

Counterside Global Server Evolved-001 Playbook As at 07/10/23

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Purpose

This guide is meant to introduce Evolved-001 (E1) comps and how the team plays, as well as note some common members of the comp and the roles they serve.

This isn't meant to be a definitive guide to playing E1 so much as it is a rundown of what to expect and some common decisions you'll be pressed to make over the course of a typical match.

Much of the information presented here comes from my own experience learning E1, which involved soliciting the very helpful discord community, watching way too many RTA streams, and losing a lot.

I hope this guide helps make E1 comps more approachable for the 10 other people that pulled her banner, as well aid those trying to understand the thought process behind E1 so they may better play against it.

About the Author

Hello! I am Yiggins, a relatively new Challenger 1 RTA mech main. I picked up Counterside in August 2022 because I absolutely loved how the PVP looked and played! As of writing, I have yet to become jaded but I'm sure that will change shortly with the release of A.Jake.



Devoted 1/1

Courageous 1/2



Courageous 2/2

Sincere 1/2



Sincere 2/2

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Understanding your Win Condition

How does E1 ownership translate into E1 winning? The basic premise behind an E1 comp's win condition is fairly simple:

Deploy E1 and protect it until it nukes the opponent's backline

There are several places this can go wrong that will be addressed in the coming sections.

Questions to keep in mind include:

- Where should I be deploying E1?
 - What do I use to protect E1?
 - How can I make sure E1 nukes the backline?
 - How do I translate killing people into ship damage?
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Understanding E1

It is important to understand what E1 individually is capable of. While E1's kit is fairly straightforward, there are some quirks to the kit that lend to notable interactions with other units.

Passive (Evolving Attraction): When deployed, E1 applies a debuff to friendly mechs that rapidly drains their HP bar. Contrary to what the wording suggests, this is continuously applied to all mechs deployed after E1 for a brief period of time. This knowledge can be applied to:

- Give you a starting hand of 5 units: You do not need to cycle your sacrifices into your hand because their deployment order relative to E1 does not matter.
 - Sparrow -> E1 is the same as E1 -> Sparrow, with the added advantage that your opponent cannot react and kill Sparrow in the split second before E1 is able to apply its debuff onto them.
 - E1's HP drain is a temporary debuff. It is possible your sacrifice doesn't actually die. This tends to happen when the sacrifice is deployed too late following E1's deployment.
- Avoid silly deaths: Do not deploy E1 + other core mechs (Ifrit, Overflow) simultaneously to avoid accidentally getting them killed.

Basic Attack (Enhanced Attack): E1's enhanced attack fires a projectile similar to Gaeun/ Replacer Queen's ultimate. The ball inflicts a considerable amount of hitstun multiple times, as well it applies 100% healing reduction. E1's enhanced attack can help:

- Keep your opponent's backline CC'd for an extended duration of time. By chaining Overflow dash + E1 enhanced attack + Coffin-6 S2, it is possible to keep your enemy stunlocked for much of the time it takes E1 to wait down the ult cooldown.
- Help make backline chip damage stick. By applying 100% healing reduction, E1 can help mitigate the impact of your opponent's backline healers. This makes it easier to chip away at backline threats that otherwise would be able to perform uncontested; E1 comps have little to no backline access.

Special Skill (War Bringer): E1's Skill is a powerful ability with good range and is one of the few sources of full buff removal.

- E1's skill doesn't directly remove buffs. Instead, it applies a "buff cancel" debuff. This means you cannot remove buffs from units with debuff immunity (i.e. Olivie proc).
- E1's skill outranges Old Administration Riflemen (OAR) and Rita. It is easy to punish your opponent if they misjudge and deploy while you still have resources to protect it (i.e. undeployed frontliners).
- E1's skill can be used to deny R.Esterosa/ Veronica the full duration of their immortality.

Ultimate Skill (Anti-war Ender: Nemesis): Contrary to traditional counter comps it is not only viable, but almost obligatory to play E1 with **manual ult on**. Half of the units in E1 comps do not have ults, and given the order of deployments E1 is typically the first to have ult ready anyways. E1's nuke is impactful enough to be worth directly managing.

- Of note, getting your ult redirected by Ingrid/ Gremory/ Kang isn't a real counter to E1 and is typically done as a last ditch attempt at staying in the game.

Gearing E1

Unlike some characters with flexible gearing options (e.g. Awakened Lee Sooyeon), gearing E1 is a very straight forward process:



Use Maze CDR

There are a few items to note about E1 and its gear:

- E1 takes Maze CDR because you are wholly reliant on its nuke being able to oneshot your opponent's backline. E1 teams don't generally run backline killers because it is expected that E1 will kill them. You cannot afford to be greedy with tank gear (i.e. Gordias movements) because E1 is completely useless if it is unable to kill the backline.
- E1 cannot use mech Challenger hands. Challenger hands gives Special Skill DMG AMP, but E1's ult is categorized as an Ultimate Skill.

