



THiRD SHiFT

A Gearbox Podcast

- MATT:** Welcome, everybody, to the second episode of THiRD SHiFT. I'm one of your hosts, Matt, and with me as always is our other host, Eric. Eric, how you been doing this week?
- ERIC:** Aw, man. The Lootpocalypse this last weekend, been playing the hell out of that. I got quite a few piece of gear. Also, a little bit of real life, took the kids out once again to the park, played a little bit. They had fun, ice cream, the usual. Pretty good week overall. You?
- MATT:** Been pretty good. This week, had a little friends' get-together, so I didn't get as much Lootpocalypse as you did. Other than that, just been chilling, playing a lot of *Battleborn*. Went out to pub trivia last night and got third place for my first ever time, so that was pretty fun.
- ERIC:** Outstanding. As we discussed, I would've been terrible at that, so good thing you didn't bring me to that one.
- MATT:** That's very true. But also this week, I think both of us -- the whole team, actually, has been really excited with the number of views, the number of downloads we've been getting for our first episode, so like to say thank you to everybody out there who checked us out. And more to come, obviously.
- ERIC:** Oh, yeah. I'd also just like to second that, thank everyone who took a listen, downloaded, et cetera. It's awesome. We hope to keep going and entertaining you guys the best we can.
- MATT:** Absolutely. So as before, we're going to start off with the This Week in Gearbox segment, and this week it's pretty much probably going to be the whole show because Gearbox dropped a whole lot of info on us for the patch that's dropping right now, today, as we're recording this.
- ERIC:** Starting things off, we're going to go ahead and talk about the diminishing returns on quick melees. Beforehand, I guess there was an issue with people quick-meleeing everybody into walls and pinning them down, et cetera. They went



ahead and put on a diminishing return which will hopefully, in theory, take care of that issue.

MATT: Yeah. They were saying on the stream, I guess, Miko could -- using quote fingers, here -- take you on a magical ride, just meleeing you all the way across the map. So now after the first hit, each hit afterwards is going to push you back a shorter amount so you can't just keep shoving everybody off, infinitely into space. That's not something that I ever really ran into, personally, but I tend to not use my quick melee attack, unless it's in Story Mode. I don't know about you.

ERIC: Yeah. Pretty much for me, it was always Story Mode. I didn't know it was a thing in PvP, which shows you that I'm not a pro.

MATT: So in addition to that, one of the big things that's going to go not over all characters, but over a good chunk of characters, is they've implemented -- altered in Galilea's case -- a wound mechanic. And now every character who had this wound ability, it's basically a debuff. It's going to drop the healing, health regen and life steal that you receive by 60%.

ERIC: Correct. And the characters that are affected real quick, on a rundown, are going to be Attikus, Caldarius, Deande, Galilea, we got ISIC on that list, we've got Mellka, we've got Phoebe, and I believe that's it. Actually, that's not it.

MATT: Whiskey Foxtrot, too.

ERIC: Whiskey Foxtrot. Thank you for the correction, good sir.

MATT: No problem.

ERIC: But, yeah. You want to check those guys out because they've got new and/or changed wound abilities, so definitely.

MATT: Yeah. That's definitely something that, again, on the stream, they went a little more in-depth into it, saying that people have been running a lot of double-healer -- not builds, but teams. So you'll have an Alani and a Miko. So while you're throwing damage on that Alani, Miko'll run over and heal her, vice versa. So this way when you -- if you're, say, Attikus or Caldarius, you're engaging on the healer or the tank -- if he's got a pocket healer -- run up, throw a wound on him, then you can do a lot more damage to him without them being able to just regen it back in a snap.

ERIC: Yeah, exactly. Or like your first example there with Miko and Alani, you put a whole bunch of damage and a wound on Alani. She's trying to take care of herself. That allows you time to go ahead and try to knock out that Miko.

MATT: Yep, yep. I guess that's a little overall kind of stuff that's going to be hitting a lot



of characters all at once. After that, I guess we'll just kind of do a little bit of a deeper dive into some of these characters because a lot of them have fairly significant changes. And some, even if it's just a quick change, it can change up how you play. So, if you want to start us off there, Eric, with your main girl.

ERIC: Oh, yeah. I will go ahead and get us going here with Alani. I'm very excited about these changes, actually, because, as everybody knows, they recently nerfed her and I do believe they nerfed her a little too hard. And it shows right here because they went ahead and increased Alani's base damage by 20%, so that in itself is going to hugely assist with making her competitive again. They also went ahead and increased her sprint speed by 10%. And for all of you who've played Alani, you know the sadness, the beginning of the match when you're watching everybody run ahead of you and steal all the shards because you can only walk. Apparently, that was a thing.

MATT: That's me.

ERIC: Yes.

MATT: I do that.

ERIC: That would be Matt. He steals all the shards. And you show up to the game about two minutes after everyone's already engaged in battle. So that is amazing. I'm super excited about that. On a downside, they did nerf Geyser. They went ahead and decreased its range of effectiveness. They also went ahead and reduced Geyser's bind effect from 2 seconds to 1.5 seconds. And I really think they should've just stuck with reducing its capture range to start off with and see how that went. I think it's going a little bit too far by taking it down by taking it down by 0.5 seconds. I know it doesn't sound like a lot, but the way I use it, I use it as a control ability. So by time I feel secure that I'm not about to die and turn to actually get a couple rounds in, I think that 0.5 seconds is really going to make it so, myself, I'm not going to be able to actually do any damage. It's just going to be used to get out of trouble.

