

# Royal Match

## Deconstruction

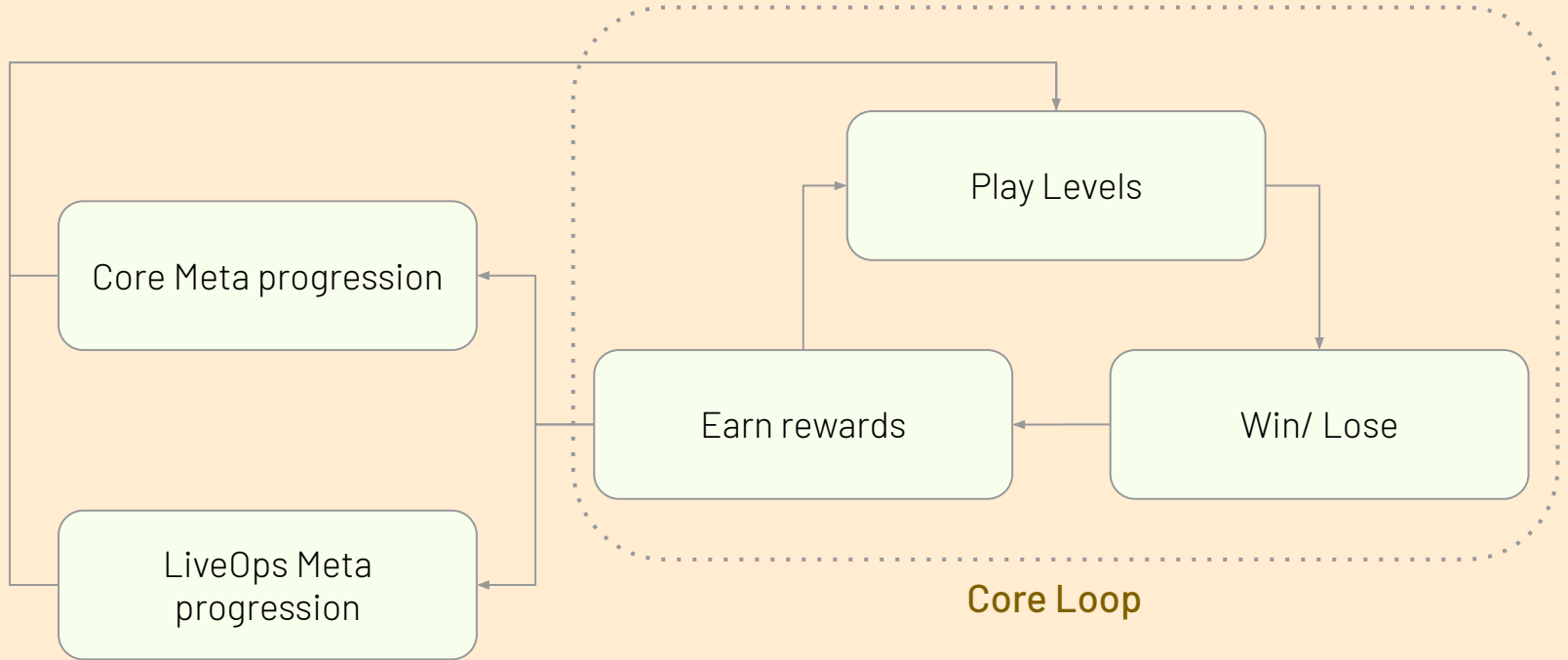


# Deconstruction criteria

1. Core Loop
2. Difficulty Curve
3. Progression
4. Meta gameplay
5. LiveOps features
6. Monetisation - IAP Strategy
7. Monetisation - Ad Monetisation Strategy

Please note: This deconstruction was created on 5 April, 2025 after playing Levels 1 to 49 of Royal Match in its current app version 28115.

# Core Loop



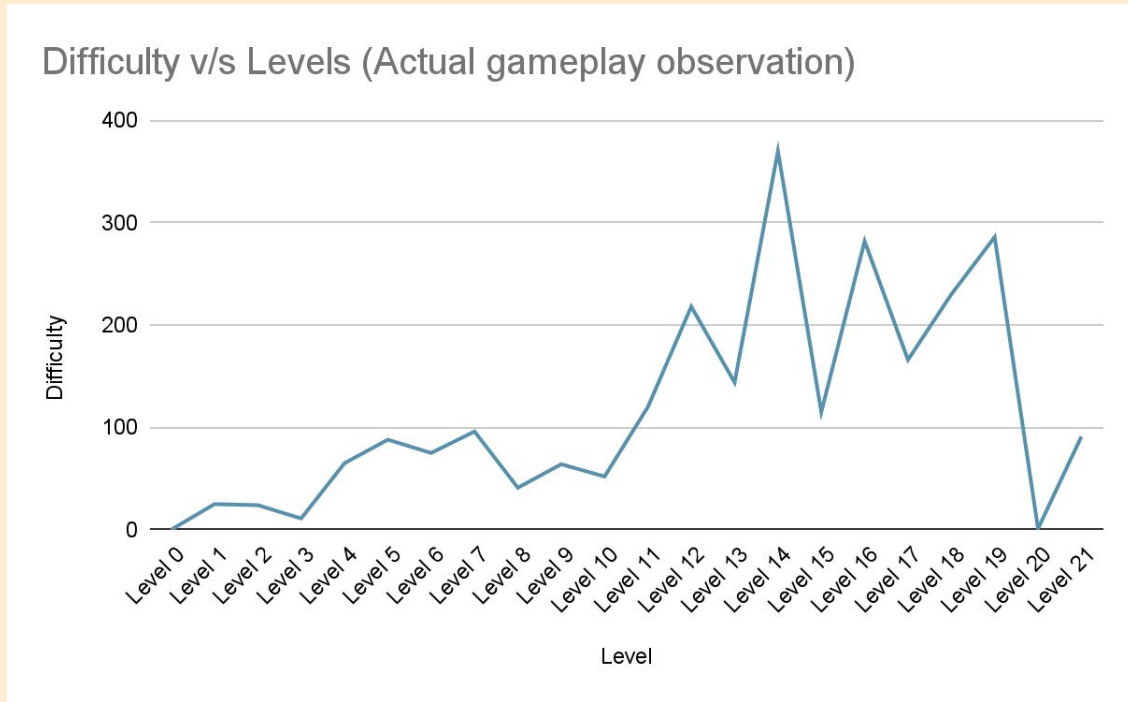
**These meta gameplay loops will be discussed in the coming slides.**