- Do not farm E1's EE. It's a prohibitively expensive resource sink.
 - E1's EE has a higher attack main stat (+446 at T7) than a Maze hands (+399 at T7) but attack is scaled down in RTA to the point it makes no difference.
 - E1's EE has the same amount of skill haste as Maze but can achieve an additional 0.6% Ground DMG (at T7).

Understanding Coffin-6

E1 is played exclusively with Coffin-6 (for the free Tarrasque that comes with the ship). However, E1 is immune to non-permanent buffs. While it can be buffed by Coffin-6's ship passive, the skills themselves do not affect it! A common mistake people make is dropping Coffin-6 S1 on E1 to make her tankier. This does not work (for several reasons):

- E1 is immune to non-permanent buffs.
- E1's passive stacks (45%), Coffin-6's passive (15%), and Coffin-6's S1 (40%) all grant DMG RDC, which is classified as a Group 2 buff. The net of Group 2 buffs/ debuffs cap at 50%. Even if the Coffin-6 S1 buff could be applied to E1, it would not affect E1's survivability.

With this in mind, Coffin-6's skills should be used reactively; there is little benefit to deploying the skills as soon as they are available.

- S1 is typically reserved for Overflow when it dashes into the enemy team. It depends on the situation but generally you need your frontline tank alive more than you need the opponent's frontline dead. So long as your opponent's frontline is in front of E1, there is no urgency to kill them because they would die either way to the E1 nuke.
- S2 buffs your mechs and debuffs/ damages your opponents. It is used for backline disruption. The knock up on initial cast helps prolong your frontline's life expectancy and helps stall until E1 can ult.
 - S2 buff applies to all mechs on field at the time of cast regardless where the debuff field is deployed. Mechs deployed after S2 is used do not receive the buff.

Understanding your Operators

E1 cannot receive non-permanent buffs and by extension most operator buffs don't apply to E1. Operators for consideration are primarily Sigma and Serina (though other options can be considered depending on availability or the nature of the weekly bans):

Sigma

- Sigma can be easily procc'd since E1 is a defender. While operator proc order is an issue easily remedied with leads and good hand cycle, Sigma takes much of the awkwardness out of triggering the operator proc.
- E1 can receive Sigma's 20% (at level 8) max HP shield, making the operator one of the few ways you can "heal" E1. While Sigma helps give E1 additional bulkiness (a lot, considering its HP pool), Sigma's shield isn't meant to enable E1 to tank longer. The shield helps soak up chip damage, keeping its actual HP bar healthy giving you more HP to work with as the match progresses.

- Using a defender shredder to proc Sigma for the 50% role ADV DMG buff is a basic tech to help shred through defender frontlines faster. It should be noted that the 50% Sigma buff is multiplicative against the 30% role ADV DMG (for an increase of +15% role ADV DMG). It isn't as impressive as the big number would otherwise suggest.
- Sigma's shield is non-removable, meaning it cannot be refluxed. A basic tech option is deploying Ifrit and instantly triggering Sigma with another ranger to protect Ifrit's shield from barrier reflux (notably Na Yubin).

Serina

- Serina's buff removal can be used to shutdown problematic buff-reliant units. Notably, it disables RKing, turning an otherwise unwinnable matchup into a bearable one.
- Serina's buff removal can be used in tandem with E1's nuke to deal significantly more damage, especially against hospital comps stacking backline supporters.
- Although E1 lead doesn't lead strikers, Serina proc can still be consistently initiated with Glitch or Spira (among other strikers in E1 comps).

Understanding your Sacrifices

When E1 is initially deployed, it will consume all friendly mechs and buff itself for 15% ATK and 15% DMG RDC per mech consumed, up to 3 times.

To set yourself up for success with E1, ensure you get your 3 passive stacks at the start of the match. While this seems incredibly basic, there is a fair amount of nuance to it. You realistically only have 3 options (one of which is a novelty). Detailed below:



Sparrow (2): At 2 DP, Sparrow is the cheapest way of getting 2 stacks for E1. Sparrow naturally lends itself well to the role of being the team's defender shredder as a:

- Flying (bypassing anti-ground res gear)
- Mech (receptacle for the Coffin-6 S1)
- Ranger (procs and uses Sigma's chunky Role ADV Damage buff)



Glitch (2): Similar to Sparrow, Glitch is 2 stacks for 2 DP. His on-deploy stealth is crucial to (almost) guaranteeing your E1 receives 3 stacks. Glitch has respectable damage output but their short range often puts them in situations that would get them killed by splash damage. Notably, their innate anti-mech kit makes them well-suited to killing the ubiquitous Thunderbolts and Goliaths core in siege/ terror units.



Kyle Wong's Wall summons (2): Kyle's special skill summons 2 (mech) walls that can be consumed by E1. In theory, this allows you to get your stacks "for free" because Kyle himself doesn't die and can continue to contribute value. In practice, it is difficult to keep Kyle alive because it's very hard to position him somewhere safe (i.e. behind E1) without deploying your E1 too far forward.



