

# ***ESPORTS WORLD CUP***

## **Dota 2 Rulebook**

## Foreword

This document outlines the rules that should be followed at all times when participating in an EWC 2026 competition. Failure to adhere to these rules may be penalised as outlined.

It should be remembered that it is always the tournament administration that has the last word, and that decisions that are not specifically supported or detailed in this rulebook - or even go against this rulebook - may be made in extreme cases to preserve fair play and sportsmanship.

We hope that you as a participant, spectator, or member of the press enjoy your participation in the tournament and hope that you will join us in our mission to make our events fair, fun, and exciting for everyone involved.

Yours sincerely,

The Tournament Administration Team

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# 1 Definitions

## 1.1 Range of Validity

The event is operated as part of the ESL Pro Tour for Dota2, comprising EWC, DreamLeague and designated third party events.

This rulebook is the basis for the ESL Pro Tour ruleset, which is valid for this event, its participants and all matches played within the scope of the event. With their participation, the participant states that they understand and accept all rules.

The ESL Pro Tour Dota2 Ruleset may be supplemented by additional event specific rules at the discretion of Tournament Management.

## 1.2 Participants

An event participant is a team or a player that is taking part in an ESL Pro Tour competition. No participant can at the same time be a part of more than one organisation taking part in a given ESL Pro Tour Competition.

If an organisation maintains ownership of several teams, those teams may never participate in the same stage of an ESL Pro Tour Competition, whether that stage be Open or Closed Qualifiers or the Tournament proper.

If in doubt, please contact a member of the tournament administration team about whether the competition in question poses a conflict.

## 1.3 Region

For ESL Pro Tour events, the world is divided into eight regions which are as follows:

- China
- Eastern Europe
- North America
- Middle East and South West Asia
- Rest of World
- South America
- South East Asia
- Western Europe

The regions can be further divided into subregions, as EWC sees fit.

Rest of world is the catch all to be used for any competition that cannot reasonably be inserted into one of the above regions for ping constraints - at this time the main areas this is likely to cover are South Africa, Australasia, and South Asia exclusive tournaments.

For a list of all countries and their primary assigned region, see the appendices.

## 1.4 Punishments

### 1.4.1 Definitions and scope of punishments

Punishments are given for rule violations within EWC events. They may be penalty points, fines, default

losses, player/team suspensions or disqualifications, or a combination of these punishments dependent on the incident in question. Participants will be informed about the punishment by email and given a timeframe within which they can appeal the decision.

#### **1.4.1.1 Penalty points**

Penalty points may be given for incidents relating to the competition. Every penalty point deducts one percent (1%) of the overall prize money received by the participant in the competition it is given.

#### **1.4.1.2 Fines**

Fines may be given for incidents related to competition matches, and for failures to fulfil obligations that are not directly related to the competition such as press/media appointments, or planned sessions for fan interaction. Where the amount of fines accrued exceeds the total prize money earned from an event, an additional invoice will be sent to the participant to clear the remaining amount.

#### **1.4.1.3 Bans/suspensions**

Bans or suspensions may be given for very severe incidents. They can be awarded either to a participant or an organisation.

#### **1.4.1.4 Disqualification**

In the most severe cases of rule violations, participants may be disqualified from the event. Disqualified participants forfeit all prize money accumulated for the competition in question. Furthermore, the organisation and its members get banned until the end of that competition.

#### **1.4.1.5 Additional methods of punishment**

In special cases, the tournament administration can define and implement other methods of punishment not directly outlined in the ESL Pro Tour Dota2 Ruleset.

### **1.4.2 Punishments for repeat offences**

All punishments outlined in this rulebook are applicable for first-time offences. Repeat offences will usually be punished more severely than listed in the appropriate section of these rules.

### **1.4.3 League bans and penalty points outside in other competitions**

League bans and penalty points outside of the ESL Pro Tour Dota2 do not normally apply towards ESL Pro Tour Dota2 events, except when the punishment has been awarded for cheating, or for other reasons by the publisher. The ESL Pro Tour Dota2 Tournament Management team reserves the right to apply punishment for heinous breaches of integrity in non ESL Pro Tour Dota2 tournaments.

## **1.5 Tournament Organisation**

The event is organised by EWC. EWC is operated by ESL FACEIT Group GER GmbH.