# Difficulty

The difficulty scales slowly at first during the first 10 levels, while the initial resources are sourced and players get to pile up on a big amount of gold and boosters. Then, after Level 11-12, the difficulty begins to spike every 10 levels with the introduction of new Blocker types, walls and limitations on starter tiles.

**The entire intention of the difficulty scaling is to introduce Monetization squeezes at the right points.**

It is also important to provide relief and checkpoints in Level design by making levels easier after Squeeze points and difficulty spikes. This allows the player to have some breathing space and stock up on resources again for the next set of difficult levels.

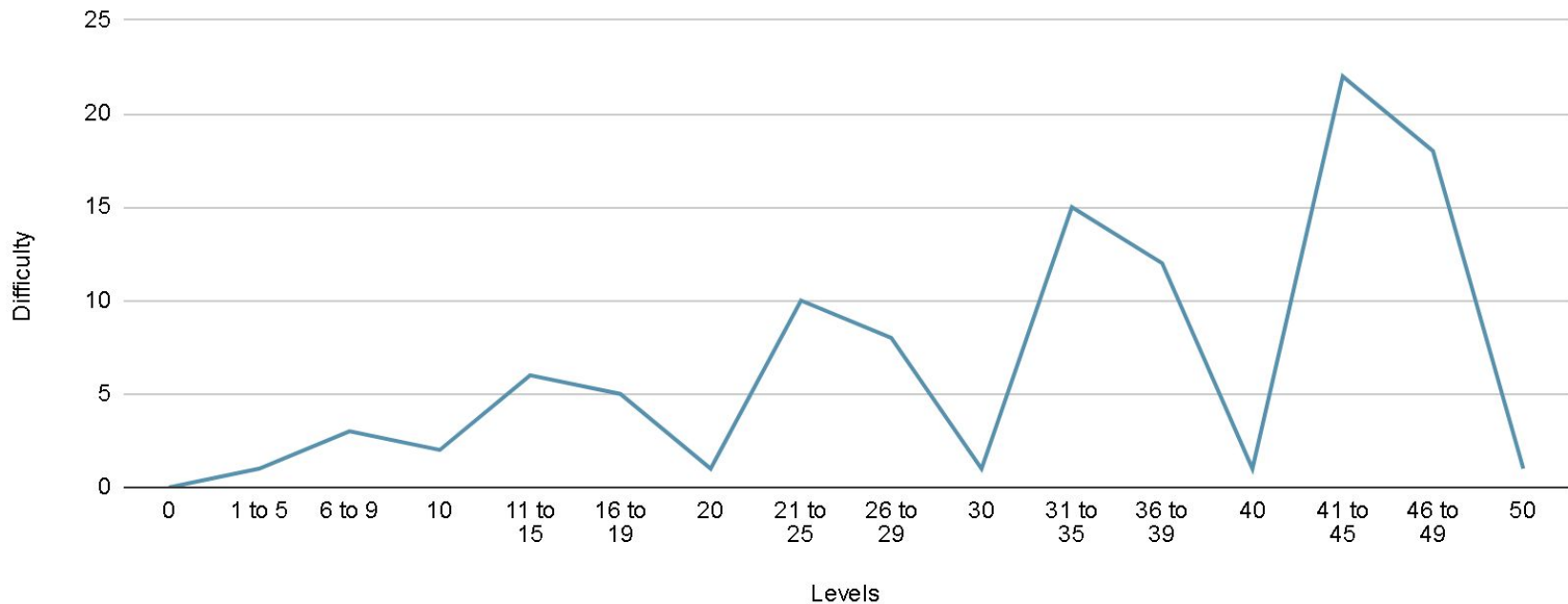


This is an accurate observation of difficulty spikes over the first 21 levels. This paints a picture for us that allows us to assume confidently the rate of difficulty scaling for the rest of the game.