Coffin-6's Tarrasque summon (1): One of E1's three mech sacrifices will always be the free Tarrasque summon that spawns periodically from Coffin-6. Although seemingly straightforward (deploy E1 when Tarrasque is summoned), It is important to understand that Coffin-6 will only spawn Tarrasque when an enemy is close to the ship (~at the middle of the map). You are reliant on your opponent to give you your third stack.

Coffin-6's Tarrasque summon (and Kyle, should you use him) presents an issue where you need to get your opponent to perform a specific action (walk up to the middle of the map) in order for you to get your 3 stacks. This is problematic, as a knowledgeable opponent can punish you and sabotage your stacks, putting you at a disadvantage before the fighting has begun.

Understanding the Playstyle

E1 teams are played as "camp" comps. This is done to more easily protect E1 as it charges its nuke. What is camping?

An Introduction to Camping

To understand why camping works it is important to understand how the game's deployment system works:

1. You are only initially allowed to deploy units on your half of the map (with exceptions).
2. When the opponent's ship reaches 2/3 and 1/3 hp, you can deploy closer to it.
3. The deployment zone cannot shrink.

Camping, playing from your side of the map (in extreme cases, directly under your own ship), is generally considered advantageous because you have considerably more freedom deciding where to deploy than your opponent. Your opponent can only (with exception) deploy in front of you and walk up. With some creativity, you can use this to great effect:

- You can freely deploy on your side of the field
 - A classic example of this is camping until your opponent has built up a backline of rangers and snipers, and then deploying A.Mina to kill them all.
 - You can more easily protect your existing frontline units (i.e. A.Yuna) by deploying another tank in front of them with a healthy gap between the two, protecting your unit from splash damage.
 - This is in contrast to your opponent, who can only deploy units in the middle and let them walk up. Their frontline becomes stacked together.
 - Following the deployment area update, you can no longer deploy at the back of your ship but units can still end up there. Units with backdashes (e.g. ASY, Lily) can get wedged under the ship where they can become impossible to dislodge.

- You can redirect their frontline (and backline), they cannot redirect you
 - If your opponent intends to use the reach on their frontliners' skills to chip/ kill your backline (i.e. AJSY rush) you can deploy your frontline behind theirs as they walk up. This turns them the other way and shuts down that win condition.
 - Short of Kang's Stronghold/ BBMk2 soldiers, it is nearly impossible to redirect (get behind) a backline unit camping under the ship. Skills that could/ would be redirected (i.e. Amy skill, ASY ult) are now protected from that risk.
- Your backline is bunched up, creating a meatball of valid hits that can be difficult to kill
 - Snipers (generally) have long range that keeps them safe from the fighting, but it isolates them from rangers and supporters, leaving them vulnerable to getting picked off by R.Liz/ Kang. By camping you can stack them all together. This achieves several things:
 - It is difficult for R.Liz to hit the intended target with her limited valid hits.
 - It is difficult to harass the backline because the stack of units can more effectively deal with such threats (i.e. Ingrid, Spira, R.Knight)
 - Supporters and buffers with auras (e.g. Mika★Star) can consistently cover everyone with their skill casts/ passive aura effect.

Camping comes with its own intrinsic risks. Assuming you are taking full advantage* of the opportunities made possible by camping:

- If your frontline is prone to hitstun, they can be pushed back into your backline and everyone will die horrifically.
- Your backline is especially susceptible to splash damage because they are bunched up.
- Your ship is more likely to take damage because your opponent is so close to it. If you are unable to turn your positional camp advantage into a material advantage, you will lose at 3 minutes to ship chip damage.

*In theory, a camp comp would address these risks and have a means of mitigating them.

As the extensive list demonstrates, the camper has a significantly expanded selection of options available to them opposed to their opponent. Many common risks of playing "standard" (frontlines meeting at the middle of the map) can be mitigated and/ or avoided entirely by camping. Even if you are not taking advantage of the new opportunities available to you, camping gives peace of mind that your backline is (relatively) safe.

What steps can be taken to ensure you can consistently set up a camp, and how can you avoid being camped (sucker)?

How Initial Deployments can set up Camping

It is common in RTA for players to take preventative measures to mitigate the risk of ending up in a situation where they are getting camped. The most basic is holding their DP until caps at 10 to deploy.

If I were to deploy my unit at the start of the match, there would be no opportunity cost associated with my opponent not deploying, as their DP gauge (currently 7 DP) would continue

to accrue DP. They can freely choose where to fight by waiting until my unit has walked where they want it, and then deploying a frontline on top of them.

To mitigate this risk, it is common to see people wait until 10 DP to deploy. Should my opponent still wish to hold off their own deployment, they will lose DP as the DP gauge can only hold 10. When people still opt to do this, it is referred to as “negative DP camping”.

