

The 2020 Summer Split has perhaps been the most interesting season of Japanese League of Legends we've seen in years. For the first time since 2016 Summer, DFM are not leading the regular season. Many of the other splits have been dominated by two, sometimes three teams.

Summer Split has had three teams consistently showing strength, but uniquely, the mid tier teams have been threatening to take games.

This last week we saw two of these titans clash as Sengoku Gaming took on V3 Esports, and what an interesting game it was.

Let's start with the draft.



Overall, I don't have many criticisms for this draft like I did in my previous article. Here are a couple of small thoughts I had in no particular order:

- I really like the R4 Tahm Kench pick. Jhin has become a very common counterpick to Ashe in the professional scene, but it's not because of a specific one-on-one champion interaction. In fact, Jhin sports a 42% winrate over 33 games in professional play this split, despite being almost exclusively an Ashe counterpick. Jhin does a great job at supporting other pick characters like Zoe and Nautilus, and has excellent gank assist. Ashe is very vulnerable to dying to ganks, and Tahm Kench trades aggressive laning power to make Ashe safe in lane and reduce Zoe's effectiveness.
- R3 Camille blind is confident. Camille can struggle, particularly in lane, against a number of champions that apaMEN plays. In isolation, apaMEN's three most played characters

this split of Aatrox, Mordekaiser, and Renekton all have stronger laning phases than Camille. Additionally, Gangplank, one of apaMEN's historically powerful picks, is another champion Camille can struggle against. I don't hate it, but I don't love it either. I would have preferred a Wukong pick followed by a Gangplank ban.

- That said, the B4 Aatrox feels a little weird as well. Despite the winning laning phase, Aatrox gets utterly demolished if the game goes longer than about 30 minutes and globally sports a 38% winrate over 13 games for that exact reason. I would have preferred a Gangplank pick here. Again, don't love it or hate it.

Coming out of the draft I had a number of major thoughts which we'll break down here.

Firstly, just generally speaking, this game is going to be majorly focused on how well teams are able to establish and play around vision. We touched on how strong SG's pick tools are with Jhin, Zoe, and Nautilus. Graves also can hunt Kha'zix early on in the game due to how much armor he has. V3 match this with three diving champions in Camille, LeBlanc, and Kha'zix, and have an Ashe arrow to boot. Both teams lack a true tank frontline, so any skirmishes are going to be over quickly, and therefore the team that starts fights is usually going to win them. Statistically, Sengoku Gaming is one of the best LJJL teams at controlling vision. While having a narrow lead in how many wards they place per minute, they are much better at denying their opponent's vision. Point to Sengoku.

Secondly, if this game gets to the 25 minute mark with V3 even, V3 are actually winning. If the game is still going by the 35 minute mark, Sengoku Gaming are going to be incredibly reliant on Pirean finding a pick, but this is made difficult due to Tahm Kench. Personally, I tend to expect games to go longer and this in my mind gives a point to V3.

To counteract that point though, Sengoku Gaming also have a ton of options for how they want to create a lead in this game. Blank can reasonably target just about everyone on the map except for Ace. He can try and rely on the priority his solo lanes give him in order to push Bugi out of the jungle. He can use Aatrox's strong laning phase to kill Paz over and over. He can use the huge amount of crowd control his bottom lane offers to prevent Archer and Raina from ever being relevant characters.

Again though, if I wanted to talk about everything interesting that happened this game, this article would take longer to read than the game took to play, so I'll focus on a few key points in this game.

The game starts with Blank going for option 1, denying Bugi the ability to farm, but as we see in both the top side invade and the first blood, Ace had priority in the mid lane and Blank found himself initially falling behind.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/AdventurousRoundWaspKappa>

<https://clips.twitch.tv/PiercingAffluentSnakePRChase>

He then tries to spend a little more time bottom lane where we see the game take an unexpected turn. Paz spends his teleport to come and try and interact with a fight, Pirean picks up a kill on Bugi, and V3 picks up nothing.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/HardProtectiveAxeOhMyDog>

Something very important happened here that will allow Sengoku Gaming to snowball this game. See if you can think of what it is. Go back, watch the clip again if you need to.

Ready?

Paz flashed. Without getting a kill.

Remember how we were talking about Aatrox being a difficult laning phase for Camille? Remember how we said Blank can use the power of his top lane to prevent Paz from playing the game? Paz was already slightly down, as we should expect based on the champion matchup, and now he can't contest his lane at all. Blank is suddenly free to take Bugi's northern jungle quadrant. Tower dives become a possibility. The Rift Herald isn't something V3 can reasonably contest for at least five minutes. Let's see how many ways Sengoku punish Paz's overaggression.

1. They bring bot lane up to guarantee Rift Herald, and happen to get an incredible snipe onto Bugi, compounding their top side issue.
 - a. <https://clips.twitch.tv/PatientLivelyQueleaDxAbomb>
2. apaMEN dives and solo kills Paz
 - a. <https://clips.twitch.tv/FantasticAgilePepperUWot>
3. Blank comes up and dives Paz again
 - a. <https://clips.twitch.tv/CloudyAnnoyingOrcaTheThing>

Paz is now thoroughly out of the game, and because Sengoku Gaming haven't given up anything else on the rest of the map, they are in a dominant position to close out the game cleanly. They still want to focus on controlling vision and finding picks, since that's what their comp is good at, but plays that would be bad if the game was even suddenly become much better.

From here on out, we're basically just going to be highlighting ways in which Sengoku Gaming do just that.

Remember how we said the team that gets the jump will usually win? Note the control ward in pixel brush. Sengoku was ready for this fight even if they technically didn't start it.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/TriangularAgitatedKuduWOOP>

This next clip highlights the vision game working in both team's favor. We first see Pirean clearing a control ward with Bugi sitting behind him, then Archer decides to pick a fight with Enty because he didn't know Blank was there until it was too late.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/ArborealAliveCrowDBstyle>

Even with apaMEN getting caught a few times, showing early signs of the difficulty Aatrox has with Camille later in the game, it allows SG to play this fight with near perfect information and get apaMEN easy access to the back line.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/RelentlessFitKathyCharlietheUnicorn>

A couple of key mistakes around the Ocean Soul Dragon also effectively seal V3's fate. Note Ace stepping out of the bush into vision, and Bugi walking around the corner to get spotted on a ward.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/BoringExpensiveToadPeoplesChamp>

With Baron buff and Ocean Soul in hand, SG can walk into the enemy base and close the game out.

To that end, Sengoku Gaming had a combined vision score of 209 to V3's 167.



17	2/2/7	251	172	3/4/1	25
47	8/2/3	188	135	1/4/5	33
34	6/1/3	221	211	2/3/3	28
33	1/0/6	269	273	1/2/0	28
78	0/2/11	34	33	0/4/0	53

They did a fantastic job of punishing what seemed like a small mistake early in the game, and leveraged a huge information advantage later on to choke the life out of V3.

While Sengoku have shown some small consistency issues, dropping games to opponents V3 have not, they nonetheless showcased very intelligent League of Legends and mastery over one of the most often ignored parts of playing.

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