

Enable Simultaneous Route Completion and Team Rocket Battles in Pokémon GO

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Overview and scope

Introduction

Pokémon GO offers two distinct features: Route Completion and Team Rocket Battles. Routes are predefined paths that users can follow while exploring, providing bonuses and rewards upon completion. On the other hand, Team Rocket Battles allow players to battle with Team GO Rocket Grunts at invaded PokéStops to catch Shadow Pokémon.

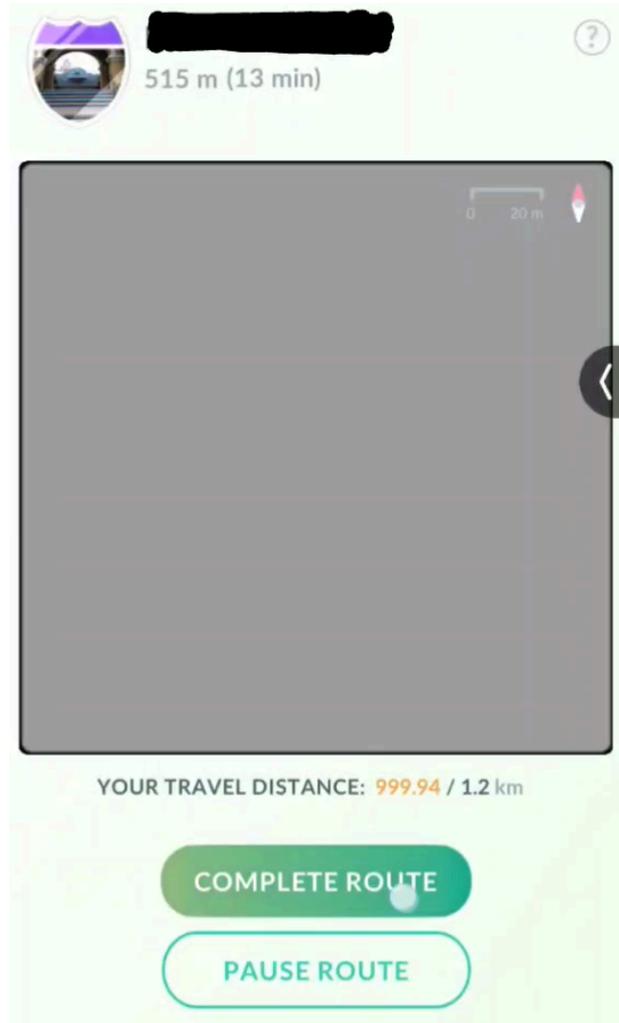
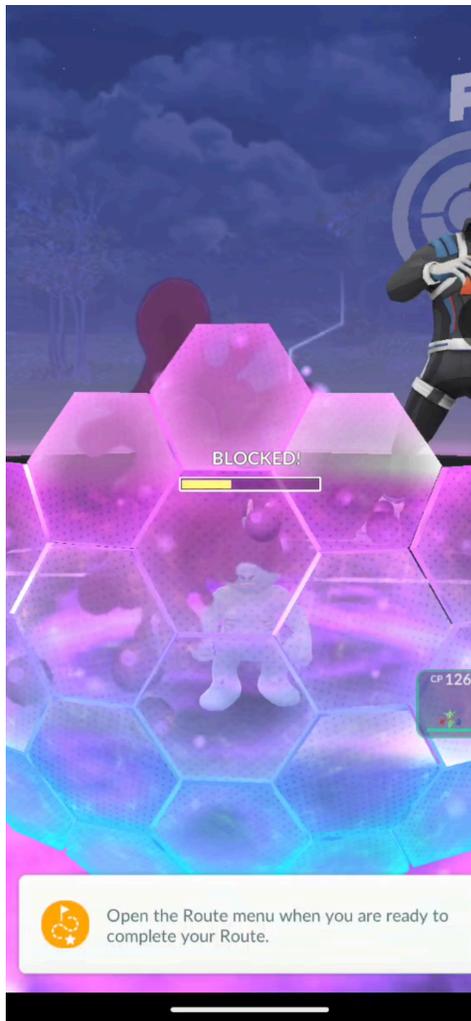
Problem statement

Users face a frustrating interruption in gameplay when they simultaneously complete a Route in the middle of a Team Rocket Battle. Upon Route completion, a pop-up message appears on top of the Charged Attack button during the battle, redirecting the user to the Route completion screen. This transition often leads to the freezing of the application, resulting in the loss of progress in the ongoing Team Rocket Battle. This issue was discovered on an Android device with the latest Pokemon Go app version, 0.305.1, and was replicated on an iPhone 15.

During such an encounter, users experience:

1. Overlapping pop-up messages for Route completion and Charged attack selection.
2. Accidental exit from the battle screen to the Route completion screen.
3. App freezing during Route completion.
4. Unregistered Team Rocket battle upon app restart.

This detracts from the overall gameplay experience, as seen in the images below.



Opportunity

To enhance the user experience in Pokémon GO by simultaneously utilizing the Route Completion and Team Rocket Battle features, addressing the issue of interrupted gameplay and potential freezing of the application.

Target customers and devices

Pokémon Go owners across mobile phones. The current scope does not include tablets and fold or flip-style phones.

Proposed solutions

1. User Interface Optimization:

- The battle interface will display a subtle visual indicator (e.g., a Route completion banner) informing the user that the Route has been completed. This banner should not obstruct core battle elements like Pokemon selection or attack buttons.

2. Background Route Completion:

- Enable background processing for Route completion acknowledgment, ensuring that the acknowledgment does not interfere with the ongoing battle sequence. Utilize asynchronous processing techniques to handle Route completion tasks without affecting real-time battle interactions.

3. Battle and Route Integration:

- The Route completion notification popup will appear only after the Team Rocket battle is concluded. This ensures the user remains focused on the battle and doesn't accidentally exit.
- Alternatively, introduce a discreet notification icon or gesture that users can access during battles to confirm Route completion.

4. Error Handling and Recovery:

- Implement robust error handling to prevent app freezes during overlapping events. If an error occurs, the app should display a clear message and offer options to resume the battle or retry Route completion. Consider offering a "Complete Route Later" button within the battle screen for a more seamless experience.

Jobs To Be Done

1. As a Pokemon Go player, I want to be able to continue battling a Team Rocket grunt even if I complete a Route during the fight so I can catch the Shadow Pokemon reward.
2. As a Pokemon Go player, I want clear visual cues informing me of both Route completion and available battle actions so that I can make informed decisions without accidentally exiting the battle.
3. As a Pokemon Go player, I want the app to handle overlapping events gracefully so I can avoid app freezes and maintain progress.

Definition of success

1. Reduction in user reports of app freezes during Route completion and Team Rocket battles.
2. Increased user satisfaction through surveys or app rating changes.
3. Analysis of in-app data to track the number of concurrent Route completions and Team Rocket battles (optional).

Future potential

1. Explore the possibility of displaying Route completion rewards within the post-battle screen for a more integrated experience.
2. Investigate the feasibility of allowing users to initiate Team Rocket battles while actively following a Route (if appropriate).