*Please visit the linked Google sheet to understand the calculations undertaken to create this graph.*

*Link:* [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tnxynucpsz1S-8RBq5\\_o08Y2l4ieabyR0\\_X3Dv2eNg0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tnxynucpsz1S-8RBq5_o08Y2l4ieabyR0_X3Dv2eNg0/edit?usp=sharing)

## Difficulty v/s Levels (Representation)



**This is a representative Difficulty scaling curve that shows how the difficult spikes and drops are coherently spaced to make the player feel like they are constantly progressing in skill, ensuring minimal churn.**

# Progression

The players derives a sense of progression from three main parts of the game:

1. **Level (Gameplay progression):** The level that a player is currently at is a primary informer on how experienced of a player they are.
2. **Core Meta progression (Narrative progression):** This is the main indicator of narrative progression, as the player constantly gets visual upgrades to the 'King's castle' by completing levels.
3. **Liveops Meta progression (Collector progression):** This is a cyclic Meta that refreshes monthly. It is technically a part of Liveops, as the Collection system refreshes with new Collection cards & rewards for every cycle.  
Although it is a long-term retention tool, it's scope is limited in comparison to the thousands of visual upgrades that constitute the Core Meta.

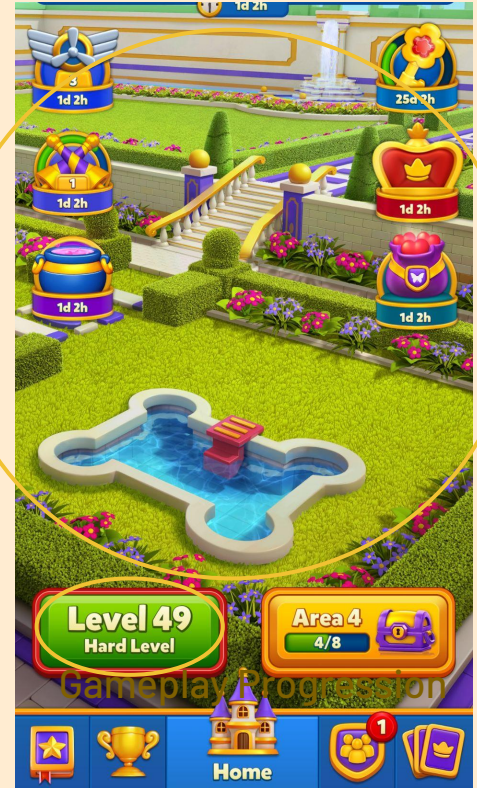
The elements of progression are the primary drivers of Retention metrics in the game.



Core Meta Progression



Collection Meta Progression (Liveops)

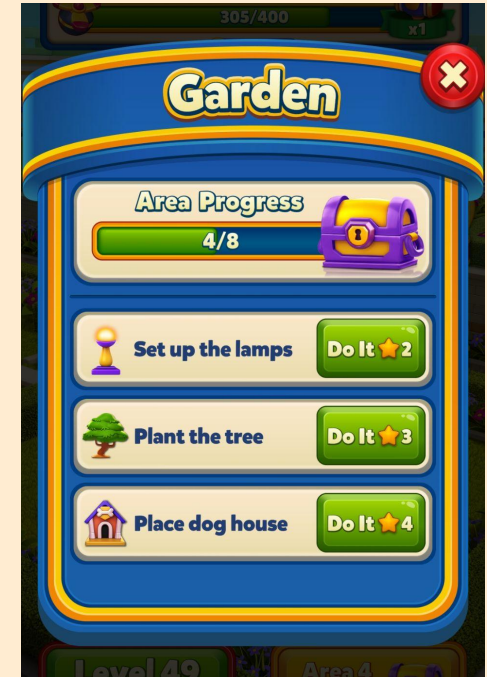
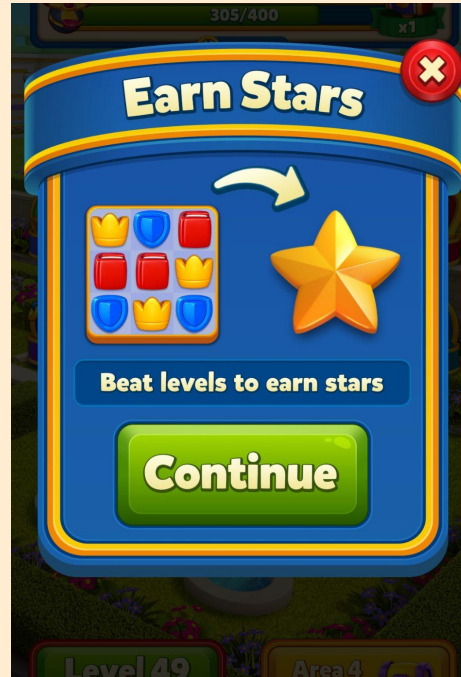