		Player A	
		Deploy at Ship	Deploy at Mid
Player B	Deploy at Ship	Clash at Mid	Clash at B Ship
	Deploy at Mid	Clash at A Ship	Clash at Mid

Referencing the above payoff matrix, both parties should deploy at their ship to avoid being camped by the other.

How does this tie into E1 comps and Coffin-6's Tarrasque?

With the knowledge that Tarrasque spawns when your enemy is close to the middle of the map, the above payoff matrix can be modified to show scenarios where Tarrasque spawns/ does not spawn:

		Player A	
		Deploy at Ship	Deploy at Mid
Player B (Coffin-6)	Deploy at Ship	Tarrasque spawns	Tarrasque spawns
	Deploy at Mid	Tarrasque doesn't spawn	Tarrasque spawns

Player A, looking to deny E1 its Tarrasque stack, should always deploy at ship. Player B should always deploy at ship.

Importantly, Tarrasque will only spawn when your opponent is near the middle of the map. Whereas the option of stalling for ship skill is appealing to many comps (RKing especially), E1 comps will be no closer to winning until E1 itself is deployed, and E1 does not like being deployed without the Tarrasque summon. You **must** coax your opponent to deploy their frontline to receive your full 3 stacks.

What is “Deploy Baiting”?

Deploy baiting is the act of deploying a unit with the intention of forcing your opponent to respond. The most obvious example of this is Replacer Bishop lead. If your opponent does not deploy a unit to draw Replacer Bishop's aggro, she will stick to the ship and quickly melt it while permanently stealthed.

The two units most commonly deployed first in E1 teams are Sparrow and Glitch.

Deploy Baiting with Glitch: If you are familiar with using Replacer Bishop to facilitate a camp setup, you should be comfortable using Glitch. Glitch is a 2 DP soldier/mech hybrid that spawns with a short-lived stealth buff. Glitch is the perfect sacrifice for E1 because it accomplishes several things:

- Glitch is 2 DP like Sparrow. There is no opportunity cost sacrificing Glitch over Sparrow.
- Glitch can be forward deployed to force a response from your opponent, or else they will deal chip damage to the ship (though not nearly as severely as Bishop).
- Your opponent cannot target Glitch without stealth detection (i.e. Kaci Bins/ Alex) and they will walk past them. Glitch is at no risk of dying while you wait on Tarrasque.
- Your opponent cannot afford to negative DP camp a stealthed unit.

Notably, Glitch differs from Bishop in that Glitch deploys forward at 8~9 DP. This is to account for the time it takes for Glitch to walk up to their ship, your opponent to deploy (at 10 DP at ship), and your opponent to reach the midpoint to trigger the Tarrasque summon.

Deploy Baiting with Sparrow: Unlike Bishop, there is a fair amount of risk involved deploy baiting with Sparrow. Ideally, your opponent's ground-attack frontline would run past them and towards the ship. In the short span of time between when Sparrow deploys and Tarrasque spawns, there is a risk that your opponent can spawn a ranged unit and oneshot Sparrow from their side of the map without triggering the Tarrasque spawn (any ranger/ sniper skill). If Awakened Lee Seo Yoon (ALSY) is free, it is impossible to even react before Sparrow dies.

Your opponent wants to kill Sparrow as they walk up. This is the "correct" response from your opponent because:

- You cannot punish their exposed backline deployment as a camper.
- If you do not immediately deploy E1, Sparrow will die, losing you 2 passive stacks.

You will be forced to settle for 2 passive stacks, forgoing the Tarrasque summon stack.

Depending on the week, it is important to determine if the risk is worth deploy baiting with Sparrow for the 3rd sacrifice stack, or if it is better to immediately sacrifice Sparrow with E1 -> Sparrow for the guaranteed 2 stacks.

While it is impossible to prevent E1 from camping without specific planning (e.g. Bishop, towers, Albion S1), it is entirely possible to deny E1 its full stacks.

While E1 teams are fairly flexible, it is worth considering reducing the number of mechs you need to bring. This sounds counter-intuitive given Coffin-6 is “the mech ship” but an excess of mechs can cause issues:

- **Initial Hand Cycle:** If your team does not have its sacrifices (or E1 on an E1 ban week), you will need to cycle your hand to get them. If you have nothing but mechs in your hand you can easily brick yourself because all of your mechs die when E1 is deployed.
 - **Mid Game Redeploy:** It is almost an inevitability that you will need to redeploy E1 if you don't win off the momentum of the first nuke. Minimizing the amount of mechs in your team makes this redeployment less painful, and keeps more of your backline and/ or frontline alive.
-

Early Game

Stalling

You should never deploy anything proactively/ preemptively when playing E1. There is no reason to “seize the initiative” from your opponent. You are already poised to win by default if your opponent does not somehow manage to diffuse the E1, and you will need all your DP to respond quickly to those threats.

