

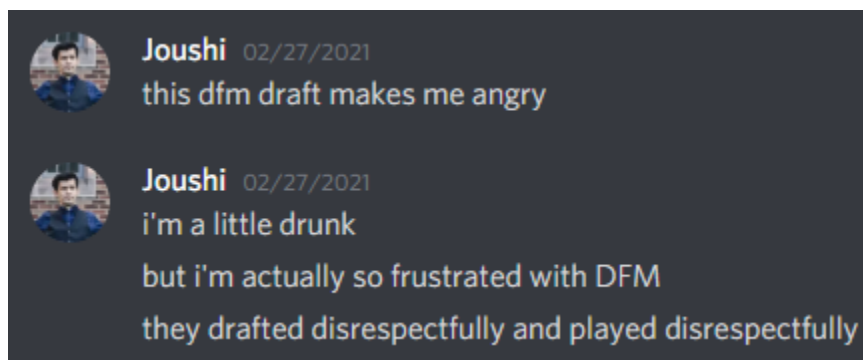
# Only DFM can beat DFM

Only DFM can beat DFM. I tweeted this multiple times last night while watching the semi-finals between Detonation FocusMe and Rascal Jester. The roster that DFM is currently running with Evi, Steal, Aria, Yutapon, and Kazu is not only the strongest roster in the LJJ currently, but might be the strongest possible roster Japan has ever seen, and possibly will see for years to come. If you handpicked a team from all the players that are currently in the league to try and beat DFM, you could not build a roster that is stronger.

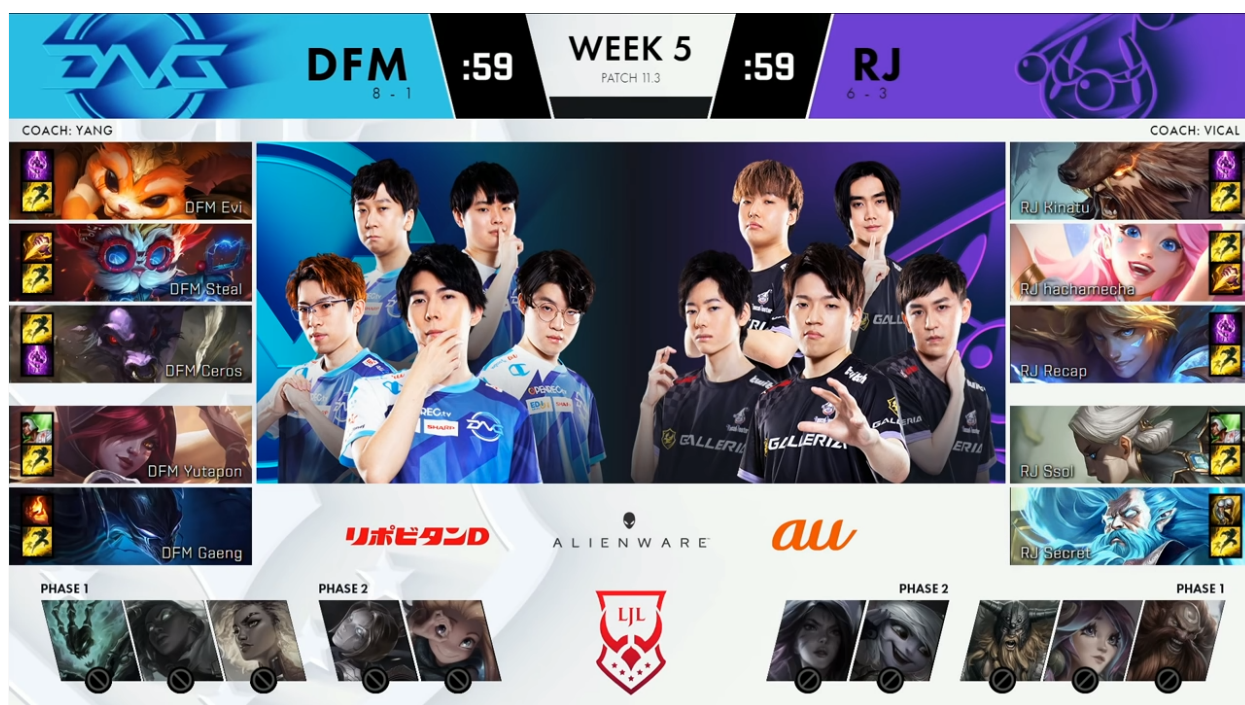
With that in mind, while DFM should be happy that they are currently in the finals, this is the second time that they have dropped games to Rascal Jester because of their own arrogance. For a team that is currently holding the hopes of an entire region to perform internationally, this is unacceptable.

