

Andrew Tan – Written July 2024

On July 13 2024, the double elimination segment of the Pacific Playoffs began, and both Paper Rex alongside Talon Esports were swept up 2-0 by Gen.G and DRX respectively down to the lower brackets. With Korean Valorant asserting its dominance in the Pacific region, both Paper Rex and Talon Esports faced unfortunate defeats as they must face off the next day for elimination, while DRX and Gen.G battle for the first Grand Finals spot.

In Paper Rex's case, the maps played were Ascent and Icebox, with the former being a map that the team were historically not too strong at, having lost to ZETA DIVISION and RRQ on Ascent despite still winning the series. Their saving grace, however, is that they seemed much more confident, and can attribute the close loss to losing both pistols.

On Icebox, however, it simply seemed as if Gen.G were on a different level, as they played an incredible game that Paper Rex were simply unable to keep up with. Whether Paper Rex can bounce back and make a lower bracket run to the Grand Finals depends if they can find their stride in their game the next day against Talon.

In Talon's story, while the first map was also Ascent, the audience got to see DRX bring out their strengths on the new map, Abyss. On Ascent, it seemed as if Talon were unable to start the momentum needed to win rounds, as they were unable to string together the wins needed.

On Abyss, it was a free for all, a clash of ideals between the two teams as they brought out different compositions. While both teams ran Omen, Cypher, and Sova, DRX went with Jett and Kayo. Talon, on the other hand, opted to run Neon and Iso, a double duelist execute heavy composition. DRX's ideas came out on top, as they closed the map off 13-4. In the post match interview, however, Talon's head coach FroST says there are more comps the team would like to try, as there is no set "meta" comp for this new map yet.

Paper Rex faces Talon Esports for elimination, and Gen.G will face DRX for the first Grand Finals Spot on July 14, 2024.

Talon Post Match Interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0l1MjfErJI>