Surfing

Surfing is a custom gameplay form of Counter-Strike and other Half-Life mods. It consists in manipulating speed and steering the player through custom maps created for this purpose.

Players strafe into slanted walls (commonly referred to as "ramps"), causing the player to accelerate rapidly. When the player reaches the end of the ramp, their velocity is retained allowing the player to perform large jumps. Surf maps will usually require the player to navigate a series of ramps by performing jumps of varying difficulty.

History

Surf maps were originally meant to be played in a deathmatch, much like the original Counter-Strike maps. Players could glide around a course and would try to kill each other. Later on, new ways of gameplay along with maps properly made for them were invented, most notably Speedrun and Freestyle (also known as "Tricksurfing") .

Although the first Surf map was made for Counter-Strike 1.6, the modality later spread to games based on the Source engine, such as Counter-Strike: Source and Team Fortress 2, where it gained more popularity. Work is now even being done on creating a standalone game for surfing.[1]

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[1] http://kotaku.com/fan-building-counter-strike-surfing-game-1776374888

Variations[2]

"Kill Surf" or Combat Surf

The surf deathmatch, where players are required to kill others while maintaining a high speed to avoid being shot themselves. The shotgun weapon is iconic of this mode, since their spread bullets give the possibility of hitting targets mid-air. The maps usually feature a lot of teleporters that take the player to rooms with gun supplies or to strategical places, sometimes with boosts that help players build up and maintain speed. The Counter-Strike 1.6 map surf_ski_2 and the Source map surf_greatriver, both made for deathmatches, were very likely the most famous in surf and brought most players into it.

The first surf maps such as surf_egypt and surf_ninja were meant to be played in this mode. While "surf" originally comprehended this mode itself, it was later regarded as "kill surf".

We can distinguish combat surf in two parts: arena combat surf and linear combat surf:
- Arena combat maps have no defined course goals and you can easily get around to everywhere from everywhere (e.g. surf_greatriver_xdre4m). Arena combat maps have tend to be the most popular combat maps in the competitive scene, probably because they are most based on surf skills.
- Linear combat maps have more or less some directionality. The player can't get around to everywhere from everywhere (e.g. surf_rebel_resistance_final3).

Speedrun

Runs made through surf courses, with the intent of completing the map as fast as possible. Each mod usually has its own surf community that keeps a list of speedrun records. Speedruns are recorded with the innate "demo" feature of the Half-Life mods. Some maps have built-in timers, others can only have timed runs with custom plugins. Examples of speedrun maps are surf_temple_of_toon/surf_catacombs_h (1.6), and surf_amplitude_encore/surf_omnibus (Source).

Freestyle/Tricksurf

More characteristic of 1.6 surf but also seen at Source, it consists in creating a run that wasn't originally intended at the map. For such, the player needs to apprehend certain aspects of the map and play with them. This could be going around a pillar, passing under a ramp, exploiting a boost to take more advantage of it, jump to a high lamp or a distant rock that was placed as a detail in the map, exploiting map flaws (such as a wall that does not properly bound a level), etc.

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[2] http://deletionpedia.org/en/Counter_Strike_Surf

The criteria for a good trick is usually that what matters is firstly creativity, secondly difficulty and thirdly style.

Like speedrunning, players exhaustively try the trick after conceiving it, recording it with the demo function. Tricks are then shared with friends and published at movies, which can feature a solo player or a group of players. Some moviemakers call out any players to gather demos, others restrict their projects participation to their friends.

Although any surf map is eligible for this mode, there are maps specifically made for it. Much like the "kill surf" ones, they resemble "ramp parks", but usually feature less boosts. Some discoveries at course maps used in tricks sometimes find use as a shortcut and are incorporated to the speedruns. Counter-Strike 1.6 players have also made many tricks at the official de_ and cs_ maps using the surf ramps and ledges they have to offer.

Sometimes Freestyle might refer to a more non-linear run, usually done on the ramp-park kind of maps, while Tricksurf refers to a run with a certain linearity, described as "Speed build-up->Surf trajectory->Land on somewhere". Most times this distinction isn't used, though.

Other Variations

The "Surfcatch", based on the original Hide-and-Seek mod for 1.6. Players are divided in two teams, where one can only use the knife and the other, a limited supply of grenades. First team to ace the other wins the round, but the team with the grenades can win by surviving through its duration (around 4 minutes). The Surfcatch maps are rather small and have no teleports at all. Players are much more susceptible to fall on the ground from the small ramps, which causes more damage depending on the fall height. This is an important aspect of the matches, since great part of the rounds end purely with falling deaths. To make use of this, other than having surfing/kreedzing ability to prevent falling, good players also need know how to juke and block opponents in the ramps or mid-air.

Another modality is the "Top2Top" (Top-to-Top), where the player surfs a single ramp back and forth, getting to the same place where he originally jumped without the help of any boost. Although "Top2Tops" are sometimes regarded as "tricks", they differ fundamentally from Tricksurfing, since they consist solely on movement precision and skill, and there is no regard to "creation".

Map design

One player named Mariowned stated he created the first surfing map when he encountered a problem in one of his other self made maps:

"*Counter-Strike surfing began around the Summer of 2004. I came across the idea for surfing in CS by accident. I made a map called ka_killbox a few months before the first surf map was made. Ka_killbox features a dead end street of a neighboring town that I grew up in. My friends and I would do sort of a destruction derby down this one street, so I decided to make this map in CS. The level featured a big street with three big houses going down the angled street. While messing around in the map one day, I slipped off the side of one of the houses and as I was falling to my death I landed near a ladder connected to the adjacent house. So during the next round, I went back to the roof and tried sliding off and landing on the ladder. Eventually I got it and thought it was awesome. I went right back into Valve Hammer, the CS level creator, and opened up ka_killbox. I took the roof of that one house and turned it into a prefab then opened a completely new file and put just that roof in.*"[3]

From this the prism-shaped surfing ramps probably originated, that are still widely present.

"*The first surf map ever made was called surf_the-gap. It consisted of just the main wave, a platform with water on it and a button to blow up the whole map. The idea of the map was to be the first person to surf and land on the platform and kill everyone.*"[4]

Other notable early maps:[5]
- surf_egypt: One of the most popular early trick maps. It was very basic, yet people managed to do all sorts of insane stuff on it.
- surf_city: Believed to be the first level map, made by Mariowned himself.
- surf_water-run: Yet another classic by Mariowned. This one is well known for people trying the famous doublewrap and triple wrap on the last level.
- surf_ski: Popular early map which has variations still played today, the most popular being surf_ski_2.
- surf_icebob/surf_icebob2: Arguably the most popular deathmatch/combat surf maps of 1.6/CZ.

Clans and notable players

Usually records of the best times on the maps are listed and the players unite in teams called clans. ….

Notable 1.6/CZ surf clans:

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[3] http://www.world-surf.com/e107_plugins/forum/forum_viewtopic.php?1226
[4] http://www.world-surf.com/e107_plugins/forum/forum_viewtopic.php?1226
[5]

https://www.reddit.com/r/Games/comments/1hqs78/valve_will_host_a_surfing_simulator_at_gamescom/cax640x

- XXL Gaming: Large clan that exclusively hosted surf_icebob2 for deathmatch surfing. The map was unique as it was only playable on XXL Gaming's server unless edited.
- Lucky: Hosted surf_ski-remake and surf_ski_revamp for combat surf and trick surfing.
- Splak

Cheating and cheaters

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