I'll start by saying that at the beginning of the season, I was not expecting Rascal Jester to be anywhere near as strong as they are. They are remarkably good, and Kinatu in particular is a rising star in a region that has had a number of strong top laners. That said, they should not have won a single game against DFM this spring.

Let's go back in time a little bit to the time that Rascal Jester beat DFM in the regular season. Here are some messages I sent to LoLNinja while watching the game.



Here is that draft.



This is one of the worst drafts I have ever seen in professional play. You might not believe me, but after having talked with a number of LCS coaches on the topic, Seraphine on most patches was so ridiculously strong that it actually reduced her presence in pro play because they weren't able to practice it in either solo queue or scrims and therefore weren't comfortable playing it on stage. Nonetheless, it was still incredibly popular with a 56% winrate across mid, bot, and support.

Udyr on patch 11.3 had a presence of 97% across all regions that send representatives to worlds, with nearly twice as many bans as picks, and a 57% winrate.

In a League of Legends draft, due to the fact that there are usually only a handful of overpowered champions at any given time, teams play a game of chicken in how many of these champions red team is allowed to draft. The ideal situation for red is that there are either 0 overpowered champions available after bans are finished, or 3. Blue wants only 1 available, or 4 or more. If there are exactly 2 it's a tie.

The idea here is that red wants to get compensation for any powerful picks being given to blue side. If there are 3 OP champs, blue can only pick 1 and red gets two of them. If there is only 1, blue gets it and red gets none of them. If there are 2, each team gets one of them.

On patch 11.3 there were a number of champions that could be considered in this category of overpowered. Undeniably among them were Seraphine and Udyr. Arguments could be made that Rell, Gragas, Azir, and Renekton were also included, but you could also argue they weren't. If you want to be really generous you could include Kai'sa, Lillia, Alistar, and Olaf. The point that

I'm getting to here is that Gnar, despite being a strong champion, and Evi is a great Gnar pilot, is not broken.

There's a whole lot of deeper theory we could dive into here in terms of counterpicks and matchups and compositions, but in its simplest version Gnar is good against Renekton, ok against Gragas, and weak against Camille, all of whom were incredibly popular at this point in time. Similarly, Renekton, Gragas, and Camille have enough strengths that they could be selected in almost any composition.

Now, if DFM is not planning to pick either of Udyr or Seraphine, that's fine. You just have to ban them. You can't give over FUCKING BOTH OF THEM. Not only are they individually incredibly strong, they are an incredibly potent combo, and Udyr is not great to play against Seraphine, so you're disincentivized to pick it once Seraphine is selected by the other team.

I was already furious after seeing these first 3 picks. But that's ok, DFM are the best team Japan has ever seen yeah? Surely they have a plan to beat these two...

HEIMERDINGER???? I... what? DFM gave over the two strongest champions in the game by a significant margin in exchange for Gnar and Heimerdinger? DFM aren't dumb. This is disrespectful.

The Alistar is a good pick, especially with Rell and Thresh banned. The Ezreal is fine, this could have been almost any ADC and it would have been fine. It hides who is playing Seraphine, but could have also been a mid champion or support since Seraphine is such a flexible and strong champion. Different lines, they're all fine.

