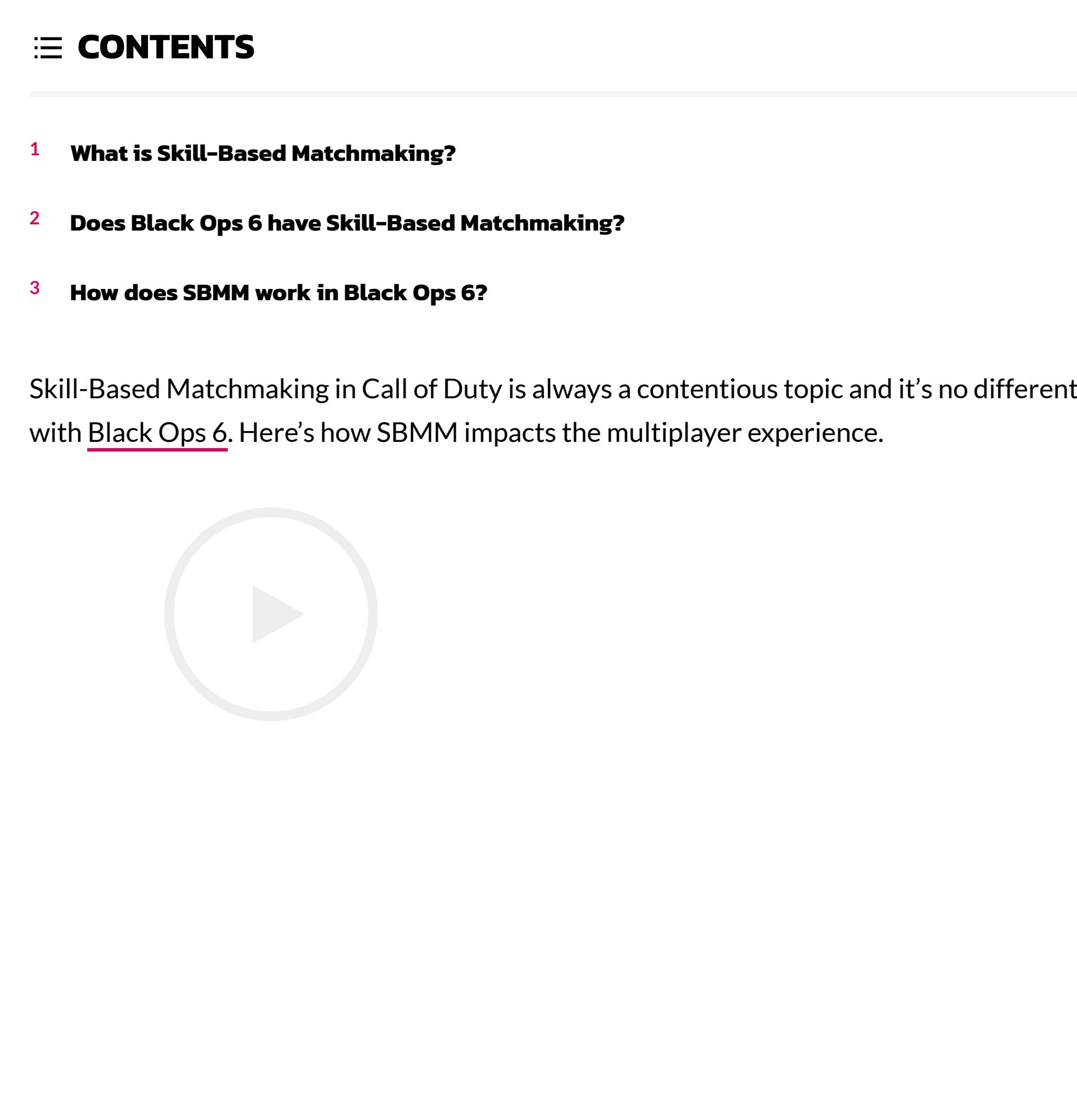


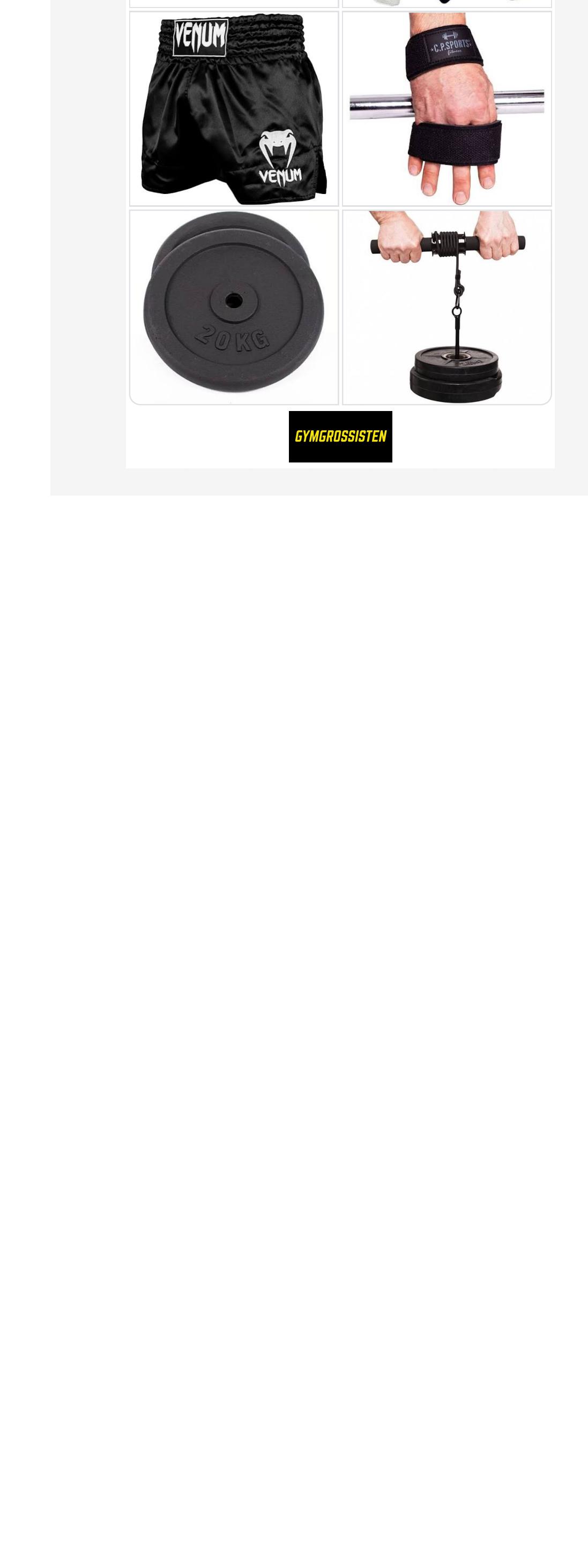
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# Skill-Based Matchmaking in Black Ops 6 explained: How SBMM works in CoD