MATT: But for someone like me who is always -- well, not always, but is so sick of getting bubbled up in the air and just going, "Oh, I'm bubbled. I'm just hanging out here, hoping not to die. Please heal me. Maybe." It'll be nice to have a little more control over what's going on for someone on the receiving end, so I can see it both ways. Plus, I don't think the reduction of the radius is that big of a deal. It's only 15%, so it shouldn't really be noticeable, but you never know.

ERIC: No. Yeah, I definitely don't mind that particular change. I was just a little bit sad to see the 2 to 1.5. But overall, I do think it's fair because I can say, having played Alani quite a bit, that there's been multiple occasions where I've Geysered three or four members of the opposite team up at once.



MATT: True.

ERIC: And while hilarious and great, I do believe that is a little bit overpowered. So overall, I'm pretty happy with the changes they've made to her and can't wait to get in and play her.

MATT: Yeah. And next up, another character who had a lot of big changes done was Ambra. They talked a lot about this on the stream that they kind of want to focus on her a little bit and have her be putting out Sunspots all the time, all over the place. And as someone who's played a little bit of her, that's -- it seems like in Story Mode you can do that a lot more than in PvP, I think just because everyone's running around, swarming everywhere. It kind of sucks up the damage and the heals that you can throw out from those Sunspots. So they've reduced the overall cooldown on Sunspot so you can throw them out quicker. Plus, they're integrating the heat mechanic in there so every time you use a melee strike that'll use up some of your heat bar, that refreshes the cooldown on Sunspot by one second. So you can run in, use your little health-drain staff ability, build up heat, throw out a Sunspot, and then whack people with your staff to reduce that cooldown, then throw out more and more and more Sunspots. Just Sunspots everywhere. Sunspot-a-palooza.

ERIC: Yeah. I was actually really excited to see that they reduced the cooldown of Sunspot from 12 seconds to 8 seconds, along with, of course, making it heal for a lot more. I think that's going to make her much more viable as a healer on the team. I know right now a lot of people use her for DPS so, with these changes, I think we'll really see her come back as a healer, a strong healer, much more.

MATT: Yeah, because it's always kind of a pain when you have every other role on the team filled, and then the person who's left chooses Ambra as the healer and then just kind of rolls DPS with her because the heals aren't that great. So it'll be definitely be nice to get a little bit more of a boost from the Ambras in that case.

ERIC: Mm-hm. And for our old boy Attikus, they went ahead and increased his base health by 20%, which this was a big deal because a lot of people wanted to use Attikus as a tank. But he was pretty squishy, so it wasn't really an optimal solution for him. And they also changed it so his Pounce now silences enemies for 1.5 seconds instead of knocking them back, which I think that's amazing because he gets in there and does a whole ton of damage. But if he's knocking them back, it's kind of defeating the purpose of him as a character, in my opinion.

MATT: Yeah. That's one thing that I noticed even -- I'm not a big Attikus player, but as someone who has played against many Attikuses -- Attikusi? -- I would always notice that he'd Pounce behind me, which would knock me forward into his team. But I would be able to turn around and start running back to where I was before he could even reach me. So this will help out those Attikus players that they can do a lot of more burst/sustained damage just by keeping you there so they can



keep punching you and wailing on you and electrifying you and all the other good stuff that he does.

ERIC: Exactly. And they did -- also, as a side note, here -- increase the damage of Pounce by 33%, so its initial damage has also been increased, which only helps him be a powerhouse on the battlefield.

MATT: Yep, yep. Again, in the realm of keeping you where he can hit you, instead of being able to knock you up for his fully-charged Hedronic Eruption, instead it's going to slow you. So it's going to -- they mentioned this a lot on the stream of just he'd come in and hit you with an ability, and then he wouldn't be able to follow-up with anything because you'd be up in the air, you'd be knocked away. This is just something, again, to keep you there so he can keep laying that damage in like he's supposed to.

ERIC: Awesome. Can't wait to use him.

MATT: Next down the list, we got a couple characters with some pretty small tweaks. Benedict's got a little bit more base health and his rocket launcher does a little bit more damage, which should be nice. I've only played a couple games as Benedict, but I found him kind of squishy. And starting with Level 1 and at lower levels, I didn't do a whole lot of damage with him. He just seemed like any other character, basically.

ERIC: Yeah. The only thing I've seen on him is mostly just controlling lanes and being a nuisance to the opposite side.

MATT: Yeah, yeah. Definitely. And next up, a character I've been playing a lot of recently, Caldarius. He doesn't get a lot of changes, here. He just gets a wound on his Energy Blade. So he can throw a two-second wound out any time he smacks you with his melee, which may seem a little over-powered if you're just looking at it face-value. But playing Caldarius, he is pretty squishy. You generally don't want to be in there engaging with a lot of people at melee range. But in another instance, which I've had before, if you're going up against someone like an Alani, and you're trying to engage with her and she just keeps healing herself, pop in, swipe her, throw a wound on her, then you'll be able to take her out, hopefully a little bit easier.