Gameplay Progression



# Decoration Meta: Core

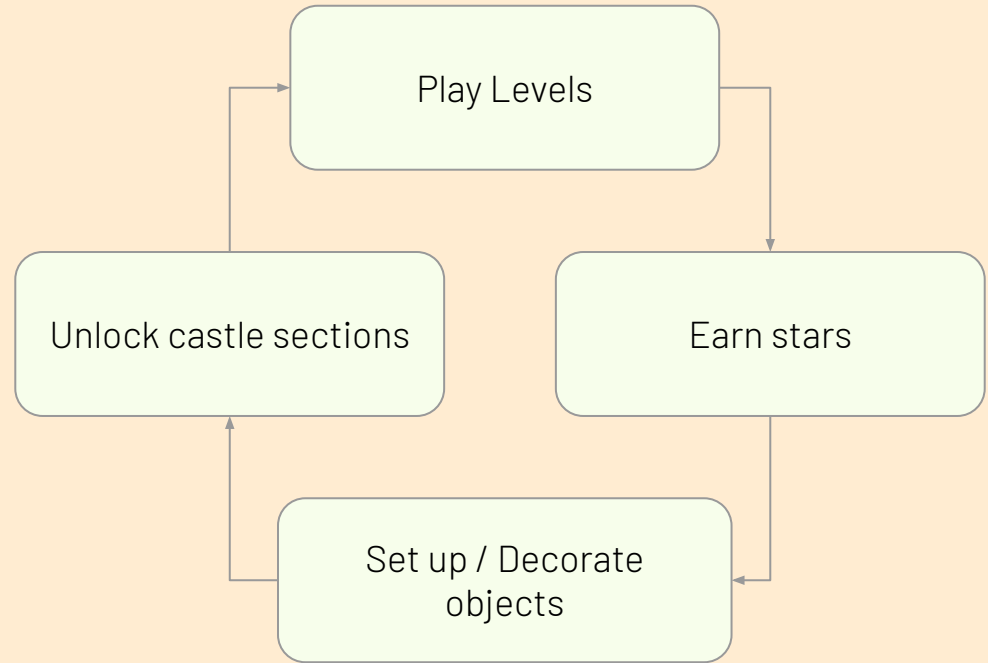
The task of 'decorating the king's palace' delivers a bare-bones visual narrative delight that is just engaging enough in short bursts to keep players vying for the next visual upgrades.



# Decoration Meta loop

Like many other features, simply playing levels provides a steady of 'Stars' that can be then used for the next range of visual upgrades to completing a section of the castle and move onto the next.

This is one of the core indicators of player progression in the game, apart from player level.

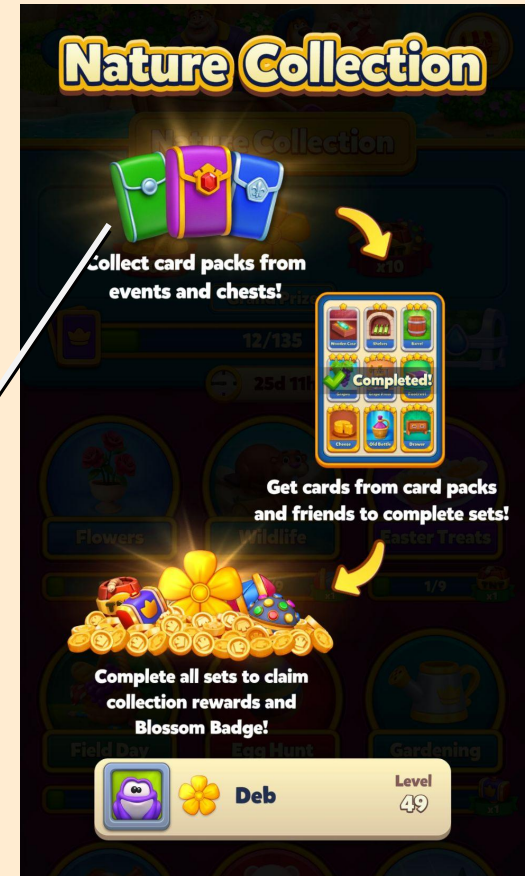


# Collection Meta: Liveops

This is a major Liveops meta based on the established engagement driver events. Players earn cards from events like Season Pass, Propeller madness (mini Season event), Sky race etc.

The source is managed such that the feature retains player interest and triggers 'collector' archetypes within players.

The key metric attached to this feature is 'retention'. Players who are actively engaged in the collection loops are more likely to act stickier.

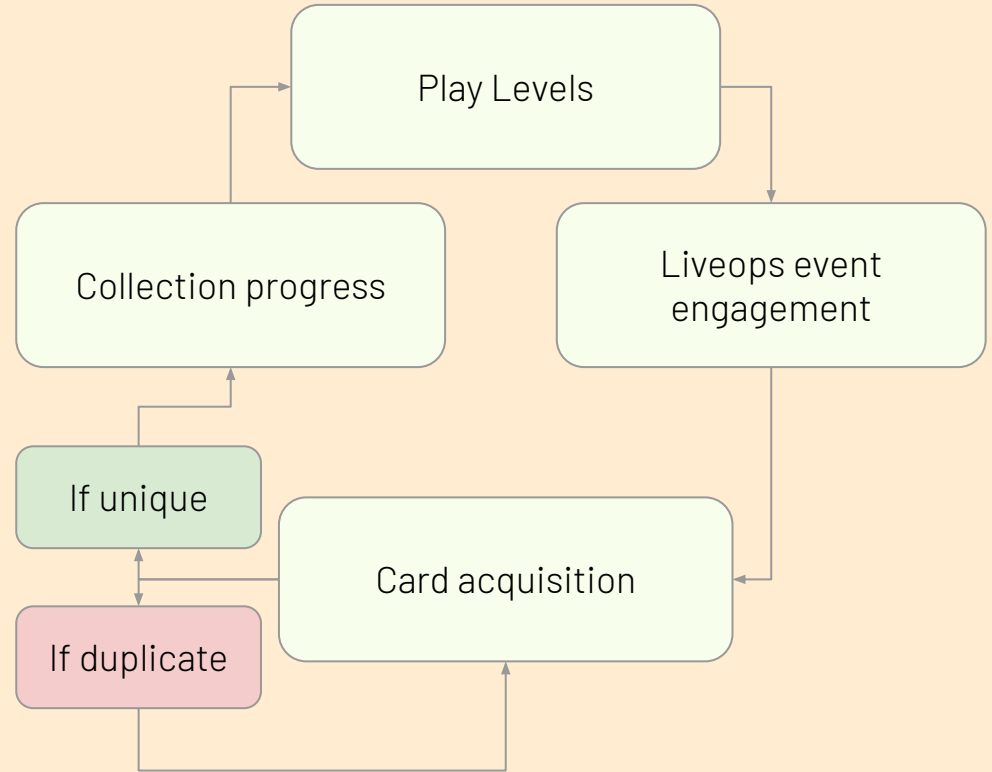


# Collection Meta loop

These Liveops events last for about a month each and requires players to indirectly engage with core gameplay loops to gain progression in mini Liveops events. These then lead to gaining cards of varying rarities.