Now we have to look at the draft and identify what both teams need from this position. DFM are hopelessly lost in terms of being able to teamfight front to back. Maybe they can pick an ADC with backline access that can dive with Alistar and whatever jungler they pick? Maybe they can create a situation in which Evi can effectively split the map by protecting Gnar from some of his worst matchups? Maybe they can pick a jungler that ganks really heavily and snowball the game early on?

Things they can't do: they can't ban out Heimerdinger's bad matchups, there are too many of them. They can't pick a team that scales or tries to play fights defensively, since they'll get poked and out-sustained.

With this in mind, the easiest option here is to ban out Evi's bad matchups. Seraphine and Udyr are very strong, but they're very strong because they front to back teamfight exceptionally well as a pair. They don't respond to splitpushing very well.

They ban Orianna and Zoe. What does this do? Recap still has shown Syndra, and Syndra is a worse matchup for Heimerdinger than either of these other champions. In fairness, Kinatu has

only played Gnar, Aatrox, and Renekton at this point, and the latter two are not good into Gnar, so it would be hard to ban Camille.

Rascal Jester did a fantastic job at limiting one of DFM's options of having an ADC with backline access by banning Tristana and Kai'sa. The Camille pick was bold, but very strong, and then DFM pick two more dazzlingly bad champions in Xayah and Nocturne. Nocturne is unimpressive as a solo diver, especially into Seraphine and Ezreal, and can't snowball the game by ganking early. Xayah has no backline access, and is only useful here because of her ability to not die to Camille.

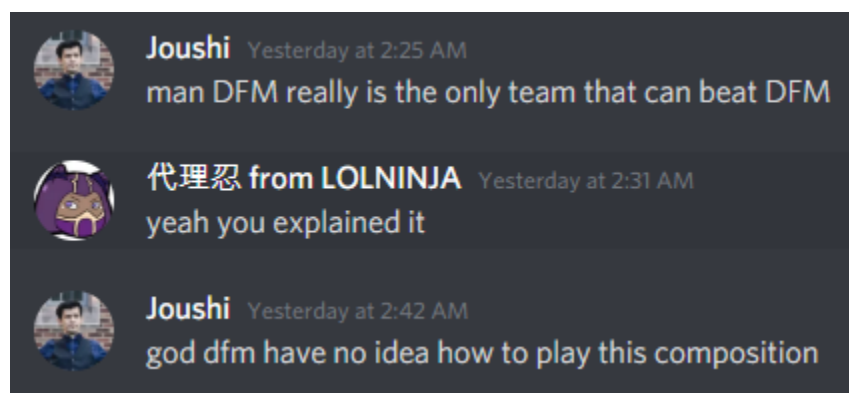
The Zilean pick from Rascal Jester is imaginative, as it allows Udyr to run fast enough to actually be an effective engage champion, and allows him to function better as a solo tank because he will be revived. He scales incredibly well and isn't punished by Heimerdinger. More traditional picks here would have been Rakan, Nautilus, or Mao'kai, if we're looking at things that Secret had already played at that point. Rakan would be my personal favorite as it pairs well with Ezreal and gives them a secondary frontliner that sets up for Seraphine's ult well.

If you look at the end result however, how in the world is DFM supposed to win? In isolation, Gnar loses lane. Nocturne can't gank before level 6 effectively. Midlane is a wash. Bot lane has a stronger 2v2 but struggles to actually find kills due to the range of Ezreal and Seraphine. DFM can't teamfight, they can't split. They literally just have to be better players. Which, like, maybe they can do. But if that is your primary win condition, that means you have lost the draft.

