How long have you been playing professionally?

So only a couple years now, but I've been playing the game for over a decade. IT is hard to determine the exact momentI began playing professionally. It was one of those things wehre I just added more to what I was doing and had more success and then eventually it just happened, but probably around Legion, when it was about half-way through.

For WoW, do you play on a team?

Oh yeah itsa  ateam. Its like 20 people so the team size is much larger than most sports. And everyone has their roles. The taem I'm for is ████████████, and we raid professionally. Our goal is to clear ther aids first. We've been around for five or six years now, and the success was something we worked up to.

So you made the guild and it became major from there?

Yeah I'm an ofcier and over time we've gotten members who are hungry for the game. Going world first, what we do takes a lot of preparation. Like 110 hour weeks for four weeks leading up the world raid. It isn't for the feint of heart and we oirignally didn't want to do it. But as we buiolt up, we got younger people who were hungry for it, and we went for it.

Whats the average agea?

I think the average age is currently around 25. We used to track that closely. I know it went down recently, since the people we recruit are younger and are really really good. I think recruiting younger players is vital for eSports. No matter how much time you put in, eventually there will be someone younger that comes in and are just better. Oertime, the younger generation will just take over everything.

Could you walk me through your average day?

I'm actually a werid case because I have a day job. What we're doing in Wow wasn't a thing until a coupl years ago. Until ther race, it was just passion, no one wanted to pay us money. You could still stream, but it was very hard, you had to work up for it. I am a computer professional during the day, I work full time. They kniow about my Wow stuff and they support that. Its sort of an awkward situation because you're asking for amonth off to play a video game. Luckily I found people who prioritize whatI do where I work and theyt support it. Just for a normal day, it depends on progression mode or not. Before the switch, the average day is going to work, for seven or eight hours, then playing WoW until midnight. Then I go home and repeat it. But in progression, I allocate my time very cerafuly in tetrms of what I need to achieve. If the goal is to hit eighty neck before heroic week, I need to grind one content really really hard. Necaue of this I allocate my time so I can spend 16 hours a ady playing the game, every single day, with eight hours of sleep. Then repeate it over and over again for about a month.

How often does progression happen?

It varies a lot, but I would say the average is evry eight months.

So every eight onths you've got 16 hours playing, with eight hours sleeping?

Yeah, and I think WoW is a special case, because it depends on what you do agter the patch. Raiding is only one thing WoW has. I was doing a dugneo race once, and tht was practicing eight hours every night for the dungeon race, which I was doing with my job. And that was very challenging with doing my job and not lseeping enough, I just basically did not get any sleep ever. Would nto d othat again.

During your routines, do you workout or have an exercise program at all?

I don't really do much exercise, but I try to get some walks in. I don't go to the gym, but to me, one of the most important things is to try walking around a bit to try not getting blood clots. Also just try doing little things to reduce the stress on your body, like how you sit in the chair, where your desk is, how your monitor is, how my wrists are set up. I'm just trying to make everything in my setup work so I can keep my body uip to speed.

That leads into a question of mine, have you experience physical pain from eSports?

Absolutely. Everytime we have a race or a new expansion. I have chornic dry eye. My eyes are beru semesotoveand when I play through the game like that, my eyes get really bad. 99% of eye drops don't work, so I have to be very, very aware of how much time I'm playing and when I'm blinking. But I usually fail and my eyesg et evry irritatied, getting super red and hurta lot. Besides that, I think your body just kind of aches. If you sit in front ofa computer for 16 hours for so long, you get neck pain and back pain. Your elbows get bruised, gamer elbow, because they've been sitting on a rest for so long. I try to fix that by gettinga massage afte, gettinga deep tissue massage after every progression period.

Have you ever had other help?

Well not directly connected to eSports, but we get sick a lot during these races. When we travel a lot, with people that don't leave their house, they're going to get sick afterwards.

Do you have a nutrition plan at all?