ESL FACEIT Group GER GmbH  
Schanzenstr. 23  
51063 Köln  
Germany  
<https://www.eslgaming.com/>

### 1.5.1 Tournament Administration

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Michal 'michau' Slowinski   | Tournament Management Supervisor       |
| Jacob "TheKenwyne" Lawton   | Senior Tournament Manager, Dota2       |
| Wade "AggressiveDuck" White | Dota2 Referee                          |
| Jordan Lee                  | Senior Tournament Manager, ENC and EWC |

## **2 General**

### **2.1 Rule changes**

The tournament administration reserves the right to amend, remove, or otherwise change the rules, without prior notice. EWC also reserves the right to make judgments on cases not specifically covered by the rulebook in order to preserve the spirit of fair competition and sportsmanship.

### **2.2 Validity of the rules**

If a provision of this rulebook is or becomes illegal, invalid or unenforceable in any jurisdiction, that shall not affect the validity or enforceability in that jurisdiction of any other provision of this rulebook or the validity or enforceability in other jurisdictions of that or any other provision of this rulebook.

#### **2.2.1 Local laws**

If any rules or procedures are in conflict with local laws, they will be adjusted to be aligned with the laws in a way that stays as close as possible to the originally intended effect.

### **2.3 Communication**

The main communication method for EWC is email, inquiries of any kind need to be directed through email to the following address: [dota2ref@efg.gg](mailto:dota2ref@efg.gg).

When contacting participants of EWC events, the tournament administration will use contact email addresses that have been supplied to them. Where a contact email address is not known, the tournament administration may reach out via discord or through other team managers to establish contact.

#### **2.3.1 Use of Discord**

For online tournaments, discord servers may be used to facilitate the broadcast and operation of the event. For such tournaments, the servers will be clearly defined via email by the tournament administration. Official requests and appeals should still be sent via email.

### **2.4 Conditions of participation**

The following conditions must be met in order to participate in the event.

#### **2.4.1 Age Restrictions**

All participants of an event must be sixteen (16) years of age at the time of the first mandatory day of the competition for that participant, including media days and qualifiers. In some cases legally binding proof may be requested if a player's age is called into question.

#### **2.4.2 Regional Limitations**

A team may not try to qualify for the same event in more than one country or region. A team will usually be limited to participating in the qualifier for the region in which it registers for the EPT Rankings.

#### **2.4.3 Home country/region**

A team's home region is the region within which the team participates in EPT competition. If the team does not participate in EPT Competition, it will be placed in the region within which the majority of its members reside. A member is adjudged to reside in the place in which they spend the majority of their

time living. If a participant wishes to contest the country/region they have been assigned, they should directly contact the tournament administration with the pertinent proof of residence that satisfies the conditions for competition in another region.

The countries are considered parts of the regions as outlined in Regional Affiliation by Country. Some countries may be considered part of their own, distinct region due to ping concerns when playing online; these countries may have secondary associations with regions they can compete on with acceptable but not optimal ping.

## 2.4.4 Country/region of qualifiers

Qualifiers for an event, including invitations, are usually restricted to a country, region or sub-region (we will call it region for the rest of the paragraph).

Exceptions to this rule are possible, if the organiser decides that there is a valid reason why the participant would be unable to attend all required parts of a qualifier in their home region, or why they should be allowed to play the qualifier in another region.

Any exceptions must be directly requested via email to the tournament administration by the participant for each event individually. Examples of valid reasons may be:

- There are no qualifiers in the home region(s) for the participant and they are willing to travel to the region of the qualifier to play it.
- The team is taking part in a competition(s) in a region other than their home region(s) and has matches to play there before and after and in such close proximity to the time of the qualifier(s) in their home region(s) that travelling back for that qualifier(s) would be unreasonable.
- The participant is staying in another region for a good reason (esports related) for a prolonged time that spans the time of the qualifier for their home region, and it can be clearly shown that this situation has not been created in order to take part in a qualifier that might be easier to qualify from

If such an exception is granted, the respective region will be considered that participant's home region for the entire event, or until the conditions for the exception expire.

### 2.4.4.1 Multi Region Countries

In some cases, a country may be assigned to several regions. A player or team from this region may choose which region to represent in each qualifier window at their leisure. A team may still only attempt to qualify in one region per each qualifier window. A team may not change regions more than once per season without suffering EPT Leaderboard and Regional Ranking point penalties, and risk reductions to their Regional Ranking points on each occasion they change regions as per the usual rules.