Health as a Resource: Using E1 to Stall

E1 is uncharacteristically tanky for a backline unit. This allows E1 to soak damage from frontliners (R.Esterosa, R.Orca, Seraphel, Lee Yumi etc.) for extended lengths of time. However, E1 will still melt when facing a proper DPS unit.

Managing E1's health as a resource is important in the early game to maximize the amount of time you can stall waiting out your opponent's deployments. Because of E1's inherent tankiness:

- You have the luxury of deploying backline -> frontline while your opponent must play frontline -> backline.
 - This is advantageous because it allows you to play reactively to their backline deployments opposed to spending DP on a less threatening (equally valuable) hand cycle unit (e.g. R.Laura).
 - Most importantly it means you can decide if you want to stack backline units behind E1, and when you want to deploy a frontliner to tank.
- Your opponent is forced to act. Assuming no further deployments, E1 will nuke before their frontliner kills E1. Your opponent will inevitably have to deploy their defender shredder.
 - Although E1 has (ideally) 50% Category 2 DMG RES, it is still incredibly squishy. With 0 EVA, E1 dies to OAR/ Ifrit faster than you are able to generate the DP to deploy a frontliner to protect it.
 - The advantage of forcing your opponent to act is not that you make them do something, it is being able to prepare (both when drafting your team and anticipating in-game) for when they inevitably deploy something to kill E1.

Frontlining for E1

Sooner or later your opponent will deploy a backline damage dealer to make tanking with E1 unfeasible. E1 comps can take a number of frontline options that vary by the week, though some are more synergistic with E1 than others. Notably, E1 benefits immensely from characters with the means of pushing into your opponent.

- **Overflow:** Overflow is well suited for E1 comps thanks to his kit. His value comes from the charge and the subsequent stun which can help immensely with backline disruption. Overflow has steadily been falling out of popularity with the increase in cost-efficient frontliners and high damage defender shredders. Of note:
 - If Overflow is unable to accomplish anything meaningful with his initial deployment (i.e. deploy when there are no backline units present) he tends to die shortly afterwards. Overflow should be played reactively.
 - Overflow is disruptive but he is not actually very tanky relative to other traditional frontliners. It is best to treat him as a utility offtank (e.g. base Kaci Bins).
- **Raphaela:** Similar to Overflow, Raphaela can use her pseudo-forward deploy to drop directly on top of the enemy backline. Although Raphaela cannot take advantage of Coffin-6, the nature of her kit allows her to stall incredibly long.
- **Spira:** Spira's backline disruption is especially valuable to E1 for a number of reasons:
 - Spira can "dash" further than other frontline options, keeping E1 safe from splash damage (i.e. Ministra).
 - As a striker, your opponent's ranger backline will struggle immensely to kill Spira. This forces them to divert DP towards anti-striker options when they are already pressed for DP trying to DPS check the E1.
- **Gremory:** As a supporter with perfect evasion and a generous deployment range, Gremory can be used as a type agnostic frontline with high survivability. Compared to Spira who may struggle when deployed into a mixed backline of anti-striker anti-defender, Gremory is able to tank both well.
- **Woodpecker:** Woodpecker is an obscenely tanky 2 DP frontline unit for E1. As a flying striker, rangers with anti-defender DMG anti-ground DMG do very little damage to it. Woodpecker feels unkillable vs. rangers and can kill many of them on its own, but it will die quickly to any source of anti-striker damage (notably Rita/ Lyudmilia/ Wardens).
 - Woodpecker has unique targeting AI and only looks forwards. If the enemy frontline walks past Woodpecker, Woodpecker will keep moving forward. This differentiates Woodpecker from other tank units.
 - Woodpecker is heavily gear-reliant (x2 Inhib movements with anti-melee DMG RES) to perform its role because if it is knocked back into the E1, it has no way of putting itself back on top of the enemy backline.
- **Economy frontliners:** Outside the typical assortment of low-cost high-value frontline units, you can also take advantage of the weekly ups to find cheap tanky HP meatballs to protect your E1. These include:
 - Eins & Zwei, Rearm Kaci Bins, Rearm Alex
 - Upped Ryan, Mone, Hilde, ATAC-130, etc.

Is Horizon Good?

Horizon looks like a viable option in E1 comps. Between her constant shielding, MDL, knockback in enraged mode, always-active gap closer, and synergy with Coffin-6, she has everything in her kit to be an excellent frontliner for E1. Horizon's enraged mode bonks out-range Ifrit and OAR. While not entirely self-sufficient, she can last longer than other defender alternatives. In practice, her knockback can cause many issues.

- If Horizon is deployed in front of E1 (so your opponent's frontline is behind her), there is the serious risk she knocks them into your ship, which can lose you the game.
- If Horizon is deployed beside E1 to avoid the issue of bonking your enemy frontline into your backline, she doesn't have a way to get in front of E1 (e.g. Overflow dash, Raphaela forward deploy, Spira jump). E1 ends up tanking for Horizon.
- Horizon is inherently incompatible with camp comps because if she's too successful knocking everything back, your units will walk up and break the camp you had set up.

