

Introduction:

My name is liquidman257, and have played league of legends since season 2, ranked since season 4. I was a hardstuck silver/low gold player until season 9 where I peaked d4 100lp. At the time I had mained Katarina until I became hardstuck around platinum 2 and then took up leona/soraka support. This season I am a washed out, hardstuck gold and struggling at that. Throughout my playing of league of legends and across my accounts, I have received many chat restrictions, three 14 day bans, 2 permanent bans (one of which was this account and was unbanned), and average honor level 0 across all accounts. This is not to justify my actions or to say I do not deserve being punished nor that I was justified in my actions, merely to bring to light how I feel the game can be improved as well as what I have learned about the current state of the game.

Honor:

I have had countless arguments and discussions with riot employees over what is acceptable and what behavior leads to being punished by Riot. from everything I gathered, it is pretty much summed up by The Orphan

“The way it's currently set up, honor is viewed as a 'win streak' of positivity. So when there is a game your account is behaving negatively in, the streak is broken and you have to start over again from a lower level to prove you can be honorable. Even 1 report can result in losing honor progress and a penalty if there was chat misuse or negative behavior.”

This came up after a 6 month streak of no problems, punishments, etc.. I had just climbed to the last step of honor level 1, and then bam:

“Players have reported you 4 times in the past 20 games for negative or abusive behaviors in chat”

Blitzcrank bot absolutely obliterated me. All my hard work suddenly meant nothing. Those countless games of not (maybe a little bit of) flaming the inting Jinx or the Rakan who would literally just run down mid because the enemy picked the leona he wanted to play. Now I would have to start from honor locked to climb back into Riots good graces. Or so I thought.

Going back through my many, many chats with various Riot employees over the years I came across this gem:

“When an account continues to display low level negativity that isn't bad enough to warrant an actual penalty its status will not recover, and it looks like that is what happened here.”

I remember arguing with Riot Skiwi over my last ban on this account and when I asked him why my account had not after the 3 months of no prior punishment been given any karma

back he told me that even “low level negativity” could hold my account back. But wait a minute, what is “low level negativity” because I am sure most players get reported every so often whether it be warranted or not. What is this threshold? Clearly it is below what they give punishments for. So is it possible to still climb honor and still be at risk of being banned by Riot games? To this I say, yes.

After getting such cryptic answers and a sudden and immediate locking of my ticket with Riot Skiwi, I had opened another ticket with Fromage. This very helpful and human employee informed me that

“Once you have a suspension on your account you're put on very thin ice, either its a full reform and you deescalate your account back to good standing, or if any sort of negativity continues then you can be banned. Now deescalation takes a very very long time, and honor is a good indicator that you're moving in the right direction, but it doesnt necessarily mean you've returned to good standing.

If you have very mild negativity in your chats that do not warrant a penalty, but are still considered negative, like a couple instance of arguing or telling others you'll report them, then you will not return to good standing and will remain at that final warning stage. Your reform has to be consistent and complete as even one game can ruin your progress of deescalating.”

This means that you may be getting honored and 9 out of 10 teammates would recommend, but because that 1 teammate found what you said in chat (or lack thereof) offensive, they can and probably will report you, which will ultimately lead to your false sense of reformation on an account. This means even if you reach honor 5, you could still have soft-flamed in a few games just long enough to keep your standing below average, and ultimately but unlikely, still receive a punishment just for one hard flame in a game that you had a bad day and your team just pushed your buttons the wrong way. This gives another false premise: your honor in game reflects how good of a teammate and how nice you are. Instead we find there is not a direct correlation between honor level and type of player you are. Instead we find from The Orphan that honor is gained:

“Honor progression is individualized based on things like the following:

- Your behavior in chat; the biggest things to avoid doing in chat are arguing with others, blaming your teammates, spamming, or name calling.
- How consistently positive or neutral(not talking) your behavior is
- How often you honor players(non-premade count for more)
- How often players honor you(non-premade count for more)
- whether your whole team is honoring teammates(non-premade count for more)
- how many games you play

Note though: you *don't need to be honored* for decent progress!”

There is no reason to be nice or anything in games, or even to actually fall into one of the three honor categories, as really all you need to do to climb is grind out as many games as possible and just honor a teammate after everyone regardless of if they were or were not honorable. And with ranked and hextech rewards being locked unless you are honor level 2, this means that instead of a system which rewards good behavior and upholding Riots values, there is a system that rewards playing as many games as possible, not interacting with anyone, and just honor people for no reason as you get rewards if you do. That means that that honor level 5 ahri on the other team who carried which you thought was probably giving motivational speeches and leading her team very well could be flaming them and bming the whole game, yet just plays a bunch of games and her team does not report her since “she carried”.