ERIC: True that. They also changed a couple things for Deande. They went ahead and increased her attack speed on the Tessurim War Fans by 15% and they also made the transition between the Tessurim War Fans a little bit different to feel, I guess they said, more responsive. So I don't play her very much, but that's more damage for her, which I think she needs, because, honestly, I don't play her and I also don't see her played that much. So maybe this will change things up a little bit.



MATT: In keeping with that giving her more damage, making her more viable, they are going to increase the damage of Blink Storm, which is her ultimate, by 35%, which I think is a good thing, even as someone who has been on the receiving end of it many, many, many times, it does seem kind of weak that I can get caught in it, stunned, wailed on for it almost seems like three full seconds at times, but then I can still just turn around and run away. So it'll be nice for Deande players and feel a little more balanced if, "Oh, you're caught in it. Well, she's doing a lot of damage to you."

ERIC: Exactly. Then also Galilea, as we mentioned earlier, she kind of got a couple nerfs. Her Level 1 right helix augment, Calamity, wound debuff went from 100% to 60% for five seconds to align with the new wound debuff. Also, her Level 2 right helix augment, Mark of the Feeble, went from 100% to 60% as well. So all you Galilea players out there, she kind of just got a little nerf. I still think she's going to be OP, so I wouldn't worry too much.

MATT: Yeah. The way she would use that desecrate, it was just nuts. So I'm glad it's a little more in line with everyone else. We'll see what happens with it.

ERIC: Well, we'll see what happens, but I still think she's going to be OP considering she has everything at her disposal, as I've argued a billion times with you.

MATT: Oh, that's true. That's true.

ERIC: We'll leave that for a side topic some other day.

MATT: I was going to say, that can be a whole other episode: Why Eric Hates Galilea.

ERIC: Yes.

MATT: It'll be perfect.

ERIC: I like that episode.

MATT: So another character who got a -- he only really had one ability change, but apparently people have been kind of flipping out about it a little bit is Ghalt. At Level 3, you used to be able to choose a skill that would give him 100% more range on his shotgun blasts, and now there's going to change that to he gets extra shield and shield recharge per second. So they're trying to make him more of what he basically, as a shotgunner, really should be: close-range character. He's going to want to throw down a trap, he's going to want to hook you into it, and he's going to want to blast you with a shotgun, as opposed to staying at mid- to long-range and not really sniping, but laying down effective damage at those long ranges.

ERIC: Precisely. And I 100% agree with that change because that's what his character



was intended to be was someone who trapped you, hooked you in there, got in close, and laid down a few rounds of outstanding damage, and then put you down.

MATT: Yep, yep.

ERIC: ISIC, he hasn't too many changes. It's basically just his Omega Strike now has a 40-second duration.

MATT: Yeah, and I know they said on the stream that was just to prevent people from, "I'm going into Omega Strike Mode in the base after I die and I'm just walking the whole way to the front in that mode, just blasting out damage as far as the eye can see, as much as I want." All the ISICs that I've played against who've been good, who've done a good job of killing me, it seemed like they were in Omega Strike Mode all the time.

ERIC: I actually just last night had that happen to me. I was playing an Incursion round and he opened up Omega Strike at the Sentry, and we simply could not push through because it was just going and going and going and going. So this was definitely a change needed and I don't think it's that bad of a nerf. I think it's pretty fair.

MATT: Yeah, yeah. I think that's pretty good. It puts him more in line with all the other characters who -- you have an ult, you pop it, it runs for a little while, and then it goes on cooldown, versus, oh, you pop it and you're just killing everybody forever.

ERIC: Unless somebody can get in close, obviously.

MATT: Right, right.

ERIC: But if you're smart, once again, in an Incursion round, you get next to the Sentry and pop it and, well, you are immortal.

MATT: Yep. A couple other real minor changes for him, he had one stun, they're dropping that down from about a second duration from two to one. And he got one wound debuff that you can choose if you've got the mutation unlocked. I guess it's the Level 5 mutation. It'll throw a one-second wound debuff on you instead of a slow. So another character with a wound, again, you'll have to play him a decent amount to be able to access it at all, but it's there.

ERIC: Yeah. I'm looking forward to actually giving him a shot. After seeing what kind of power he has put on the battlefield a few times now, I really want to play him and see what it's all about.

MATT: Yeah, definitely. Next up on the list is Kelvin. He only really had one major change and that's they're slowing his movement speed bonus when he's in his



little, twinkly, fairy, ice form that he just flies through and stuns you forever, and runs away. His speed's going to be going down and then they're also going to reduce the duration of that stun so you're not just sitting there forever, watching Kelvin fly around you, stun your whole team, have everybody else jump on you, and then you're all dead.

ERIC: Yes, this was very much needed. I know a lot of Kelvins used it as an escape plan, but, honestly, even as an escape plan, you'd see them do a couple whirlwinds around the opposite team and then get out of town. And that was just extremely OP. And a quick correction on that, Matt. It was called, He Went to Navi Form, okay?

MATT: Oh, yeah. Hey, listen.

ERIC: Exactly.

