Analyzing the Spawn Bias in Overwatch 2's Clash Mode

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Abstract

Clash is a multi-point, tug-of-war-style game mode in Overwatch 2. While it aims to reimagine core aspects of the retired Assault (2CP) mode, it faces a significant design flaw regarding attacker and defender spawns. Namely, once a team is designated as "attacker" or "defender," that role persists, even if the overall score ties up later in the match. This paper outlines Clash's key mechanics, explains how the spawn logic creates imbalance, and suggests potential solutions to restore parity.

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1 Introduction

Overwatch 2 introduced Clash mode as a dynamic alternative to the traditional Assault (2CP) and other core modes. By presenting five sequential capture points labeled **A** through **E**, Clash promises frequent shifts between offense and defense as teams attempt to push into enemy territory. Despite these aspirations, the mode unintentionally inherits an imbalance in spawn assignments.

2 Overview of Clash Mode

2.1 Basic Rules

- Five objectives (A, B, C, D, E) are arranged linearly, with the central point C contested first.
- When a point is captured, the map "shifts," and the next point closer to the defending team's spawn unlocks.
- Standard points grant 1 point upon full capture; final points (A or E) can yield up to 3 segments for the attacker.
- The first team to 5 total points wins the match.

2.2 Spawn Assignments and Role Designation

Each team spawns near its own final point (A for Team A, E for Team B). This means:

$$\text{Team A spawn} \longleftrightarrow (A)\,(B)\,(C)\,(D)\,(E) \longleftrightarrow \text{Team B spawn.}$$

Under normal circumstances, Team A naturally "defends" A, while Team B is the "defender" of E. If you push into the opponent's side, that team "defends" the point in question. However, when one side is labeled *attacker* for the final point, that label never flips, even if the opposing team regains multiple objectives and ties the score.

3 The Design Flaw: Locked Roles and Spawn Imbalance

3.1 Problem Illustration

1. **Early Momentum:** Suppose Team B quickly secures C, D, and partial progress on E, going up 4–0 in points.

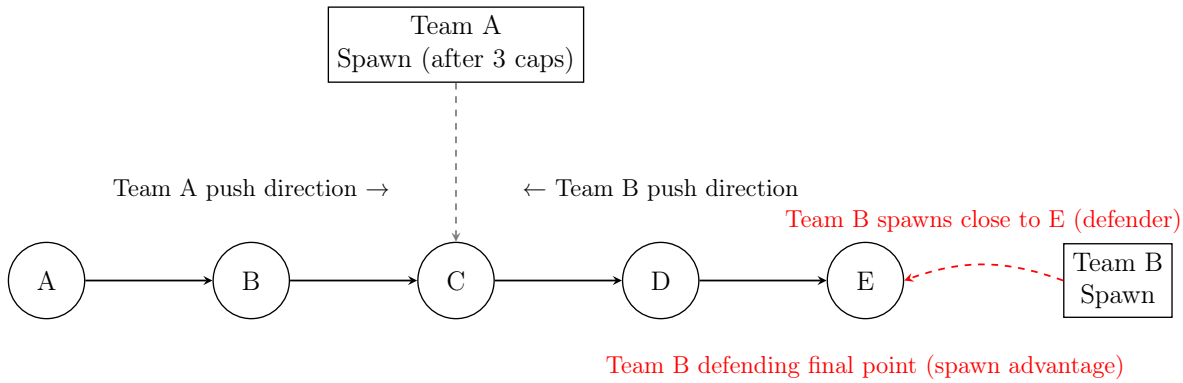
2. **Comeback Beginnings:** Team A manages to stall out E and eventually flips D and C back, tying the score at 4–4.

3. **Persistent Spawn Bias:** Despite the tie, the game still considers Team B the "attacker" towards E and Team A the "defender." Team A thus keeps a closer spawn on their side, giving them an advantage in subsequent fights.

The crux is that Clash never updates spawn designations even if the match score becomes even. The side that *originally* had its territory threatened retains the defender spawn advantage, and the other team remains the attacker with a longer travel distance.

4 Diagram of the Spawn/Objective Layout

As shown in Figure 1, Team A is associated with point A and Team B with point E. Once the game designates who is defending or attacking each side, that *role remains* regardless of score changes.



Even when tied 4–4, spawn logic favors Team B as the "defender" due to early progress. Team A's spawn moves up, but still leaves them at a structural disadvantage.

Figure 1: Spawn flow in a 4–4 tie scenario. Team A's spawn moves forward, but Team B retains final-point advantage due to fixed role logic.

5 Implications for Gameplay

5.1 Prolonged Stalemates

If a team fights back from a deficit, the defenders retain a home-field advantage that can lead to lengthy standoffs. Even when the score is effectively even, the nominal "defender" has a short reinforcement route.

5.2 Snowball Potential

Alternatively, if the "attacking" team quickly wins early fights, they may chain captures before the defenders stabilize. This can feel like an unstoppable push due to respawn timers lining up poorly for the losing team.

6 Potential Solutions

6.1 Dynamic Role Reassignment

Reevaluate spawns upon a tie (e.g., 4–4). Move both spawns to a neutral midpoint or define symmetrical spawns so neither side has a perpetual ad-

vantage.

6.2 Adaptive Spawn Shifts

Allow spawn points to shift incrementally based on live conditions. For instance, if the enemy retakes a lost objective, the original defenders do not keep the previous spawn advantage.

6.3 Layout Redesign

Consider redesigning final objectives so each side's spawn advantage is tempered. For instance, allow more flanking routes that attackers can use, or ensure defenders cannot quickly recontest without a penalty.

7 Conclusion

Clash mode demonstrates a creative attempt to merge elements of Assault and Control. However, the locked-in roles for attackers and defenders can create persistent spawn advantages that do not reflect the real-time match state. Addressing this issue may require spawn logic revisions or a more fundamental map layout change. Revisiting the mode's design is essential to ensure fair competition and preserve Overwatch 2's fast-paced, teamwork-centric gameplay.

A References

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