I have a personal one, where I try not to eat much red meat, and count calories, as compared to my daily value. During there ace, I let a lot fo that slide and just go wit hthe flow. There is something nice about not caring about what I'm eating and just going to flow with everything else that goes on. IT gives me more peace of mind and save that mental bandwith for during the race.

That's a good lead in to the next question, about psycholocigcal parts. What kind of stress or other mental factors you've faced in eSports?

What we do is actually one of the best eSports to look at when it comes to stress. As far as I know, ther are no other esports that area marathon like what we do. I would say the biggest thing about playing 16 hours a day for a moth and being all in on it for amonth is the mental fatigue. You haven't done any work and you feel like you're ready to collapse, youre so tired you just have to sleep. It's the metnal fatigue and its something that has to be built up overtime. Their first time, they all succumb to it. They fel asleep on the break at noon, it just builds up. You have to work up to the mental callus where you can power through this sort of thing. IT is almost all mindset. That is really the main thing. You're plaing for a long time, youre accountable for those mistakes. You just say it and you move on. Theres a lot of stress if you make msitakes, and there is a lot of pressure. We ave a 30 man roster but only 20 get to raid, so we can swap people out. So that pressure is in the back of your mind. For me its different, because I;m an officer. I think about the guild, while others may be more concernced on themselves.s

the mental thing is everything, and you have to go in with the mindset that we have to beat whats in front of us, and no was elese matters. If you get too distracted, you'll go down a dark path, which is why we band twitch caht.

You ban twitch?

Yeah no one is allowed to look at chat or play other games. Zero distractions, completely gocused. We alt=tab it so that its compeltly out of the way.

What is the biggest cause of all that mental stress do you think>

I think if your;re new, it is the screen time. But if not, it's the responsibility. Like I'm an officer and I have to set the example. This last boss was a redo of a boss that was in the game previously. Since I do my day job, I miss a lot of the work. So what that means is I have to do my research on my own, outside of raiding. This boss, I thought I kenw how it worked, becuas eI figured it was a rehash. So I didn't look into it at all, and that waw a terrible mistak because I ended up looking clueless. If I was less experienced that would have titled me. But I have the experience and I know how to focus myself and not dwell on things. So I moved on and I compartmentalized it and move until I reached out and applogized about it. When the stress I this high, you have to know the metnal tricks to compartmentalize the mistakes you make.

So, uhm, in terms of the success, is there a lot of revenue that may be contributing?

I think for us it doesn't because it's a little bit weird. WE're going to get world second pretty much every tier. Unless we do well then we get first. There are no other guilds competitive enough to give us a run for out money below world second. So that meanst the amount of money we get is pretty set in stone, and we can determine it before out upcoming matches.

Ib terms of stress and pressure, what is the biggest form of support?

For me, its my wife, 100%. She actually drove out during the reace twice and was there whenever we foguth the boss. Shes a great partner in all of this and it helps me a lot having her there.

Based on your experience, what is the biggest health issue eSports players face?

I mean from my perspective, in eSports, with WoW, the biggest hing is that the game is trending in ad riection wehre the priority is about how man horus they can get players to play. This is obviouslyt something activiion is pushing because blizzard never did this before the merge. Theyre all about hours played and it leads to disasterous affects. Youd dint have to play for 16 horus a day per month to compet. Its just trending upwards and its because they're making this system wher you have to just infinitely grind. And I think for the scenario, stuff like that being in the game is so ubnbelievly bad. Think of any other sport where there is little relevancy to it but it's a plus point you can get. This si why LoL and CS and WoW have tournanet realms so sevryone is on an equal footing. So we have to go in and grind for six months for any advantage because that doesn't exist. Its really unhealthy, having the game set up like this is really reall bad. From the casual gamer its bad for them, and its bad for us as pros. Its bad for everyone except maybe the share holders. I wish blizzard was mor thoughtful instead of what they actually do to us. Theyre basically screwing teht op players, and missing that everyione emulates us. I get whispered constantly abpout players doing 1000 isladn, and I wonder why are yo doing this.

There is no need  for that. But it's a down stream affect, they think the pros do it, so I need to do it as well. So everyone is playing way more than they should.