MATT: But, yeah, I think that was another thing they mentioned specifically on the stream is that they want it to be used more as an escape versus just to be able to engage, then chomp on everybody and do all the damage, and then escape, too. So just kind of weakening it quite a bit so you can only really use it the way they intended you to use it.

ERIC: Moving on to ol' Kleese. He went ahead and got his base health raised by 88%. And let me tell you, that was needed. I've heard nothing but the fact that he's squishy and needed more. He can't tank. Et cetera, et cetera. That's all I ever hear here, even with his Rifts. So that just proves that if everybody calls out that they want a change, it happens because it sure as heck did. They also went ahead and increased the projectile speed of his energy blasts from his Wrist Cannon, so he's going to be a little bit more effective in dealing damage, which is very nice. And they also reduced the damage of his Wrist Cannon after selecting his Level 3 mutation, Quantum Precision, by 30%. Not too many changes going on, but all of them pretty nice.

MATT: There was one that I was -- I haven't played Kleese myself, but I've seen a lot of Kleeses. And it seems like -- I'm just wondering if increasing his base health is going to make him a little too powerful. Because I notice when he starts, yeah, he's squishy, but once he hits around Level 5, Level 4 or somewhere around there, usually any match that I'm in with a Kleese, he's right in there because he's popping four different Rifts down. He's just the king of the battlefield and it's hard to take him down, well, obviously, especially if he's got a pocket healer. So I'm just wondering if having him be able to be in there right from the start is going to make those later iterations of him -- when he's Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 -- even tougher and even more...

ERIC: Even more powerful?



MATT: Even more powerful. Even more irritating.

ERIC: Yes. I get what you're saying and he could possibly become more irritating because of his health getting raised so much. But I honestly don't find him to be a big problem. I really think if you can scare him off those Rifts, he's not that big a threat. It's only around those Rifts that he really, in my opinion, causes a lot of trouble. So if you get the right characters around, you can just take out his Rifts and/or just do enough heavy damage to push him off the Rifts and he's a nonfactor.

MATT: True, true.

ERIC: A lot of him as a character relied upon those Rifts, as it should because that is one of his main abilities. But I think he just needed a little boost just to make him a little more tempting for people to go ahead and give a shot.

MATT: Yeah, true, true. Next up on the list, we got Marquis. Another real quick character, not a whole lot going on, but they reduced the bonus damage from his three stackable shots from 50% down to 25%, so hopefully no more instant dying before you can even realize what's going on because that happened to me all the time. You'd hear the shots, but you wouldn't really notice because they didn't do crazy damage. Then that third one, you're just dead.

ERIC: Yeah. I can't tell you how many times I fell to that.

MATT: Mm-hm. And then the other thing, which I've seen good Marquises do, is they fixed kind of like a bug where if Marquis was peaking down on your Sentry and he could see its shield arch radius, he could -- well, obviously, he would be able to shoot down the shield. But then apparently he was still able to hit that, basically, now-invisible area to damage the Sentry's health. And I'm glad they fixed that because even though -- well, the only time I've seen it happen, it was on my team because I was dead, watching our Marquis do this to the other Sentry. But it's just not fair. If you're able to damage the Sentry, the Sentry should be able to damage you.

ERIC: I agree with that. It's a good change. Further down the list, we got Mellka with a couple changes, but I'm going to let Matt take this one because he plays Mellka a lot more than I do.

MATT: Mm-hm. They were mentioning on the stream that Mellka's poison was super annoying and you'd just be poisoned forever and all this stuff. And I've complained about that myself where I'll go in as an Oscar Mike, get poisoned and run off, and still be getting poisoned the whole run back to wherever I'm going. So what they did was they reduced the duration of Venom about halfway from eight seconds to four seconds, but they buffed its damage. So it'll be less annoying, but you'll still end up dead.



ERIC: And what'd they buff the damage by? Fifty percent.

MATT: Yeah.

ERIC: So what's funny about that, boys and girls, is they took the duration of Venom down from eight to four, but they increased its damage by 50%, so you're still going to get wrecked just like you would have before, it'll only happen faster.

MATT: Yeah. But at least this way they won't be still ticking that damage five seconds later where you can stack another Venom canister on top of them.

ERIC: Because all's it does is destroy your hope of surviving now. Instead of thinking you might survive through that eight seconds and hoping around foolishly, wandering around and hiding, you'll simply just die in the four seconds and you can get the pain and suffering over with a lot faster.

MATT: Although, as a Mellka, I do appreciate that because, I know I've talked to you about this many times, I can't even count the number of times I've been all over somebody -- all over a Toby, all over a Rath or somebody -- and I throw my Venom on him, I'm throwing the regular damage on him, and they're running and they're running and they're running. And the Venom keeps ticking, ticking, ticking, and they make it to the supply station or the Alani comes right around the corner at that six-/seven-second range and heals them up right before it was going to tick that last second. So for me, obviously, I'd be biased in that situation, but it'll be a lot nicer to get some fairly easier kills on them.

ERIC: And now that you say that, that actually makes sense. This is something I didn't even think of. By decreasing the duration down to four seconds, it'll allow you to actually get the kills instead of assists a lot as well because you'll be doing that heavy damage within that four seconds, possibly taking them down. And that's where all of Mellka's damage comes from, if I'm not mistaken.