When Horizon inevitably dies to her hp% burn you'll be left in a bad (losing) position.

Horizon can be a strong RTA unit. However, within the context of E1 comps there are frontliners that can perform the same role (frontline tank) with much less setup.

Mid Game

Setting Up your first Nuke

Your opponents also recognize the power of E1's nuke and your reliance on it. There are several actions they can take to redirect/ stall/ mitigate the nuke. It is important to be aware of these risks and to plan accordingly.

- People will frequently deploy Kang/ Gremory behind E1 to redirect the nuke.
 - The deploy-behind-E1 strategy relies on you playing with auto ult enabled because it is impossible to anticipate the nuke otherwise. By delaying your nuke for a second, you can easily bait out these attempts.
- Spira easily gets behind E1, damages the ship, and tanks well enough to require a dedicated anti-striker to kill her, otherwise your E1 will be forever redirected.
 - This risk is mitigated by bringing multiple anti-strikers (i.e. anti-striker Ifrit, Grendel, Kestrel Xiao Lin, etc.) to quickly remove Spira before she becomes too problematic.
 - You will want multiple anti-strikers because it is more than likely your opponent has some limited means of protecting Spira (i.e. Amy, R.Liz, Lake)
- Awakened Na Yubin's (NYB) passive causes him to dash back and forth through E1. If NYB isn't dead by the time E1's nuke is ready, you may need to wait a few seconds for NYB to perform his dash so E1 faces the right direction.
 - Ideally you want to kill NYB quickly and this is made easier by how easy it is to isolate him from the rest of his team. Of note, although Glitch and Sparrow are both on anti-defender gear, they do a poor job of actually killing NYB. As NYB's passive is triggered by the number of incoming hits, it's easy for him to stunlock your backline with the number of hits they do.

- NYB can be killed easily with more dedicated anti-defender options (e.g. Rearm Han Sorim, Lee Yuri, Gaeun, Doma, Nicole, Ifrit)
- Bluebridge Mark II (BB Mk2) soldier summons eat up E1's valid hits and the constantly spawning soldiers can easily redirect E1.
 - E1 comps are disadvantaged vs. BB Mk2 because there is so much risk involved trying to use the nuke while the drop pods are active. The "least losing" play is still to launch the nuke when the alternative is waiting 15 seconds for the drop pods to despawn.
 - The only situation that would allow for you to hold the nuke is when you are already hard winning, which isn't a realistic expectation.
 - Units hit in excess of an attack's valid hits take 30% of the damage and cannot be crit.

The splash on E1's ultimate is significantly larger than E1's targeting range. E1 ult can be manually activated to damage enemies/ the enemy ship without having to walk up. This helps mitigate risks:

- Enemy may be able drop a defender in the time it takes for E1 to walk up, reducing the damage the ult can do.
- Enemy may drop a frontline unit behind E1 when it walks up.

When to hold Ult: If you are winning without E1 ult, your E1 is safe, and your opponent is holding DP to deploy after the ult, your opponent has already lost the game. This is because you can hold the nuke to create a lose-lose situation for your opponent:

- If your opponent deploys, they will instantly get nuked and lose the DP.
- If your opponent does not deploy, they will eventually cap at 10 DP and lose DP, while you can freely deploy.

Avoiding the Mid Game Stall

The easiest way to throw the game with E1 is to overcommit to a bad push and watch E1 die on your opponent's side of the map. When your team pushes forward, E1 leads* the charge and becomes incredibly vulnerable. Typically this looks like E1 getting a frontline tank deployed behind it while rangers shred it from the safety of their ship. As Overflow's dash is on a cooldown you cannot control, and Raphaela can only deploy so far up, it is easy for your E1 to die unprotected.

*Although Overflow initially positions himself in front of E1, he is usually dead if not on life support by the time E1's first nuke becomes available.

Pushing vs. Redeploying

Following your first nuke, it is sometimes a better idea to hold off deployments while your opponent scrapes together DP to redeploy everything. Letting your DP accumulate is not necessarily a bad thing:

- While E1 comps are great at setting up a camp, they are abysmal at breaking one up short of nuking the whole thing. While the context matters, it is safer to assume in a messier fight that attempting a push is a futile effort and a waste of DP.
- You can treat this period of time as “free” time during which E1 can charge its second nuke. If E1 is (inevitably) redirected by your opponent’s frontline, you can use your banked DP to redeploy it, sacrificing your existing mechs on the field for stacks.

Of note, if Overflow is not dead, or you did redeploy Overflow and he manages to get himself wedged under your opponent’s ship, it is incredibly advantageous for you.