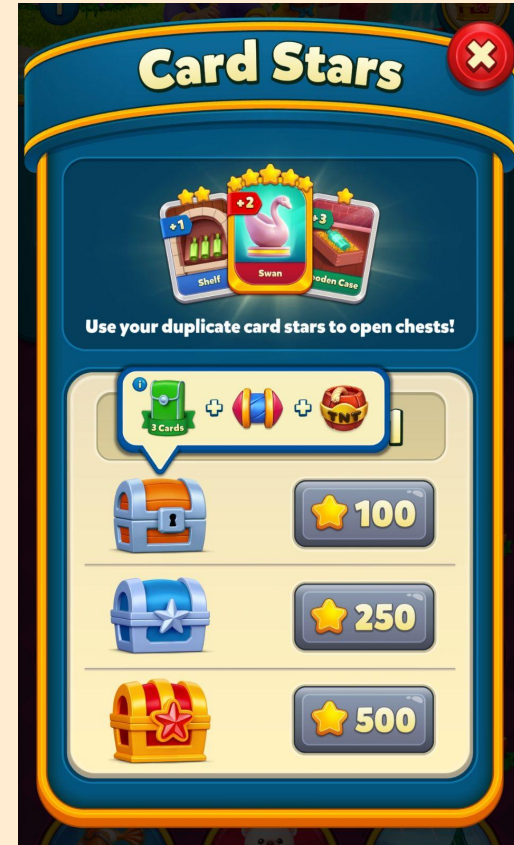
The final reward is a unique badge visible as a collector's stamp on the player's profile.

This is a secondary indicator of player progression in the game, apart from player level & core Meta progression.



# Duplicate Card Logic

This Card collection system is balanced for acquisition of Duplicates such that the duplicate cards are fed back into the system to acquire a small percentage of cards, with the potential of new cards on this draw.



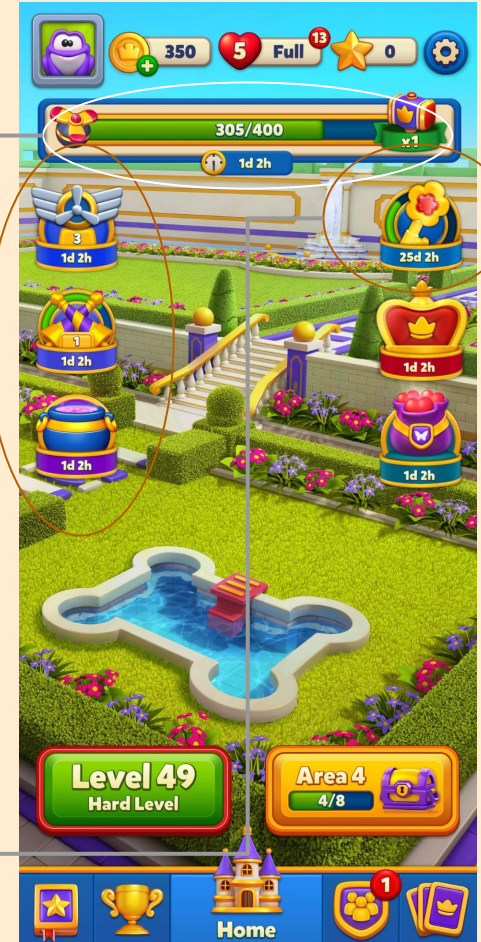
# Liveops Features

Liveops features in Royal Match are engagement drivers that are mostly free (with a couple exceptions) but very effectively help keep the player base playing into engagement loops, resulting in high average session times.

Propeller Madness: Free mini-Season like tiered event

Sky Race, Team tournament, Magic Cauldron: FREE Engagement driver Liveops events

Season Pass: Classic PAID/FREE Engagement driver Liveops events

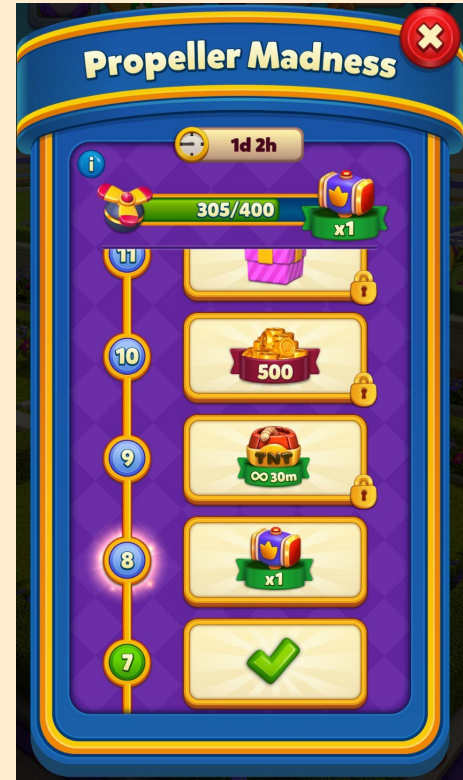




# Propeller Madness

It is a unique Mini-Season Pass event that runs for a couple days to drive up session time and engagement. It is completely free and simply requires the player to play through levels and use Propeller Boosters to 'collect' them as progression resources for the event.