MATT: Oh, yeah, yeah. Her Machine Pistol lays rounds like nobody's business, but they're all just beestings. They're just little flicks. She's flicking you with her finger, basically. But the other thing that they changed on her to help her get some more kills is now if you can throw Venom on an enemy, run in and hit them with a Spike, that'll now throw the wound debuff on him. So even if in that four seconds that they're Venomed-up, your Alani comes running in with a super-heal for them, if you hit them with that wound, that's going to drop that healing amount by 60% and maybe you can still get that kill.

ERIC: All right. Well, moving on, we got Miko. Real quick, Miko got the base health reduced by 16% and they also reduced the movement speed on a couple skills, which I think was needed. Miko seems to just stick around forever. The movement speed on him or her -- I'm not sure which.

MATT: Them. Them. I think it's them.

ERIC: Them. It? It, maybe?

MATT: I think it's -- in the Lore, it's technically a colony of spores, so it's a them.

ERIC: Okay, them.

MATT: Them is an it? Whatever.

ERIC: Okay. We'll go with them. That sounds good. They were able to move around extremely fast. They were just hard to take out and I just find Miko to be, overall, kind of annoying. So for me, I'm extremely happy that the base health has gone down a bit and they won't be going quite as fast around the battlefield.

MATT: Yeah. Apparently, that was another thing they mentioned on the stream as that Miko could get hit and get a movement speed buff, and just run away from you all the time. And like you said, no matter what character I am, I'll be focusing fire on that Miko and they/him/it is just out of Dodge, just gone before I can lay any real burst damage down. So I'm glad to see it.

ERIC: Mm-hm.

MATT: All right. Next up on the list is Montana. He just had a couple real, tiny tweaks. Some DOT effects are effective by skill damage instead of attack damage, which seems to make sense to me. If you're interested in more info on that, you can check the patch notes. I haven't played Montana very much and so I don't really have much to say on that.

ERIC: Yeah, neither do I. I haven't touched him. Orendi, her Level 1 right helix augment, Burned and Busted, it now reveals cloaked enemies near her instead of where she places her [Shadowfire] Pilar. And just real quick, as a person who plays Orendi quite a bit, I feel that that just made sense. I never understood why you'd ever take that ability as it was because why would you care if there were cloaked enemies where you're putting your [Shadowfire] Pilar down or not? If you're putting your [Shadowfire] Pilar down, you're just putting it down to do some damage. It's much more effective as they have it now and much more tempting to use so that way you can see if there's a Shayne and Aurox, anybody who can cloak, can go invis, if they get within a vicinity of you, you'll see them. And that, I think, is very useful.

MATT: Yeah. I think it's also good to -- with as many stealth characters as they already have, which is three, right, and then Pendles coming soon, who they say is going to be another stealth character...

ERIC: Him, I'm worried about.

MATT: ...it just makes sense to have at least one character who can reliably, "Hey, I can see the stealth characters." So if you were able to see that there were going to be stealth characters on the other side -- which I think both of us agree as something that we'd like to see in the game, maybe see what the other team's picking...

ERIC: That would be a great function.

MATT: ...so you can have a little bit of counter-play going on. But it just makes sense to have at least one character who can bust a stealth team up and say, "Oh, look. There's the Deande. There's the Oscar Mike." You can point them out. You can mark them. You can do all the good stuff.

ERIC: Yeah, I agree. I agree with that wholeheartedly.

MATT: And speaking of my boy, Oscar Mike, they did a really minor change to him. So for his Level 2 augment, I and pretty much everyone -- and again, they mentioned this on the stream -- was picking the Fragcendiary Grenades, which lays the giant AOE down on the ground. And no one was picking the Nades On Nades, which spawns child grenades, which does higher burst damage, but obviously doesn't leave the AOE, the damage over time. They basically buffed up Nades On Nades. They reduced the projectile speed of the child grenades, so it's got a tighter explosion radius instead of just -- it would pop off and then go in this giant cone, like, one, two, and three, and they would shoot past anybody that you just hit. In my experience, it was basically worthless, unless it was in Story Mode and you just had a giant wad of enemies all in one place. There wasn't really any real reason to use it.

ERIC: And Phoebe, they went ahead and did something I was very happy to hear about because I also love playing her. They went ahead and increased the projectile speed of her rapiers from Blade Rush -- which, from what I hear has been a running joke that those things are so darn slow, it's almost impossible to use them effectively. And after playing her for a while, I don't quite see that, but, hey, I'm happy to have them sped up because it definitely does make it a lot easier. I'm also excited about the fact that if you choose the right helix, she will now apply a wound on her Blade Rush instead of doing a shield penetration. And overall, I found that shield penetration just isn't a big deal because if you're putting solid damage down, that shield goes down rather quickly. So this wound, I think, will help her as a character much more than the shield penetration ever did. And then lastly, they went ahead and made her Phasegate damage affected by skill damage gear, which, once again, can only help make her even better. So can't wait to get in there and try her out.