Brad Norton | Published: Nov 05, 2024, 03:54



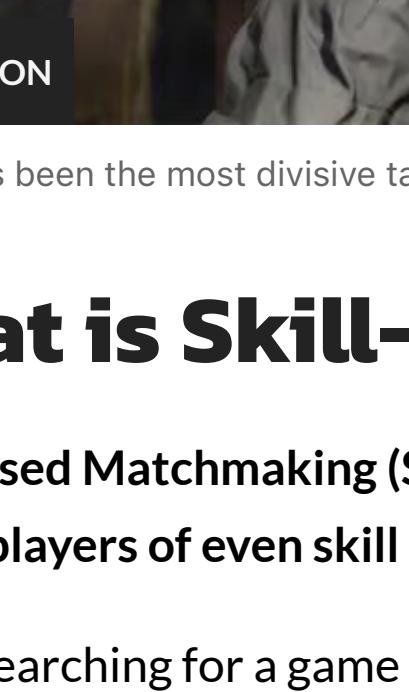
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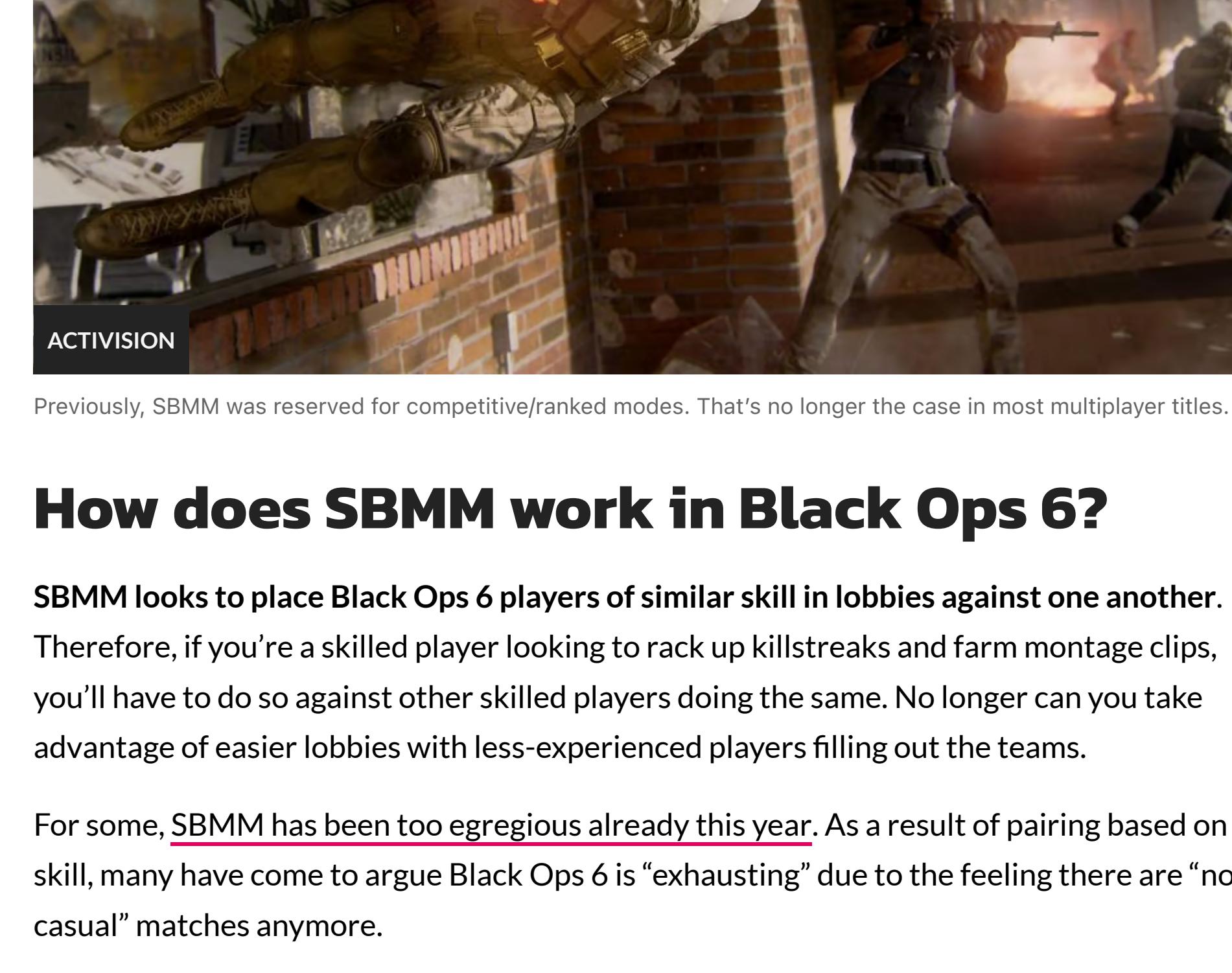
Skill-Based Matchmaking in Call of Duty is always a contentious topic and it's no different with Black Ops 6. Here's how SBMM impacts the multiplayer experience.