Assumption: This is a thematically cycled event. For the next cycle, it could require collection of a different Booster type and have a different thematic presentation for the event.



# Sky Race

It is a unique Team tournament that drives engagement and session time at its core, but with a layer of social competition and interaction.

The intended triggered player archetype here would be: Social & Killer. Players are pushed to compete against other real players in beating levels.

The key metric triggered is Engagement and session time, as discussed earlier.



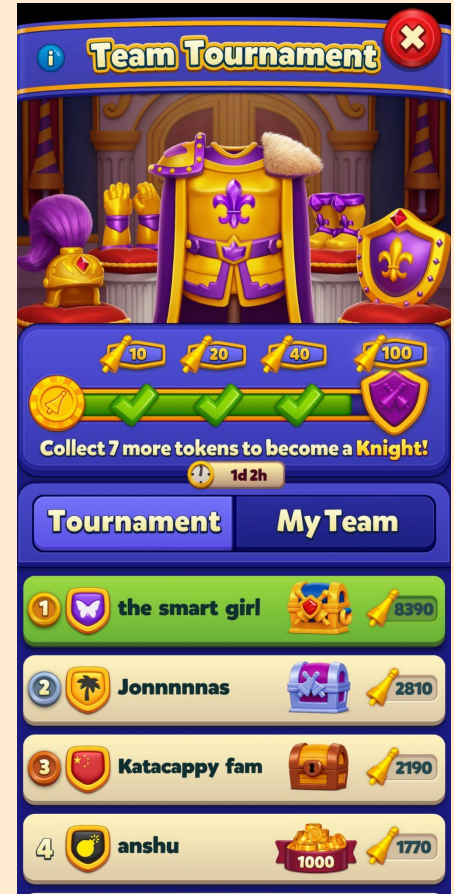


# Team Tournament

It is a unique Tournament event that runs across Teams (clans). It pits teams against each other to provide visual upgrades to participators (Knighthood) & win gameplay resource rewards. Players complete levels to gain token resources that convert into a Knight title. This is the baseline reward milestone expected from players.

Beyond this, players can keep collecting these tokens to keep contributing to their teams. Winning teams with highest token counts gain chests, Boosters & Gold.

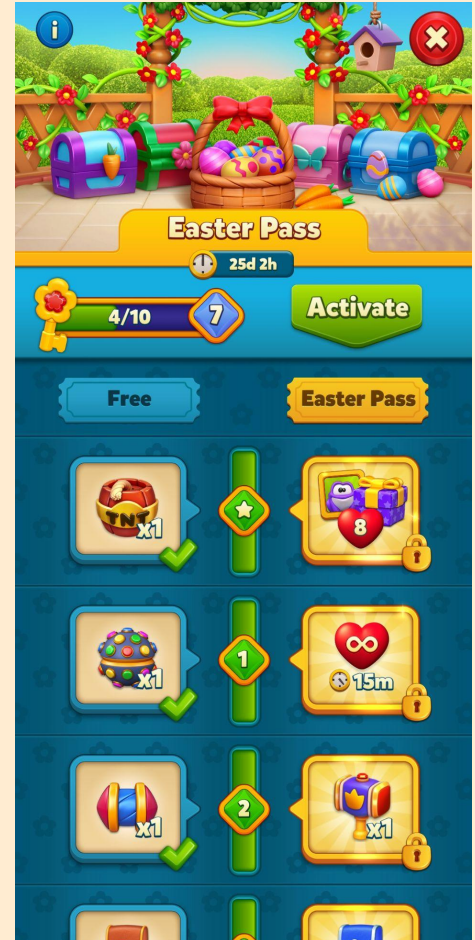
This event drives engagement and short term- retention as it runs for about 2-3 days at a time.



# Season Pass

This is a classic Season Pass event that runs for upto a month and drives long term retention along with some effect on daily engagement.

It provides the usual tiered rewards, divided between Free & Paid tiers.