MATT: Yep. Next up on the list, we got Rath with a kind of a minor nerf; only one thing really going on with him there. They increased the cooldown of Dreadwind for



about 20 more seconds, so he's not going to be in there spinning it to win on your team the entire freaking battle, at least hopefully. Then a character that's near and dear to my heart, I've played over 50 matches with her: Reyna. One of the only things they did was -- and again, they spoke about this on the stream -- they increased the push distances of Photonic Ward, so when you throw up her giant bubble, it always would push enemies back a little bit. I always found that by the time I threw up the dome and they got pushed back, by the time it zoomed back into first-person mode for me, generally, they were able to run right back inside the shield and start hitting me before I could do anything. So I'm definitely interested to see how far it knocks them back and how much more effective that ult's going to be that they can't just run straight in and do more damage to me.

ERIC: Awesome. And they also went ahead and changed Toby a little bit. They increased the damage of his Core Discharge by 15% and they also increased the damage of Core Discharge after selecting his Level 10 helix by 25%. So not too much, but basically just a little buff to his damage, which, from what I hear, he needed. But in all honesty, I don't play him too much. So for those that do, please sound off and let us know all about it.

MATT: Mm-hm. And last on this list, as far as characters and their actual tweaks, we got Whiskey Foxtrot. One of the big things they were mentioning is they wanted to change up Scrap Cannon. So now it can't be primed where as an ability where you could set it, run up to somebody and then fire it. Now it's just an instant fire. So now Scrap Cannon also applies a wound whenever you hit somebody with it, so he's another one of those characters who can really help out against a tank who's got a pocket healer or another one of those double-healer setups. Or if you're one-on-one against, say, an Alani -- I always pick Alani because I always end up one-on-one with Alani -- he'll be able to hang with her a little bit better.

ERIC: So there are a ton of changes to all the characters in these patch notes and I want to encourage all of you that didn't hear about your character from us, please go take a look in the patch notes and/or just hop on at this point and check your character out. We want to hear from you what you thought of the changes to your character since, obviously, we cannot and do not play all of them quite yet.

MATT: Yeah. Obviously, we have all the patch notes here, but being able to tell you what a lot of these mean as far as the character feel goes, we won't be able to tell you that because we haven't played all these characters, and certain not played them in-depth enough to be experts or be masters at any.

ERIC: Yeah. Some of these numbers are literally just that, number for us. So just get in there, check it out, let us know what you think, and hopefully we'll get in there and try out those characters at some point ourselves.

MATT: Another thing they've done is they've reduced the requirements for a lot of the Lore challenges on these characters. A lot of characters had "kill X number of

enemies with X ability" or "kill Character Y, X number of times". And they've dropped a lot of those down. I know for Ambra, she had one where it was kill another Ambra 25 times, and now they've dropped that down to kill or assist in killing an Ambra five times. Everything's a lot easier, so you can unlock a lot more and learn more about those characters a lot quicker.

ERIC: Well, and I know you're a little sad to hear the difficulty level's been reduced, but they did it for, I think, two reasons: one being some of the unlocks were extremely difficult, considering that when they chose these, it was early on and they didn't quite have the character pinned down in the role they wanted. So some of these Lore unlocks were just extremely difficult with the final product. And secondly, I really feel like they want you to play a lot of characters. And by having these unlocks to be extremely challenging and take quite a bit of time, that's doing the exact opposite of what they were going for. You're going to focus mainly on one character until you get all those unlocks and that's just going to be counterproductive to the fact that they want you to try out different characters, do different roles, have a great time. So I think overall it's a good change and I look forward to actually getting on and seeing that I have quite a few unlocks already completed.

MATT: Yeah. I'm kind of, of two minds about it. I mean, I love the Lore, so I love being able to unlock it quicker, learn more about each of those characters. But at the same time, as someone who -- like I said, I've played over 50 matches with Reyna. It was kind of nice to see that I was getting so close to that last unlock without necessarily, "Oh, I got to kill everybody with my Pistol. I have to focus on doing this." Just as a matter of playing her a lot, I was going to be able to unlock that last, hopefully, really sweet Lore piece. So I mean, now that they've dropped the requirement on that from a thousand to a hundred, everybody's going to be able to see it, but I don't get to feel as special, Eric.

ERIC: Well, I'm sorry, buddy. I'm sorry. I know you wanted to feel like a special banana, but, alas, it will not happen any longer.

MATT: I am a special banana.

ERIC: No, you're not. Couple other changes real quick. Campaign, they had several things. Mainly, they did a lot of overhauling of Saboteur, the Story mission, so if you want to see some more on that, feel free to check out the patch notes. They also changed some pieces of gear, but we'll just briefly mention the Vigilance Link, which they had temporarily taken offline. So with this fix, I'm assuming it's going to be back up and running. I'm sure all of you already know by now.

MATT: And as soon as all of us got the Vigilance Link, we saw how overpowered it could be. What they say in the patch notes is that the Legendary effect can't be stacked, which I can only assume means basically you get flat health increase and then I think it was maybe damage reduction. And then the Legendary effect was

everyone else on the team also got 177 -- at least on mine -- extra health. So if you had a team of five people rocking that, everybody's got a thousand extra health and that would've just been ridiculous.

ERIC: Yes. And I'm sure that's exactly what was happening; hence why it was taken offline.