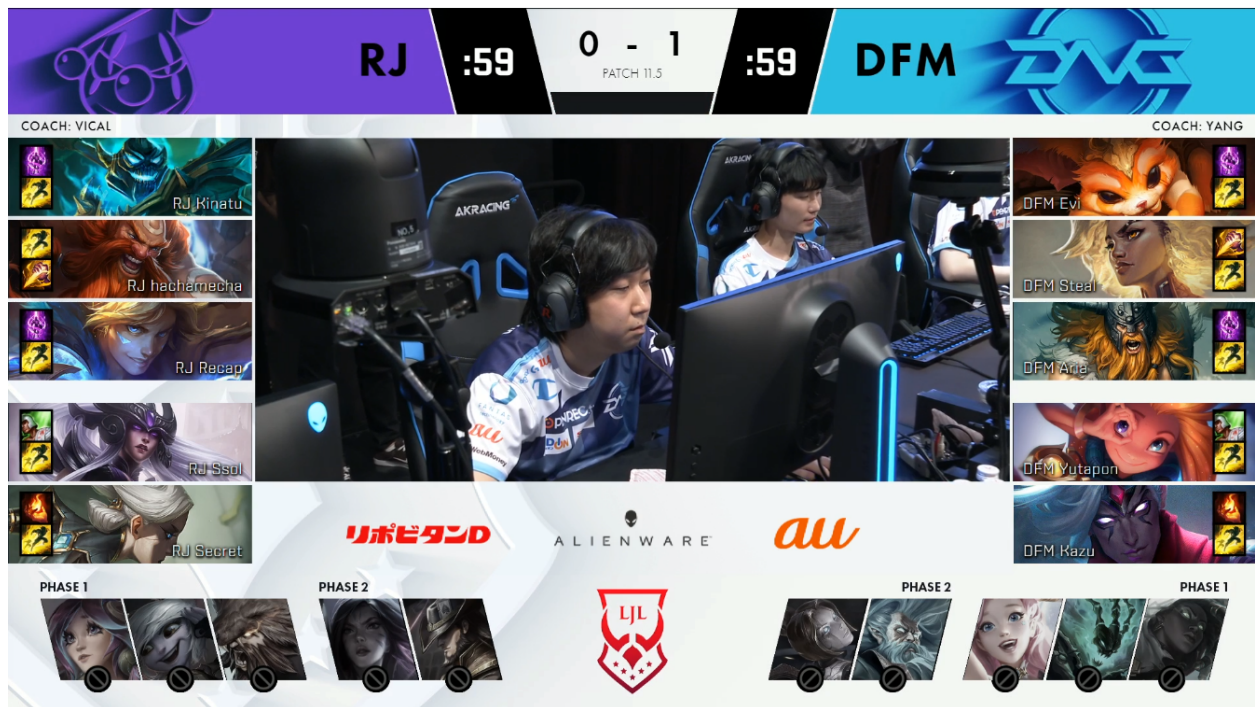
By the time the 15 minute mark rolls around, Evi was indeed the better player. Despite dying, he's handily up 30 cs and has taken his opponent's turret. However, the rest of the map is losing. The game has become unwinnable if Rascal Jester is half decent.

Alright, let's move on to their other loss against Rascal Jester, Game 2 of the Semifinals.

Here's what I sent to LolNinja during the game.



To their credit, while I was not thrilled by this draft from them, it wasn't so ridiculously bad that it's worth going over in the same way. Here it is.



There are a couple of things to go over though, and some decisions DFM has to make. Firstly is asking how Yutapon is going to build. Varus has options to build lethality and become a poke champion, or he can build crit and be a strong auto attacker. If he builds the former, DFM are committed to playing a 4-1 split, since they won't have sufficient DPS during fights to win them, and there is enough engage between Hecarim, Gragas, and Camille, to consistently get fights started if Varus is ever in auto attack range. If he builds the latter, they can feasibly look to take teamfights, and are more well rounded, and are a pretty brawly composition that wants to find a small poke advantage before fights start.

Similarly, Steal needs to pick between Stridebreaker, Goredrinker, and Chemtank. Stridebreaker does the most damage but has the least survivability, and Chemtank is at the other extreme. Goredrinker is somewhere in the middle, but is plausible this game due to the 3 melee champions Rascal Jester is playing. DFM don't have a primary tank unless Olaf goes Chemtank, because regardless of what you think of Rell, she will not have sufficient gold as a support to be able to perform the role of primary tank effectively.

DFM chose Stridebreaker Olaf and Lethality Varus. This is fine and playable, the Hail of Blades from Yutapon is weird in this context, but holy crap did they have no idea how to play a poke composition.