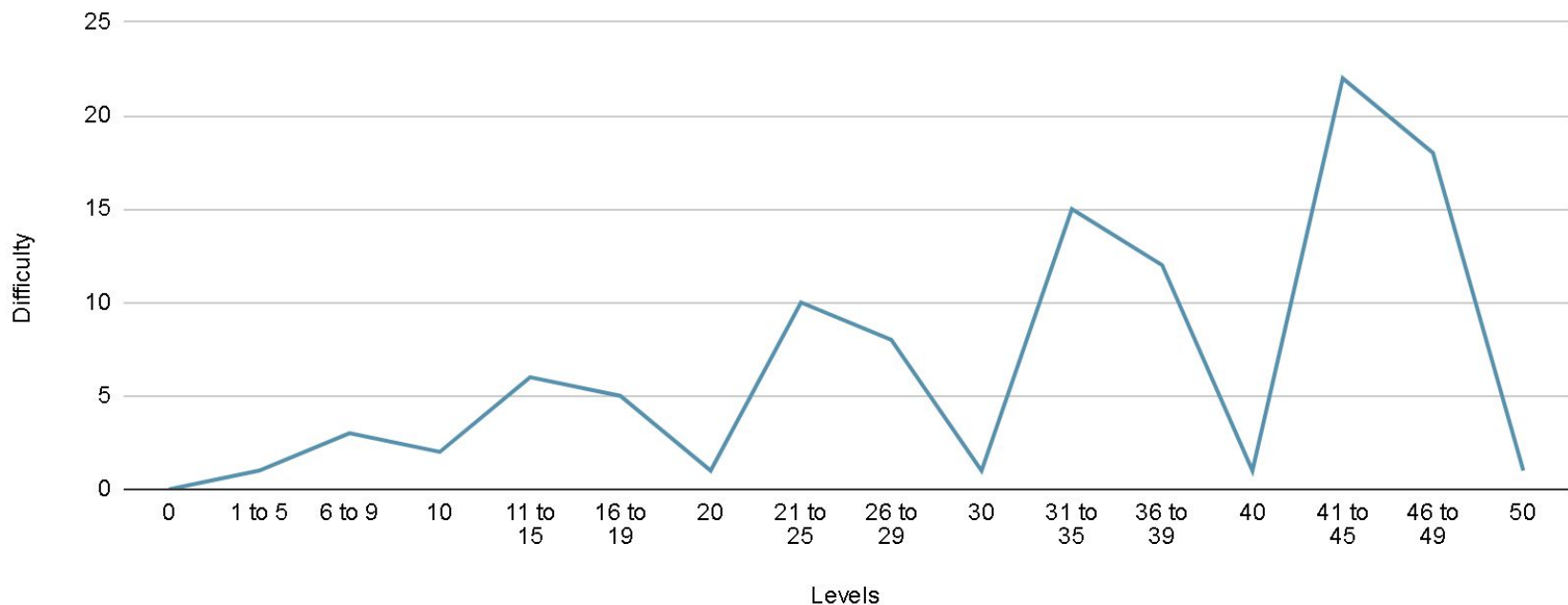
# Monetization: IAP Strategy

Monetization squeezes happen very frequently and with great intensity in Royal Match as there are intentional disbalances in the rate of sources of in-game resources to their sinks.

The primary levers applicable in enforcing IAP in Royal Match:

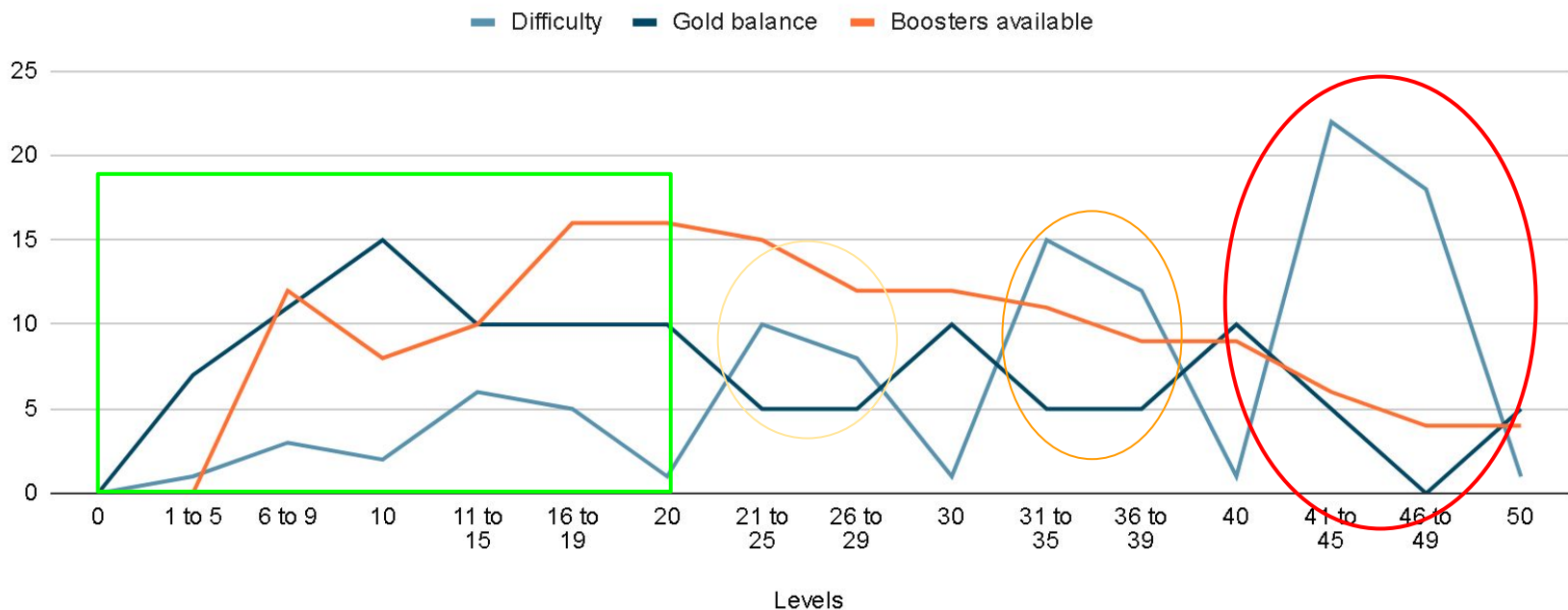
- Gold scarcity: A single redo (5 extra turns) costs 900 gold, while the gold sources amount to about 200 to 300 per hour of gameplay. **Initial gold sources act as a set up gift to make the player habituated to the idea of spending gold to progress.**
- Booster habituation & scarcity: There are 2 booster types- Tile boosters and Gameplay boosters. Tile boosters are created during gameplay matching tiles in appropriate orders while the Gameplay boosters are available to use on the tiles at any point of the game. Players start with Gameplay boosters and can choose to start with upto 3 tile boosters extra on the start tiles.
- Difficulty: The previous factors rely upon difficulty scaling of the level to enforce monetization squeezes.