MATT: Yep, yep. So other than that, we just got a few quick interface changes. Coming up in this patch, they're going to have a Report Player function available through the scoreboard. Again, we haven't been able to play with that, but I've definitely been looking forward to that because we've had -- not lately as much, but we've had so many AFKer, leavers, people who just hang out in the base, walk forward two feet, and then sit there for three, four minutes.

ERIC: Yeah. It would've been nice to be able to report those guys a long time ago because you're just ruining other people's experience. And then a lot of those matches are 20, 25 minutes, so nothing's worse than knowing you got a player who's just hanging out in the back, hoping to score some points and do nothing.

MATT: Yep, yep. Another cool thing that we found is since we're both such skin and taunt junkies, they've changed it so that when you get a skin or a taunt in a Loot Pack, it'll give you a little bit more info, a little more description of it. So as opposed to saying, "Oh, I got an Arch Frost for Attikus. What is that?" Could be a skin, could be a taunt. I got so excited I got that Arch Frost taunt. "Oh, it's just a skin."

ERIC: Yeah. I did that once again just last night. I thought I'd gotten a brand new skin and it was a taunt. So whilst I do love taunts, I am preferential to the skins. And it was a tad bit sad.

MATT: Yeah. I mean, you didn't want to be a hobo and now you still are one.

ERIC: Exactly. Thank you. Scrub for life.

MATT: Scrub for life. Just a few little things they listed under Quality of Life, now you can ping consistently. All jokes aside, I would often be trying to mark up the Miko, who is running around with a Montana, so that everybody could see where it was and know to focus on it because that's what I was doing. And it seemed like half the time my ping wouldn't go through. It wouldn't mark them up. I'd hammer on it three or four time, and by the fourth time the Miko would've run off and I'd be pinging some random place on the map.

ERIC: Yeah, and looking like a fool.

MATT: Exactly.



- ERIC:** And none of us really want to do that, so definitely a good Quality of Life fix. They have several others, but, for the sake of the show, we'll go ahead and let you check those out in the patch notes.
- MATT:** So other than that, a few more things they announced were going to be dropping with this patch. Well, we already mentioned in-game reporting. Also, the Broadcaster Tools that they showed off during the stream last week are going to be dropping this week. It's probably not something I'll be using a lot, but definitely something interesting for people who like doing streams, like doing big competitive matches with all their buddies.
- ERIC:** Yeah. It's definitely more for the competitive scene, for those of us who have a few friends who play. It cannot be used in Public Mode, so Private Mode only, which, as I just said, basically excludes us, the Normal Joe from really using it in any way, shape or form, unless you're interested in the competitive scene and want to go check it out, go to be a fly on the wall for some of those matches.
- MATT:** And I can definitely see why they didn't just let you broadcast Public games because it'd be too easy to be in a PlayStation or an Xbox party with all your buddies, "Hey, check out around Bravo, there's the little Attikus flying around. I can tell because I'm the little, floaty camera, just giving you all the inside tips."
- ERIC:** Exactly. That would've lead to a lot of, I'd just say, cheating, basically, in a nutshell.
- MATT:** Yeah, yeah. There's no other word for it.
- ERIC:** Basically skewing the side.
- MATT:** Yeah. So in addition to that, they also announced there's going to be some special, little, premium summer skins and taunts, just a few fun things. Again, those are the ones you'd be buying with Platinum. Again, just harmless, fun things. If you want to buy them, you can. If you don't want to, you don't have to. So all the rage I see over micro transactions being in this game, I don't understand that at all.
- ERIC:** That's a topic for another day, sir.
- MATT:** True, true, true.
- ERIC:** Topic for another day. But anyways, you can see what they are in the Battleplan. And if you are interested in them, hey, go check them out, go buy them. I may be getting one or two myself.
- MATT:** Definitely.

ERIC: We'll take a peek after the podcast, actually.

MATT: Mm-hm.

ERIC: Besides that, they also revealed in the Twitch stream last week the three new maps that they're dropping, which are: Monuments, the Incursion map; we've got Outskirts as the Meltdown; and we've got Snowblind as the Capture map. If you haven't checked out that Twitch, you definitely need to take a peak over there.

MATT: Definitely.

ERIC: Except you don't because as of now, you can play them yourself.

MATT: That's true. But if you want to get a better look at them -- maybe you're at work right now and you can't go play them.

ERIC: That's true.

MATT: Maybe you didn't have time to install the patch last night. You can check them out. You can watch the developers play, I think it was, one round each on all the maps.

ERIC: Yeah. It was one round each on each map, and they went ahead and kind of just gave their insight to the map. A few quick tips, I believe, were in there as well. And if you missed those, they also reiterated those tips and tricks in the breakdown of those maps for those who haven't seen that as well.

MATT: Yeah. I'm definitely looking forward to the maps not just because it'll add some more variety to the game, but also because, I mean, they look so different from the other maps that we already have. I don't know about you, but to me -- especially Coldsnap and Paradise, the Meltdown maps -- generally kind of look the same. They have that crystalline kind of frozen kind of structure vibe, so I'm definitely excited to get -- "Oh, I'm going to play a Meltdown, but it's going to be in more like a city region.

ERIC: I would say, yes. Meltdown is the one I'm most interested in. I think it has the most unique look out of the three new maps.

