*, but most of them do not incorporate weather into the gameplay. This game will offer a look at how weather effects that are taken for granted in other games will affect the player. For example, during the strategy segments, using a heavily armored unit while it's raining will have consequences to its mobility, as their armor is now carrying the weight of the rain. Cavalry will also suffer penalties to their mobility if the ground is thick with mud. The rain itself will also hamper field of vision and unit accuracy, depending on how heavy the rain is.

Players will decide the best course of action by taking into account how the weather and time of day will affect their units. Is the sun out? What time of day is it? Whoever has the sun to their back will be at an advantage. Orcs, however, will be at a crippling disadvantage in any sunlight, making them better suited to night attacks. However, an encounter that lasts until morning will be a race against time. If it's raining, or overcast however, they can be deployed without any problem.

Are there strong winds on the field? Which way is it blowing, and how will it affect your archers if you have them? Positioning them against the wind will decrease their range and accuracy, but shooting with the wind will enhance them. Aleesha's poisons can be used to amazing effects if the wind will carry them into the enemy, or a crippling case of friendly fire if the wind shifts. In some cases, the wind will not allow any use of arrows or poison.

Players will actively plan and strategize based on the predicted weather patterns and plan their attack around it. However, Monster Mercs will also offer the micro experience as well when they take control of Gaist and battle through intense, individual combat. This mode will also include weather as a factor, and will affect stealth, equipment, visibility, etc.

Having to spend the night in a swamp will affect your weapons and armor. Mud will trail along any dry patches or terrain, leading enemies to you if they're nearby. Is it raining? Unsheathed weapons, or weapons without anything to cover them will start to rust, and the effects will range from a minor detriment, to making them downright unusable. Did you equip Gaist with metal, or leather armor? The metal armor will rust, resulting in losses to defense, as

well a cost to his mobility if it's in multiple pieces like chainmail. The leather armor will cost him no such penalties, but provide less defense.

It's not only a detriment, however. What affects you will also affect the enemies you encounter, and will allow the player multiple avenues of dealing with attackers. Know that rain is coming and you have a cadre of heavy knights on your tail? Lure them into the swamp where they can't maneuver quickly, or set up traps in the mist. If visibility is poor due to rain or fog, dummies can be used as decoys to lure the enemy away, setting them up for a surprise attack where they are vulnerable.

The player will have to take into account whether or not a weapon will be able to endure the effects the weather will have on his gear. If a weapon has no sheathe, using bandages or leather wrappings can be used to protect the blade. Bladed weapons are not the only available option. Wooden weapons, such as clubs, are not affected by any kind of weather. They cannot pierce armor, however.

In order to prepare for the counter attack on the city, you will have to plan and launch strikes to liberate your captured forces, or catch dangerous creatures to tame and unleash on the enemy.

Intro Cutscene:

From black, thunder rumbles and lightning from inside a cloud cover from miles away flashes. Rain pours heavily as fifty armored infantrymen compromised of orcs, kobolds, trolls and humans charges over a hill toward the tree line of a forest. A few seconds later, a cavalry unit is right behind them.

Cut to, ELF CAPTAIN, who throws his arm forward and shouts in elvish.

The cavalry charges at the infantry. The infantry are assembled in a line and have their shields raised with their back to the forest. Just as the cavalry is about to meet them, the cavalry collapses into a wide line of mud.

GAIST, Draconian, stands up with his great axe drawn. He roars and the infantry charges. The elves struggle to get out of the mud, but their horses are stuck. The infantry easily cuts them down.

Gaist brings a great axe down on the elf captain and his horse. He looks to his left.

In the distance, a city wall is lined with campfires.

Cut back to the hill as another elven cavalry unit emerges over the hill and diverts to their left. They maneuver around the line of mud toward the infantry unit, keeping the forest to their left. As they charge, they aim their spears.

Flanglinston, Kobold, emerges from the tree line on a dire wolf, followed by more kobolds on wolfback. They charge into the line of elven cavalry, scattering them.

Cut back to Gaist. Three elven soldiers charge at him. He swings his axe wide and connects with all three of them.

Gaist

(roaring)

Flanglinston!

Flanglinston rushes up and stops in front of Gaist.

Flanglinston

Well met friend!

Gaist

Mop up what's left of the cavalry and fall back to the line before they send another unit. Have you seen Aleesha?