## 2.4.5 Nicknames

Players are only allowed to use their own official nicknames - without any additions - during EWC matches. Every player that has officially registered their nickname with Valve for DPC events is required to use the same nickname for all EWC matches. The sponsor fields associated with teams within Dota2 are permitted to be used, assuming that they are not in breach of the sponsor restrictions as outlined at 2.8.

## 2.4.6 Game account

Participants are required to submit game account information during the roster submission. Where a participant has submitted a game account for a past event and wishes to use a different game account,

they must resubmit their game account information. Unless specifically allowed by the tournament administration prior to the start of a match, participants may not use a different game account to the one submitted for the event.

## 2.5 Roster Submission

### 2.5.1 Basic Submission

Roster submissions must include the following information:

- Team name & shorthand
- Team logo (when requested)
- Contact person and details
- Starting lineup - this team will be used to confirm the slot as compared to the roster currently in ownership of the team's world ranking position, for slots assigned in that way.

The tournament administration reserves the right to request additional team information as required.

### 2.5.2 Travel & Accommodation Coverage

EWC will cover Travel & Accommodation for up to 7 team members per team, distributed as below:

Obligatory 5 positions covered

- 5 Main Players

Optional 2 position covered

- 0-2 Substitutes
- 0-1 Coach
- 0-2 Additional Staff Members

### 2.5.3 Standards

Team names may not have any extensions such as "Dota team". They may only consist of the team name and, if allowed, a title sponsor. EWC reserves the right to shorten team names where necessary or appropriate. All team names must be in line with the ESL Pro Tour Dota2 Code of Conduct.

#### 2.5.3.1 Title Sponsors

EWC may only permit participants of the ESL Pro Tour to include a title sponsor in their team name if they change the name of their whole organisation. Participants need to directly contact EWC to request the name change of their organisation, and EWC may consider it under the following guidelines:

- The application to change the name of the organisation needs to be made by the roster submission deadline of the first tournament that should include the new name. This is usually two weeks before the tournament and will be communicated on a per event basis by EWC
- The organisation needs to officially change their name and include their title partner in the naming of the organisation
- The organisation needs to use their new name in all communications and assets
- The organisation needs to update all their social media channels to their new name
- The organisation needs to use their new name across all games and tournaments they will participate in, not just ESL Pro Tour Dota2 events.

Each specific title sponsor can only be included in one organisation participating in the tournament. Only the actual name of the partner may be included; product descriptions or similar are not allowed. An application to change the name of an organisation to include a title sponsor may only be made once within a twelve (12) month period. EWC reserves the right to deny any application to change the name of an organisation at its own discretion. Participants are advised to reach out to EWC to check if a partner would be eligible to be part of the name of their organisation.

## 2.5.4 Changes to the team or roster

Any changes to the team or roster must be approved by the tournament administration before the changes are allowed to be implemented. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Adding or removing players
- Changing the team name
- Changing the team logo

## 2.6 Event licences

### 2.6.1 Definition

Before each event, EWC awards an event licence to the participants. In most cases, these are participants that have:

- Qualified through EWC national qualifiers
- Qualified through EWC regional qualifiers
- Been invited to a specific event by the tournament organisation based upon the EPT World Rankings or other metrics
- Won participation through other tournaments or events

### 2.6.2 Duration

EWC licences are valid for the event for which they are granted, only.

### 2.6.3 Team licence

Event licences will be awarded to a legal entity (registered association/organisation, Ltd company, and so on). Any legal entity is only allowed to hold one licence in the same competition. No other legal entity controlled by the same person/people is allowed to hold more than one licence.

If no such entity exists for the team in question, or the existing entity has never been reported to and accepted by the tournament administration, a restricted licence may be awarded to the team where the team leader or organiser will be the designated contact person. This person will be responsible for keeping the team information up to date. For restrictive licences, the right to the licence can only be sustained for as long as the majority of the players that actively played in the last stage(s) of the event or its qualifiers stay together as a team.

The licence holder or representative is responsible for all actions and commitments of the team. Any changes in the team licence must be reported to and accepted by the tournament administration before they can be implemented. The licence holder decides who the recipient of any prize money won under its licence will be.

#### 2.6.3.1 Multiple teams

It is not allowed for a team to participate in an Dota 2 at 2026 Esports World Cup tournament if:

- Another team of the same organisation has been invited or qualified to the main event.

It is also not allowed for a team to participate in an Dota 2 at 2026 Esports World Cup tournament's qualifier if:

- Another team of the same organisation has been invited or qualified to the closed qualifier.
- Another team of the same organization is participating in the open qualifiers.