- Following the deployment zone rework, units cannot be deployed at the edge of the map but they can still end up there (i.e. knockback, dashes). When Overflow dashes into the ship, he positions himself behind your opponent’s deployment zone.

Notable ASSR Matchups

Awakened Yuna (AYuna): ~~AYuna matchups are not favored for either player. If the E1 player makes a mistake it is very easy for AYuna to kill it with her burn aura. Likewise, AYuna is notoriously squishy and can easily die if mispositioned.~~

- ~~• E1’s skill is able to remove AYuna’s 30% damage taken buff, and its enhanced basic attack heal blocks AYuna.~~
- ~~• As a striker, AYuna is incredibly squishy. Because E1 camps hard, it can be difficult for your opponent to keep her alive from their side of the field. By virtue of how E1 teams are set up (anti-defender fodder, anti-striker for Spira, Coffin 6 S1), the E1 player has the tools to burst down AYuna and her frontline.~~
- ~~• During the initial few seconds, it can be incredibly difficult for E1 to set up their board if the AYuna player manages to wedge a character behind E1 (e.g. Mone dash, Gremory). When E1 enters A.Yuna’s burn aura, it typically devolves into a DPS race that E1 loses if you weren’t initially in a position to kill AYuna.~~

Awakened Yuna (AYuna): Post-reactor it’s an unwinnable matchup for E1 Imao

Awakened Joo Shiyoon (AJSY): AJSY matchups (specifically AJSY hospital comps) can go either way.

- Neither E1 nor AJSY can kill each other, but AJSY’s counterattacks hit the units behind it. Notably, AJSY’s counter has 2 valid hits and E1 has valid hit absorption along with the defender protect mechanic. AJSY can kill the units you deploy behind E1, and he will slowly deal chip damage to the ship.
- If the AJSY player is allowed to stack up their backline of supporters, E1’s nuke won’t deal enough damage to kill them through all the buffs and shields they provide one another.
- E1’s skill removes AJSY’s perfect evasion but AJSY can counterattack E1’s skill. By baiting out AJSY’s skill at the beginning of the match before E1 has been deployed, the E1 player can set themselves up for a fast kill on AJSY.

Ministra: Ministra matchups are E1 favored. However, she can become problematic in more purpose-built anti-mech comps.

- Ministra spawns mutated Spira which comes with all the risks of normal Spira.
- Ministra is squishy and can be stalled easily with Raphaela, among other units.
- Coffin-6's S2 ASPD down reduces Ministra's damage output and when timed correctly can cancel her dash back.
- Ministra crosses apply a permanent -33% ATK, ASPD, skill haste debuff. E1 is only immune to non-permanent debuffs, making this one of the very few debuffs that affect E1. Coffin-6's free Tarrasque spawn can easily die to splash damage and drop a cross on the ground. The crosses can make it difficult for the E1 player to play the game.

Awakened Seo Yoon (ASY): ASY matchups are E1 favored. ASY is inherently disadvantaged because it takes too long for her damage to ramp up. However, as is the case with most ASY matchups, she can kite your team to death if you have no way to get on top of her. It can be very difficult to displace ASY when she inevitably wedges herself under her ship over the course of the match.

- Between E1's enhanced basic attack and Coffin-6's S2, it is easy for the E1 player to destroy ASY's rifle summons. This limits the amount of damage she can contribute.
- E1 comps benefit greatly from Spira and try to take it when she isn't banned. Spira is a natural counter to ASY and can keep her occupied for a long time.

Replacer King (RKing): RKing matchups are heavily RKing favored.

- E1 and RKing are both camp comps but RKing can camp considerably harder than E1.
- E1 has poor matchup into BB Mk2 because the soldiers soak up nuke valid hits. Against RKing, you cannot afford to hold onto the nuke. Between the drop pod soldiers and RKing's replacer zombies, it is easy to get the nuke redirected by his fodder. This is a lose-lose situation for E1.
- With high level Serina, the matchup is playable, otherwise it is unplayable or (depending on weekly bans) heavily disadvantaged at best.
- On Raphaela: While E1 and RKing both utilize Raph, RKing uses it better. RKing will slowly chip away at the ship's HP bar. As Raph is deployed closer and closer, it becomes increasingly difficult for E1 to push forward. This can quickly spiral into a negative feedback loop with every subsequent Raph deploy.

Na Yubin (NYB): NYB matchups can go either way depending on the week. The matchup is slightly in favor of E1 but if the NYB player has the tools to keep NYB alive, E1 often loses.

- NYB can easily be separated from the rest of his team because he dashes headfirst into your backline. This provides a good opportunity to kill him with the anti-defender of the week.
- It's better to not deploy both Glitch and Sparrow into NYB. Although they are decent anti-defenders, the number of hits they deal can quickly stack NYB's passive. NYB's constant dashing will perma-stun your backline and make it impossible to kill him.

- NYB + Lake is a coinflip matchup because the E1 player wants to deploy rangers as soon as possible to kill NYB, but the NYB player will hold Lake S2 to counter the ranger deploy.