MATT: Yeah, I agree with that. But I also think that Monuments and Snowblind both -- I appreciate how different they look from the maps that are already in those modes. For some reasons, even though, obviously, we have our issues with Capture, I'm really excited to play on Snowblind because I really love the feel of that UPR base on Bliss where it's all frozen around, but you got the big technology things because, just like Void's Edge, I love the look of that level, and that's what it looks like.

ERIC: Yeah. Don't get me wrong. I'm excited about all three. And especially with that Snowblind, as you just mentioned, they've got that bridge going across where you can control parts of the map. And as they said in their little blurb, if you can get into the Charlie base and control that, you're at a huge advantage. But to get to it, it's a little bit of a stretch. So I think the dynamic in that's going to be a lot of fun to try out. And as you were also saying with the Incursion, it's got all sorts of ins and outs, and cubby-holes and hidey-holes, and ways to move around. I can't wait to get into there and just check out how different it is from the usual control-a-lane, push-and-pull, push-and-pull.

MATT: Yeah. I definitely can't wait to be jumping all over the place with Caldarius or Mellka and just being just fricking annoying, just driving everybody insane, hopping in and out of hidey-holes, hopping across all those little pillars where anybody who's not a really mobile character can get at you.

ERIC: Exactly. That'll give all those agile, weak players a little bit more room to play and get into the thick of things, basically.

MATT: Yeah, yeah. So also, the other exciting thing that everyone's been begging to hear about is our boy, Pendles. Every time I go on a post, people are saying, "Hey, where's Pendles? You showed a little bit of him. When's he going to drop?" Well, now when he's going to drop. For everyone, he's going to be available August 4th. But for Season Pass holders, we get him a week early. I say we because we both are Season Pass holders. Next week, on Thursday, July 28th, we get Pendles.

ERIC: Yes. I cannot wait to try him out. Apparently, he's going to be another sneaky character, disappearing, coming in, poisoning, all that good stuff. He has two -- what did they call those?

MATT: Kamas. Kamas.

ERIC: Kamas. Two kamas. And of course I'm sure we'll hear all sorts of weird corrections on that.

MATT: Look out for us next week when I'm sure they'll drop all kinds more info.

ERIC: Yes. We're looking forward to hearing about the helix, et cetera, on that particular character.

MATT: Absolutely. Yep, yep. So that's pretty much it for This Week in Gearbox, which has taken up the majority of this oversized episode right now.

ERIC: Yes, Gearbox. Thanks for dropping all this information on us all at once. Holy cow.

- MATT:** But again, like you said, this is another beautiful example of people have been asking for these changes, they've asking for maps, they've been asking for info on Pendles, and they gave it to us.
- ERIC:** They gave everything to us. I mean, if you -- sheesh. Anything you wanted, you're basically getting with this patch.
- MATT:** Yeah. You can't ask for more than this, really.
- ERIC:** So definitely, everybody needs to get their butts in the game, check it out and start spreading the good word to those that have relapsed and/or were on the fence about getting it. I mean, I really feel like a lot of these changes are just going to make this game even better and draw in some more people for us to kick butt in, in the battlefields.
- MATT:** And speaking of drawing in more people, right now, as we speak, on Humblebundle.com, they've got the Humber 2K Bundle 2, I believe it's called.
- ERIC:** Yeah.
- MATT:** And in that, if you're a PC player, you can get *Battleborn* for -- I think it's the \$15.00 tier.
- ERIC:** \$15.00 tier gets you *Battleborn* along with a whole host of other 2K and Gearbox games.
- MATT:** Absolutely.
- ERIC:** So if you haven't picked it up yet and you're listening to this podcast, go check that out. I mean, 15.00 bucks. It's nothing. And you're getting so many games for that. And you're helping out a good cause or multiple good causes as well.
- MATT:** Yep.
- ERIC:** So it's just a win-win for everybody in there.
- MATT:** So other than that, I think that's pretty much going to wrap it up for, like I said, this giant-sized episode. We won't really be going this long most of the time. Like we said, we're going to shoot for more 30 minutes. Another segment we want to be doing in the future is a Mailbag segment. We got a few questions already, but obviously we're running way, way long today, so we're probably going to nix that.
- ERIC:** Yeah. Since we're running so late, I think we'll go ahead and save that segment to start up next week. Definitely, all you listeners out there, please, please, send us your feedback, anything. Let us know how we're doing. Anything you want to

hear about. Any segments you'd like added to the show. We want to hear from you guys. We cannot get better if you guys don't tell us how to get better, so please, please, send us your feedback so we can improve.

MATT: Yep. And if you want to send us that feedback, you can send it via email at info@thirdshift.me. You can find us on Facebook at "THiRD SHiFT"; on Twitter, @THiRDSHiFTme, that's THiRD SHiFT M-E. You can now find our podcast on iTunes, on Stitcher, on PodOmatic -- where we've been already. I believe we even upload to YouTube. So pretty much any way you want to find us, you can find us. And you can find us on the web at thirdshift.me as well. So, yeah, definitely check us out next Friday, July 29th for the next episode of THiRD SHiFT. And with that...

DON'T FORGET TO SAVE!