When it comes to multiplayer games, there's no subject more controversial than Skill-Based Matchmaking (SBMM). Whether it's prevalent or not, and even just how prevalent if so, can make or break an online experience for some players.

With this year's new CoD release now upon us, the conversation has started up again as Black Ops 6 enters the spotlight. But what exactly is SBMM? Is Black Ops 6 affected? How does it impact lobbies?

Here's everything you need to know about SBMM and how it relates to the latest CoD title.



SBMM has been the most divisive talking point in online gaming for years now.

## What is Skill-Based Matchmaking?

Skill-Based Matchmaking (SBMM), as the name implies, is a matchmaking system that looks to pair players of even skill against one another.

When searching for a game across all manner of multiplayer titles, a range of factors are considered by matchmaking tools working under the hood. From your connection to the server to your experience in the game, there's plenty factored in. But with SBMM in effect, skill supersedes most other factors.

In theory, it strives to keep lobbies fair and balanced. You should be paired up against players of equal skill levels, meaning each match is competitive as all players are in a similar position.

In some cases, this can cause frustration. SBMM has been blamed for 'ruining' the casual multiplayer experience, as no longer can highly-skilled players wreak havoc on lower-skilled lobbies as they could in the earlier years of online gaming.

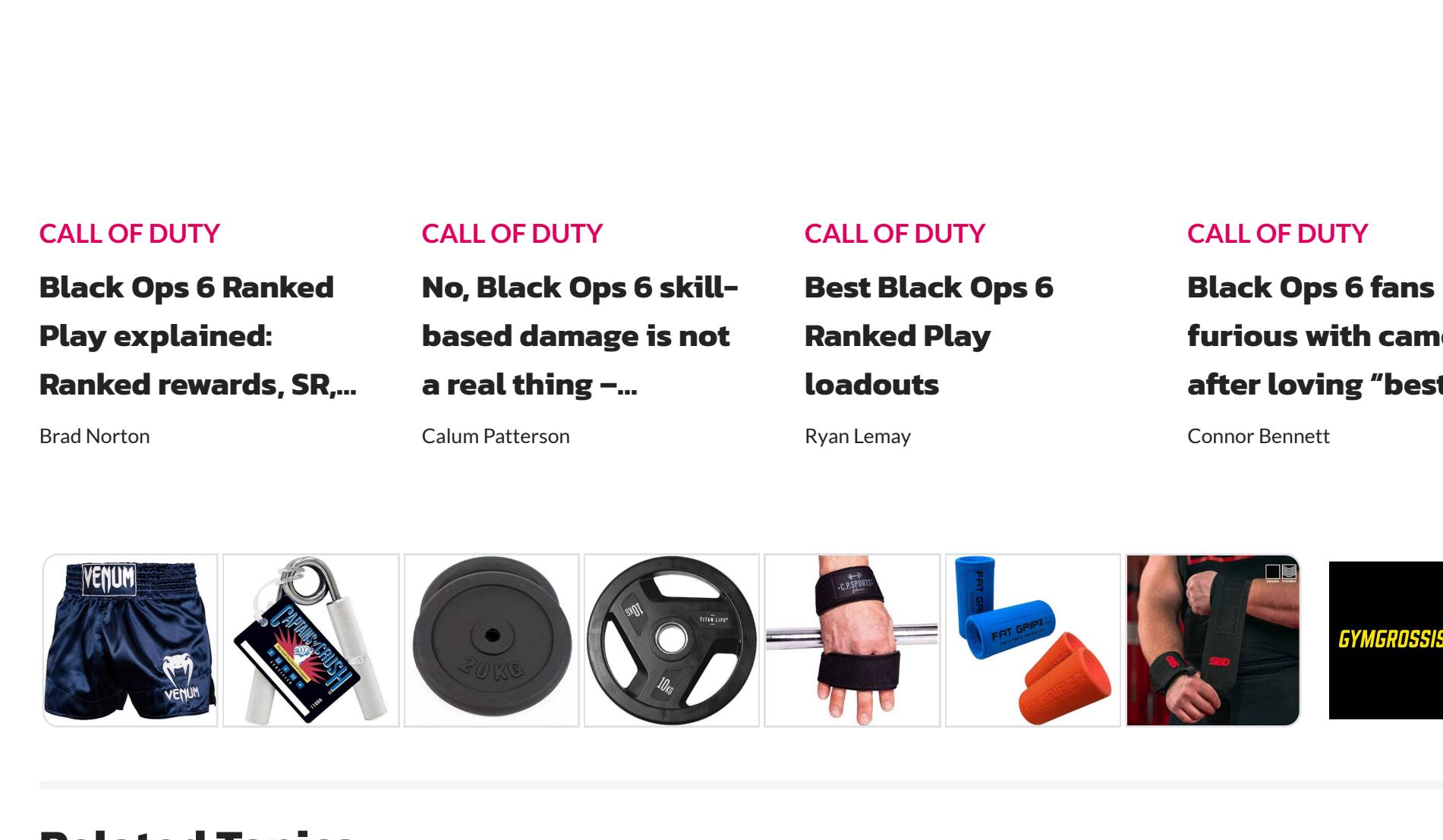
## Does Black Ops 6 have Skill-Based Matchmaking?

Yes, Black Ops 6 does indeed rely on SBMM. Skill is taken into consideration when finding lobbies in unranked playlists, meaning you'll be matched against players of equal capability more often than not.

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While developers haven't actively addressed SBMM's influence over the matchmaking system in Black Ops 6, a short session is enough to see it in action. Players far and wide have largely reported SBMM in the new CoD title, with many sharing negative feedback on the system.



Previously, SBMM was reserved for competitive/ranked modes. That's no longer the case in most multiplayer titles.

## How does SBMM work in Black Ops 6?

SBMM looks to place Black Ops 6 players of similar skill in lobbies against one another. Therefore, if you're a skilled player looking to rack up killstreaks and farm montage clips, you'll have to do so against other skilled players doing the same. No longer can you take advantage of easier lobbies with less-experienced players filling out the teams.

For some, SBMM has been too egregious already this year. As a result of pairing based on skill, many have come to argue Black Ops 6 is "exhausting" due to the feeling there are "no casual" matches anymore.

"I have to play at 100% focus, on the edge of my seat every game to barely go positive," one player described on Reddit.

If you're on the higher end, as one of the game's very best, you can expect plenty of challenging lobbies each night you hop on. Look no further than CoD legend Karma's experience as a prime example.

"The teams I get matched against make me not even want to pub," the four-time world champ said on November 4. "I lost every single game of Hardpoint for 6 hours one night."



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While SBMM is evidently impacting the experience for some, it's worth clarifying there is no truth to claims of skill-based damage. Rumors had been making the rounds shortly after the launch of Black Ops 6, with some players suggesting your damage changes depending on your performance.

Say, for instance, you had a bad match, the argument claimed you would deal increased damage in your next match to help you feel better. That is simply not the case. Activision sought to shut these claims down long ago, and it's still not the case now with Black Ops 6 in focus.

Nonetheless, SBMM continues to be in effect, and despite the vocal criticism from a portion of the audience, many players are completely unphased by its inclusion.

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