CakeAssault

In many other competitive landscapes, the greatest of all time is disputed. Lebron vs. Michael Jordan in the NBA, Garry Kasparov vs. Magnus Carlsen in chess, Armada vs. mang0 in Super Smash Bros Melee. However, no Rivals fan is going to have any qualms about having CakeAssault as the king of the competitive Rivals of Aether world.

It takes a special type of player to place as the best in the world in five out of the eight RCS season rankings, and never even drop below top five. He’s won pretty much every prominent offline major there is, and there were some seasons where he came close to winning EVERY SINGLE RCS MAJOR (!!) that season. CakeAssault looked the most mortal during the online season brought about by the pandemic, and yet he still took tournaments during that time.

CakeAssault’s playstyle had a heavy emphasis on getting the download on his opponents and brutally punishing mistakes. He used Forsburn’s good spacing and movement options to perfection. A testament to his skill was his use of parrying; he parried more than other top competitors to call out predictable approaches. His style of play left no room for anything less than perfect play from his opponents, and sometimes even that wasn’t enough.

Penguin

Penguin is the paragon of consistency. She’s one of three players that have been ranked on the RCS top fifty for every season that the RCS has been active. Her accolades include exceptional tournament wins, numerous top eight placings, and a custom skin added to the game. There was a period where Penguin and CakeAssault was the main grand finals matchup for every major. From an outside perspective, that may sound boring. However, those sets produced some of the greatest moments in Rivals competitive history. For a specific example, watch Penguin and CakeAssault at Smash ‘N Splash 5, one of the most electrifying sets of Rivals ever played.

As a player, Penguin utilized Absa’s unique movement like no other. The way she danced around platforms with gravity jumps and up-b edge cancels made her slippery and difficult to catch in neutral. Moreover, the way she controlled space with Absa’s cloud made every wrong move by her opponents punishable with a death by cloud kick. Arguably Penguin’s most dominating trait is her adaptations throughout a set. It’s not unusual for her to concede a game before completely steamrolling her opponent. Her competitive spirit makes her an easy lock for number two on the ranking.

FullStream

Before CakeAssault, FullStream was the original face of Rivals. Piloting Etalus to great effect, one wouldn’t believe from his gameplay that Rivals of Aether was his first platform fighter. He’s perhaps the only player besides Cake that’s shown true dominance in the competitive landscape. Sporting two top finishes and another second-place finish in the first three RCS seasons is no easy feat. The sheer number of tournaments won in those first seasons proved he was the man to beat for the early age of Rivals. Although he stepped away from the game in his prime, there’s no denying that he’s one of the greatest to ever touch the sticks.

MSB

MSB and Penguin have had similar career trajectories. Both have shown remarkable consistency; they’ve been ranked in every single RCS season. CakeAssault is the only other player that has achieved this. Both have had incredible peaks, with Penguin reaching second in the world and MSB reaching sixth. And, most importantly, both have become the embodiment of their character. In MSB’s case, he’s invented an ungodly amount of Kragg tech. Every single Kragg player, whether they know it or not, has performed things that MSB pioneered. No one else has embraced a character more than him, and it’s paid dividends for MSB.

ZeeBee

Imagine someone who wants to play optimally all the time. Someone who chooses the same options because they’re safe, easy, and effective. ZeeBee is the antithesis to that philosophy. Watching ZeeBee for an extended period, you’re bound to see a goofy or reckless option here or there. More often than not, you’ll find that it works.

His career has also been defined by his steady top-level play. Making the top fifty in seven seasons, he’s been around from the start. Although Kragg is his staple character, he is not afraid to branch out. He’s played Etalus for a while, and he added a Mollo at the tail end of the RCS’s life. His Mollo was especially fun to watch; he would often spam Mollo’s finisher bombs, and self-destruct just as often as he would KO the opponent. Despite this, no one can deny his place as one of the greatest.

Xaro

As one of only three players to reach the ranking summit in a Rivals season, his place outside the top five might seem criminal. However, this is due to a couple of factors. His number one finish came in the online season during the COVID-19 pandemic. Outside of that finish, he’s been ranked in the top ten for only three more seasons, and top fifty in another. Despite all this, he’s made his mark as a force in the competitive scene.

His Orcane was a beauty to behold, especially since Orcane is a rarer character and considered less powerful than some other characters. In his prime, he was the greatest threat to CakeAssault in bracket, netting many wins against him. Had he been more active, he could’ve been near the top of this list. Nevertheless, the king of random down strongs belongs on this list.

Kusi

Kusi has had similar placements to Xaro, placing top ten in four seasons. However, with one less season of rankings and without the elusive number one title, Kusi just misses out on a higher spot on this list. Make no mistake, if there were a few more seasons of RCS after season eight, Kusi would be one of the biggest risers. Making his start in the latter half of RCS, he proved to be a top threat very quickly. Mostly utilizing Ori and Sein, he added a Wrastor in the final RCS season. Although his Ori was extremely potent, his Wrastor elevated him, and he found himself in an extremely close race between him, CakeAssault, and Soulrifle. The ridiculous punish game that Wrastor granted helped him win his first and second RCS majors ever, propelling him into the top echelon of Rivals players.

Windows

DolphinBrick

Soulrifle

Seggo

CheesyPotato

Blue

FireIcey