I think that a good solution would be:

- **Honor-type based climbing:** I should have to be honored in the category in which it says I am honorable in. When I look at someone's honor I want to see that oh, they are tilt-proof, not oh, they are honored in a lot of games. Additionally, each honor type should have a different crest, no more one size fits all.
- **Increase Max Honor Level:** I think honor level should work like player level, you can in theory go infinitely high and your little crest in ranked should get more ornate as it goes.
- **Honor progress only from getting honored:** why do I naturally become honorable just for playing the game? It is a community based title let the community give it out when they feel that person has been honorable. Not everyone has to be honorable, it should be like getting a challenger to get higher honor levels.
- **Bring back honorable opponent:** Yes we all hate getting outplayed and seeing the enemy teams yasuo actually doing something when yours is dying to chickens at level 10 is frustrating, sometimes you just gotta have a way to say thank you for not bming my corpse after destroying me in that 1v1.
- **Honor-type based rewards:** Even if it is another end of season reward, maybe another ward or summoner icon, hell maybe even a tft pet different for whatever type of honor you hit level 5 as. Maybe even a special one if you hit it in all 4 categories. Even if it comes down to chromas for a skin, it is nice just to be recognized for trying your best.
- **Rework the banning system:** I feel as though too much emphasis is placed on purely if you are arguing with someone in chat rather than if you are negatively affecting the game. While no one likes teammates who are keyboard warriors, sometimes it's the person running it down mid who had their account basically boosted which is the one ruining the game, not the one telling him to shut up and telling his teammates to think of him as a trolling inter and to just play.
- **Enforce punishments:** Don't get me wrong, I love that this account got unbanned. What I don't love is that accounts do get unbanned, and that

the punishment system doesn't seem to actually deter anyone from breaking Riots rules since they feel riot won't ban them. Even something like boosting/account sharing where you can track lp locations to see that oh, this account logged on in washington but was in texas 30 minutes ago? Probably didn't fly that distance that fast.

- **Fix the ranked system:** I know a lot of my frustration in games comes from me wanting to better myself and climb, and it's because of peoples troll/lackadaisical attitudes towards something I am so passionate about and working so hard at which is what tilts me. Instead of just a lp based system, give more emphasis into individual gameplay mmr. If players can't affect another's player's rank as easily by trolling them, less people will try. With sites such as mobalytics, professor.gg, op.gg, etc. It is easy to track individual performance across a variety of aspects to accurately judge a player's skill level.

A Few Problems with Riots Solutions to Deal with the Community:

- **Mute Them:** This one absolutely kills me. One, why should I mute someone to stop flaming instead of to stop being flamed, this should be an answer to people who get upset by flammers not to people flaming. Two, it has happened quite often that I will have everyone muted by default, and suddenly notice that my teammate just runs down my lane into my tower, or just disconnects, only to turn my chat on to find that since I didn't respond to him he said he was going to int/dc or game was over. Thirdly, I don't want to sound cocky but a lot of times I just have a much knowledge of the game than my teammates (especially when I am below diamond) and it is imperative that I keep chat on to be able to accurately shotcall since most people either get tilted by pings or are just clueless to them.
- **Never Argue With Your Teammate(s):** while yes, every second you spend being a keyboard warrior you aren't spending being a demacian warrior, sometimes it's that keyboard warrior prowess that your team needs. Too often a teammate will int or be toxic to another teammate who is doing bad and causing him to tilt. How can I, being the team player I am, not step in and defend my teammate while dehumanizing this troll so that my teammate will feel better and continue to play, The second you start to shit on a teammate and put him down, anything said to you is justified. While it doesn't always work, by villainizing and showing my team that this troll is a subhuman, they will lift their spirits to anything he said as he is irrelevant and anything he says is bullshit anyway, which allows them to keep playing.
- **Just Play and Report Them After:** As a constant reportee and reporter, it is very unsatisfying to report someone and feels like a joke to get reported. Especially now with this blitzcrank bot I feel as though when I report someone the bot will look for keywords or some event to happen

just to flag it for a human to look through and see the report. And this also makes me less afraid of getting reported as I know in a game if I don't use trigger words/phrases as well as only upsetting one maybe two teammates, I probably won't get a harsh punishment by Riot Games. Additionally too often then not I get so heated with arguing at the end of a match that I just click out of the lobby as fast as possible (still making sure to honor someone no matter what) only to get into the home page and upset I didn't report him but feeling like opening a ticket and explaining the situation to much of a hassle to warrant for it.

- **Focus on Your Gameplay Not Your Teams:** I hate to break it to you Riot, most of us aren't dopa. We are not skilled enough to just naturally climb by solo carrying our games even if we are better than our opponents this is a team game. It is almost worse to be doing the best on your team, outskilling your enemies only to see your teammates constantly die and while yeah, I can outplay most of the time I can't constantly climb by just relying on my ability to outplay my opponents. It is too much of a team effort to win a game, especially once you get into a higher plat where teams are coordinated enough where even split-pushers/hypercarries can get focused from a coordinated engagement. If I am going to lose and gain lp with my team, I am going to focus on my play and my teams play.

While I think the game is beautiful and some parts are so well executed that there is no other game even close to how prestine it feels, there are also some parts, a lot of which are core aspects, that are lacking in such a senseless way such as the elo, honor, and reporting system. From a gameplay POV Riot games has nailed it, League is a very smooth, reactive, intuitive game. From a player experience POV I feel as though Riot games has kept a lot of people due simply to its almost monopoly on the MOBA genre, and how addictive playing this game truly is, rather than by how rewarding and positive it is for the player to be a part of it. I think Riot has something really amazing here and after fixing these three big issues, the game will actually just be an unstoppable masterpiece.

I have attached a link to a google drive folder with pdf's of all the support tickets referenced here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FtqmafzpJq0_xuDx01zmcaAcFMzCYFw-?usp=sharing