DFM then proceed to play some of the most disrespectful and unintelligent laning phases of their lives. Like what is this? Are you expecting your opponents to not respond properly?

<https://clips.twitch.tv/IncredulousCuteWeasel4Head-Wp9K-In0Vgekd7Zh>



<https://clips.twitch.tv/DeadRealPigFrankerZ-PeMG8F81IFUsbDH9>

<https://clips.twitch.tv/ThirstyArbitraryPelicanOptimizePrime-hNBstXDOnxzyBEv>

This last one is particularly bad. They see Hecarim is looking to dive them, they don't see Syndra mid lane, and without seeing them show up somewhere else, they just walk back to their turret and die while Olaf is top and neither of their solo laners have TP.

I actually want to highlight how far back Kinatu is playing here, because it looks weird. He's playing as far back as he is because he knows Olaf isn't bottom for this play, and is expecting to get dove himself. There's an argument that he's over-respecting DFM here, as it is still difficult for Olaf and Gnar to dive Camille, but he recognizes that DFM ought to try and find a play on the top side of the map and doesn't give it to them.

Luckily for DFM, they are good enough at CSing and they take the entire top lane turret so they end up very even in gold by the 10 minute mark. This game is still playable, but difficult and requires a lot of discipline.

Instead, we spend the rest of the game watching DFM playing as though they are playing a teamfight composition instead of a poke composition. This clip might be the only exception.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/SpoopyCloudyIcecreamChefFrank-UKcNpjNer3xNcYcM>

This is what poke compositions do. They line up, throw skillshots back and forth, and because you have higher quality poke tools, and can play from far enough way that it's hard to engage on you, you chip at your opponents' health until they can't fight you with a reasonable chance of winning. What you don't do is take fights when both teams are at even health, because you typically lose because you don't have the DPS to actually take fights.

Let's look at this fight as an example of why.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/CredulousSpicyKathyThisIsSparta-xKjw2pGiQ9j3Pe4M>

If we're generous and assume that Kazu lands his CC and Yutapon lands his ultimate onto Ssol, the fight is STILL bad. You don't have the DPS to kill Gragas and Hecarim, and there are no tools to actually kill this Ezreal, so you have to try and kill the frontline. Rascal Jester actually does a very good job at punishing the missed abilities by going for this dive, which is not something every team would be willing to do.

Here's another example.

<https://clips.twitch.tv/CredulousKindHamOSSloth-a-rRIVeMbwVHObi2>

They're down about 2-3k gold, which doesn't help, but they also start a fight on even HP while Zoe isn't nearby. This is a recipe for disaster and shows a systemic failure for DFM to understand what this composition does and how to play it. It probably shouldn't have been quite as disastrous as it was, like Recap should have died, but this still results in RJ winning the Baron.

This is the last fight of the game before RJ win.

[https://clips.twitch.tv/IncredulousWildLarkNerfBlueBlaster-kw6NvjqETWvt\\_7Dg](https://clips.twitch.tv/IncredulousWildLarkNerfBlueBlaster-kw6NvjqETWvt_7Dg)

The fact that DFM come so close to winning this fight with a worse comp for fighting and down 6k gold is a huge testament to how strong DFM is as a team. But League of Legends is nothing if not a game where your decisions earlier in the game affect outcomes later in the game, and because DFM consistently failed to play their comp correctly, this fight ends up losing by a very narrow margin.

Games 1, 3, and 4 were closer to what I was expecting from DFM.

DFM is the only team that can beat DFM. Rascal Jester is a strong team, but they have only beaten DFM when DFM are making massive mistakes. To Rascal Jester's credit, the only other team to have been able to punish DFM's mistakes this year has been Sengoku Gaming, which was a team much easier to predict being a strong team.

Because of DFM's strength, we need to hold them to a high standard. We need to expect them to win, and not only win, but to look clean and controlled doing it. We need to see them understand how to play the compositions they play. Anything less is a disappointment.

Author: [@Joushi\\_TV](#)

Publisher: [lolninja.net](http://lolninja.net)