

A Retrospective on V3 at Worlds

Knowing what I know now, I would never have expected V3 to get 2nd in their Groups at the WCS Play Ins. But I do not believe this is because I overestimated V3, rather that I underestimated PSG Talon and Unicorns of Love.

PSG Talon, when it was announced that 3 of their 5 members were going to miss Play Ins, I expected to fall dead last, and they got first in their group.

Unicorns of Love, while domestically dominant, were taking over a region that had seemingly lost much of their domestic talent. The previously dominant Vega Squadron had lost much of their strong members and came dead last, and Gambit Esports, without the stars of Sencux, Edward, and PVPStejos were still holding up against UoL. I expected them to be weak. I was wrong.

With all of that said, I think I am justified in expressing that I am disappointed in V3 Esports' performance this year. They should not have gotten last, and should have had an opportunity to play their first international Best of 5, and the first LJL international Bo5 since Worlds 2018, when EDG showed that even as the Chinese third seed, they were a force to be reckoned with.

V3 Esports need to play their goddamn style.

It has to be said. V3's meta reads and drafting was odd, and displayed a lot of confidence issues which I largely attribute to Ace. He played scared the entire tournament, and part of this comes from the fact that he played a lot of Zoe. Zoe isn't a particularly strong champion right now, and as such you need to play aggressively and confidently.

Ace did neither of those things. You can play off-meta picks, but you need to do so in a way that show you're an expert at that champion. You can't play support Zoe. You need to carry with this champion.

This lack of confidence spilled over a fair amount to the rest of the team and affected Bugi too. It felt like he didn't think he could rely on Ace to move in ways that garnered them a lot of domestic success, and as such didn't do very much in the early game.

That, and he just didn't play Graves.

Paz, for his part, as the long standing veteran of the team, looked he felt a need to be a rock. And to some extent he succeeded. He was pretty stable for most of their games, if a bit behind the power curve at points, but he was playing Renekton.

Renekton does not succeed without jungle support, and even when they played Elise alongside it, they ignored his lane. If that's the way you want to treat top lane, play Ornn! Shen! Camille is fine too due to how well she scales and can stand up in the early game to almost everything.

I could talk about this for a long time, looking at each individual pick, but the end point will always be the same. Either play what you're good at, or play the meta. Either is fine, but you need to commit.

While Unicorns of Love had a brilliant draft in their game against V3, Archer lost them this game. A common communication you'll hear in competitive 5's, at least in English, is "You're the play." What this basically means is, our team just did a thing on this side of the map, and in order to recoup their losses, the opposing team is going to try and make a play on the opposite side of the map. We just dove bot lane, and their jungler and mid laner didn't respond, so they're likely going to try and dive top lane.

Archer either never realized he was the play, or didn't care. The rest of the game, while still a mess, was actually doing... ok. Archer and Raina didn't respect the fact that Boss and AhaHaCiK could kill them, and ended up making Camille a monster.

While not the only game that this greed was a problem, it was by far the most pronounced. Archer is not a bad player, but not being able to play weak side with no jungle support isn't something that he was punished domestically for, and something we'll need to see improve.

I don't have a lot to say about Raina. He was kind of invisible the entire tournament. On the one hand, as a support, this is kind of expected. Supports often end up the punching bags of teams when they're losing. Additionally, when your team is playing scared, you can't really make plays because you don't expect your teammates to follow you up. On the other hand, it's a pretty harsh condemnation when I can't think of anything you did.

At the end of the day, this is the first time on the international stage for Archer, Raina, and Ace. Some of their mistakes are excusable. They can learn from this, and this doesn't need to be the end of this V3 roster.

But they need to play their style. They need to play with confidence. They need to play smart, and understanding when they need to back off.

You can't play carry champs as supports, and you have to actually play to your win conditions, both during draft and during the actual game.

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