An elf with a spear sneaks up from behind a tree and charges at Gaist. Gaist turns his head and the spear tip is inches from his throat when it stops.

The elf falls and ALEESHA, drow, blue skin, emerges from behind the elf, her dagger bloody.

Aleesha

(grumpy)

Hmph! I'm right here, you careless lizard!

Gaist awkwardly nods at her and walks past her.

Gaist

(roaring)

Fall back to the line! Fall back!

Gaist looks toward the city again.

Gaist

Remind me again how we got into this mess?

Flanglinston

We signed up.

Gaist

Oh. Right.

Fade to black.

Insert white text: Three months earlier...

End cutscene

Start Cutscene:

Shot from behind of GAIST running through a valley of rusty red soil and rock in full armor regalia, and his great axe slung over his shoulder, the blade hanging low behind his back. He looks over his right shoulder.

A row of cavalry kicks up a cloud of red dust behind them. ELVEN CAPTAIN thrusts his lance up in the air and shouts something in elvish.

Overhead shot of the valley with Gaist on the right and the cavalry on the left. The cavalry quickly closes the distance.

Cut back to Gaist. The ground opens and he falls into a lightless black pit.

Gaist tumbles down tumbles across jagged rocks and a sharply inclining wall, as several large rocks and bits of rubble fall with him.

He hits a slanted cliff that flings him into the opposite wall and tumbles down again.

He hits the ground with loud THUD, and rubble falls around him. The cavern chamber is almost pitch black. He pushes himself off the floor and grabs his head. A shrill SQUEAL is heard off camera.

A large, centipede like creature, with the front quarter of its body raised off the ground, wide, circular mouth lined with a row of sharp teeth charges at Gaist.

Gaist grabs the creature by the two front legs and holds it back. The creature's mouth snaps at his head, green spittle flying out.

The creature rears its head back and looks like it's about to strike again. It thrashes and squeals before it goes limp and falls onto its left side.

Standing on top of the creature, pulling a dagger free is ALEESHA, blue skin, elf, light blue hair, yellow eyes, looking at him with a slightly furrowed brow.

Aleesha: You. You owe me now. Tell me the way out of this dusty maze.

End Cutscene.

Start Cutscene:

GAIST and ALEESHA run out of a mine tunnel to the ledge of a cliff. There's a rail for a mining car, and a pickaxe leaning against the wall the tunnel leads out of.

Shot overlooking a stripmine from the ledge. Several torch fires arrayed around on each level are the only lights in the cavernous room. In the bottom pit, FLANGLINSTON rides atop SIR TICKLES and fights with half a dozen BANDITS.

Cut back to Gaist and Aleesha.

Gaist: That's Flanglinston and Sir Tickles!

Aleesha: Sir... Tickles!?

Cut to Flanglinston, a red kobold with dark red spots, brandishing a lance and shield sits atop a black dire wolf.

Flanglinston: Forward Sir Tickles! Show these curs what for! Charge!

Flanglinston and Sir Tickles charge at the cluster of bandits who scatter. Sir Tickles makes a sharp turn and does a 180 before charging again. He catches one of the bandits and mauls his arm.

Bandit 1: Get it off! Get it off!

One of the bandits raises a dagger and charges at Flanglinston. Flanglinston leaps off Sir Tickles and slams the lance on the bandit's head. Flanglinston lands on the ground, drops the lance and disappears behind a rail cart.

Sir tickles looks up from the bandit. Blood drips from his muzzle, and he growls, showing his teeth to the others.

The bandits brandish daggers, swords and one spear at the dire wolf.

Bandit 2: Hey, where'd that lil basterd git to!?"

Flanglinston pops out from underneath a wagon. He draws a dagger and stabs a bandit in the back of his left calf before disappearing back underneath the wagon.

Bandit 3: There he is!

Sir Tickles jumps on Bandit 3 from behind and bites at his throat.

The bandit holding the spear charges at Sir Tickles.

Flanglinston leaps onto Sir Tickles' back and leaps at the charging bandit, latching onto his face and beating him with a mallet.

Cut back to Gaist and Aleesha. Aleesha's jaw drops as she watches the skirmish.

Gaist: Come on, we need to back him up! More of those things are come with all this racket he's making!

Gaist grabs Aleesha's arm and leads her off screen.

End cutscene.