Awakened Jake Walker (AJake): ~~AJake matchups are completely one-sided in favor of AJake. The E1 player does not get to play the game. Unless the AJake player doesn't deploy AJake out of pity, there is no world where it is remotely winnable for E1.~~

- ~~• If AJake deploys at the middle of the map as the match starts, the E1 player will not have enough time to set up before AJake is on top of the E1. E1 can tank the damage from many frontline tanks but E1 cannot tank AJake. The % max hp burn will kill E1 before it is able to ult.~~
- ~~• AJake's lightning field aura exceeds E1's attack range. If there are no other frontlines between AJake and E1, E1 will walk into lightning aura range. It is very difficult to keep E1 from killing itself.~~
- ~~• **It is entirely possible to kill AJake with an E1 comp before AJake can burn E1 by spamming defender shredders.** However, stacking the backline leaves E1 vulnerable to the opponent's defender shredders. As well, the AJake can protect itself with strikers, forward deploy tanks (RKang, Gremory), and/or hitstun (ship skills).~~
- ~~• E1's nuke doesn't damage AJake. You would need some other anti-defenders to kill AJake. While it is entirely possible to kill AJake with a full mech team, it becomes exceedingly more difficult when 7 starting DP need to be allocated to summoning E1.~~

Awakened Jake Walker (AJake): Post-buff it's an unwinnable matchup for E1 Imao

Maestra Nequita: Generally speaking, Maestra matchups depend on the number of frontline units Maestra brings and how quickly the E1 player can grind through them. Due to the relative scarcity of Maestra and E1 players, it largely comes down to experience gap because neither player will likely have played the matchup more than a dozen times.

- E1 is non-permanent debuff immune. This means it is unaffected by Maestra's ult. However, given the general composition of Maestra comps (frontline heavy), this interaction is not as powerful as it sounds.
- E1 comps typically bring a lot of damage dealers (4~5 DPS units). If the E1 player is able to grind through all of the frontline, regardless if the Maestra ults or not it will be well positioned to push when Maestra retreats to the back of her ship.
- Given Maestra's slow movement speed, it is very easy for E1 to be dragged out to the middle of the map. E1 can easily accumulate chip damage. Notably, E1 can die quickly if it takes basic attack damage from Lucrecia.

Curian: The E1 vs. Curian-soldier matchup is played similar to the E1 vs. soldier matchup with some extra items to note. The E1 player can be easily overwhelmed by the soldier rush but if it is able to stall out the soldier player, they have an opportunity to regain the initiative off the E1 ult.

- Curian can effectively deny E1's third stack. Curian boasts incredible range on deployment and passively detects stealthed units. This significantly reduces the amount of time you can stall to drag him to your side of the map using Sparrows/ Glitch.

- Curian is susceptible to E1's enhanced basic attack. It is very easy for damage to accumulate on Curian if the soldier player cannot manage their valid hits well.

Awakened Chifuyu (AChifuyu): AChifuyu matchups are innately AChifuyu favored due to the way her ultimate functions, but can swing either way depending on the availability of other units. The AChifuyu matchup boils down to if you understand how execute works and how well you can anticipate the ult.

- Execute bypasses MDL If E1 eats AChifuyu's ult damage, it is highly likely it dies to the execute following the third hit.
- Execute does not bypass barriers. By triggering Sigma's operator skill at the same time as AChifuyu (this is very easy; the game freezes when AChifuyu starts her ult animation), E1 is able to protect itself from the execute. AChifuyu alone does not have the damage to break the shield off the first two hits of her ultimate.
- Ensure you have enough DP to redirect AChifuyu's ultimate. AChifuyu receives a massive flat cooldown reduction at 10% HP. She will always be able to ult before E1. AChifuyu's ultimate is an inevitability. However, given her fragility, it is somewhat controllable when you trigger her cooldown reduction.

Key Takeaways

E1 comps are straightforward to play with a clear win condition. The team has clear weaknesses and numerous bad matchups, but it is easy to pilot and simple to understand.

If nothing else, I hope you the reader can apply to your games:

- Manual ult (at least the first nuke)
- Until your frontline is deployed, always save enough DP to deploy a frontliner
- Do not overcommit to a push if E1 is on a sliver of HP

TI;Dr camp like a dog

Acknowledgements

Thank you kindly for proofreading this disaster ;_;

- Rice
- Adepht
- Brah
- Community SEA Discord server
- Official Global Discord server
- Snekside Discord server

Changelog

04/05/23

- Updated Overflow frontline recommendation
- Elaborated on new E1 frontline options
- Updated AJake section to be less hopeless
- Updated Coffin-6 S2 description

07/10/23

- Updated Woodpecker section for increase in anti-strikers
- Added Maestra
- Added Curian
- Added AChifuyu

10/19/23

- Updated AYuna AJake sections for post ASSR stat adjustment