## Difficulty v/s Levels (Representation)



The representative difficulty scaling will be placed in context of the gold balance & booster availability to get a sense of how the player is compelled to overspend in game resources to stay afloat and eventually convert in a payer.

## Difficulty, Gold balance and Boosters available (Representation)



Green section represents the initial resource gifting to set the player up for habituation.

Next, the three consecutive circles represent how the difficulty spikes as the resources dwindle at accelerated rates.

# IAP: Sales bundles

The general sales bundles can point out exactly which resources are scarce and monetized. As discussed earlier, the three primary factors that drive IAPs are gold scarcity, difficulty & Booster habituation.

- Gold is offered in sales packs to allow for level replayability.
- All booster purchases help curb difficulty scaling.
  - Infinite tile Boosters ensure players stay habituated and keep purchasing.
  - Rarity of Gameplay boosters ensures engagement with Liveops events and features for sourcing.

Infinite starter tile boosters ensure habituation of usage.

Scarcity on powerful gameplay boosters ensure Liveops engagement for acquisition.



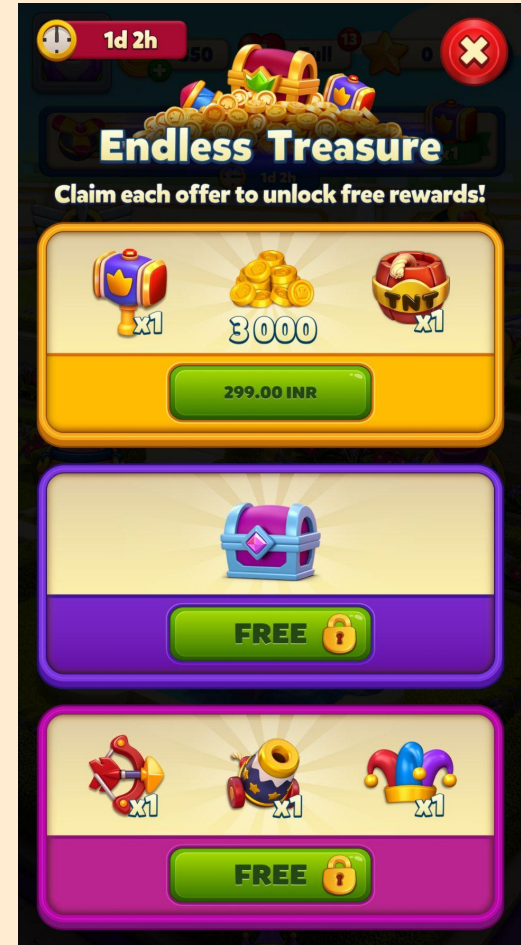
# IAP: Tiered sales

Endless Treasure is a main screen sales feature that makes use of free gifts in between paid tiers to motivate players to spend for a tier with the promise of free tiers of gifts after it. This makes players feel like they are getting multiple gifts for the price of one, resulting in purchases & conversions.

Sales logic for Endless Treasure feature:

Free - Free - **Paid** - Free - Free

This makes players acclimatized to getting the free reward tiers and makes them desire more of them.



# IAP: Team Gift Sales

This is a version of the generic Sales bundles we discussed earlier with an added benefit of sending timed gifts to teammates.

This sale bundle targets 'Social' archetypes who are already engaged in team activities, team related events and gameplay.

Sending gifts to teammates serves provides great social validation for the purchaser.

Unlimited hearts boost engagement on top of the other gameplay benefits.





# IAP: Resource sales

These are the most simple straightforward sales that run in the shop section. Players are given the option to simply buy the resource type they want rather than having to opt for bundles, in case they do not seek the other aspects of bundle sales.

However, these sales often provide lesser value for money compared to sales bundles in order to drive people towards purchasing bundles. On top of that, they are not even easily accessible in the Shop UI. Such suppressed surfacing further proof that the system is indicating better value in the other accessible sales.

	1 000	199.00 INR
	5 000	799.00 INR
	10 000	1,499.00 INR
	25 000	2,999.00 INR
	50 000	5,900.00 INR
	100 000	9,900.00 INR

# Monetization: Ad-mon strategy

Royal Match has carefully crafted gameplay & meta loops that convert players with relative ease. Hence, the average Lifetime Values (LTVs) are surely so high that the F2P players do not need to engage with ads. The paid players carry that brunt and ensure a smoother gameplay experience for the entire playerbase.

This also allows Royal Match to run very aggressive Ad campaigns in other games and apps. The cost per install (CPI) is managed by the high conversion rates and high ARPPU amongst the paid player base.

# Key takeaways

- Core gameplay: Simple and addictive Match 3 gameplay.
- Difficulty curve: Focus on scarcity triggers adjacent to difficulty spikes drives conversion rates.
- Progression: Happens both short- term and long term through range of events & core meta, catering well to both sticky players as well as new players seeking short dopamine rushes.
- Retention: Liveops Meta as well as Narrative Meta drives Retention.
- Engagement: Adherence to core gameplay loop for Liveops events drives Engagement.
- IAP: IAP first approach prevents breakage of flow that ads cause.

**Thank you!**