ESL Pro Tour Dota2 competitions that offer a slot in other ESL Pro Tour Dota2 competitions are not considered to be qualifiers. For example, an organisation may have a team compete in DreamLeague while at the same time having a roster in a different region competing to earn points to potentially be invited to DreamLeague in the future, since it is not a direct qualifier to that event. Should the first roster retain its slot in DreamLeague, the second roster would not be able to take up its slot even should it earn it. The next eligible team would be awarded the spot.

A special exception to this can only be made if the organisation in question provides a written confirmation that, at least four weeks before the part of the competition including the first team, one of the two teams will no longer be part of that organisation, and its players will no longer be under contract with them. This confirmation must be provided no later than 48 hours before the second team's first match in the competition.

This separation must be permanent and independent of the results of the teams in the qualifiers.

## 2.6.4 Changing the licence holder

A licence holder can request a transfer of the event licence to another entity, if there is an adequate reason for doing so, such as the players moving to a new organisation during the course of the event. It is at the tournament administration's discretion whether or not the reason is deemed adequate.

## 2.6.5 Withdrawing the licence holder

The administration reserves the right to withdraw an event licence from any participant(s), if the administration feels that they have not behaved within the guidelines set out by the administration and its governing organisation.

If a team withdraws from a tournament after receiving the licence without good reason in the opinion of the administration, they may be subject to sanctions up to and including removal of all EPT leaderboard points earned to date and suspension from future EPT events. If a team becomes aware of a situation which may cause them to withdraw, they are encouraged to reach out to the administration as soon as possible.

## 2.6.6 Review of licence

If a licence holder loses over 40% of their starting lineup, the administration can review the licence and, if the licence holder cannot convince EWC about their ability to continue in the event on a similar level of play, possibly withdraw it. This scenario only applies after invites have been issued and accepted for a given event; otherwise the rules governing the world rankings apply with regards to licence assignment.

For leagues, where a licence holder loses over 40% of the players who participated in the majority of the team's matches within the previous season, a review will take place to determine their ability to participate in the next season.

## 2.7 Conflict of Interest

### 2.7.1 Conflict of interest for participants

Players and coaches submitted as part of the team are not allowed to have any financial interest in the success of any other participant that is competing in the same competition. They are required to affirm that they have no conflict of interest (including any business entanglement such as shared management or ownership) with any other participant.

### 2.7.2 Conflict of interest for team staff

No person or entity that has direct or indirect influence or control over any organisation that has a team taking part in the competition is allowed to have direct or indirect influence nor to hold any shares/stocks or other financial stakes in another such organisation. An exception can be made if the involvement is extremely minimal or “unintentional”, e.g. if the amount is so low that any financial benefit of it could never match the direct benefit from the success of the actual organisation.

## 2.8 Prize Distribution

| #      | Prize       |
|--------|-------------|
| Total: | \$2,000,000 |
| 1      | \$750,000   |
| 2      | \$340,000   |
| 3      | \$200,000   |
| 4      | \$120,000   |
| 5-8    | \$70,000    |
| 5-8    | \$70,000    |
| 5-8    | \$70,000    |
| 5-8    | \$70,000    |
| 9-12   | \$40,000    |
| 9-12   | \$40,000    |
| 9-12   | \$40,000    |
| 9-12   | \$40,000    |
| 13-16  | \$20,000    |
| 13-16  | \$20,000    |
| 13-16  | \$20,000    |
| 13-16  | \$20,000    |
| 17-20  | \$10,000    |
| 17-20  | \$10,000    |
| 17-20  | \$10,000    |
| 17-20  | \$10,000    |
| 21-24  | \$7,500     |
| 21-24  | \$7,500     |

|       |          |
|-------|----------|
| 21-24 | \$7,500  |
| 21-24 | \$7,500  |
|       |          |
| MVP   | \$25,000 |

## 2.9 Penalties and consequences for leaving the event

### 2.9.1 Leaving during an event

If a participant leaves during an ongoing event (i.e. between qualifier and the main event, between two stages of qualification or even between accepting the invitation to a qualifier and the qualifier), the participant forfeits all prize money accumulated for the event, world ranking points, fines, relegations and other penalties may be imposed and all its members may be banned until the end of the main event.

The tournament administration reserves the right to penalise the participant, or organisation, in the next event they participate within three hundred sixty five (365) days. Higher penalties, not being invited, suspensions or similar punishments may also come into effect, especially for very late cancellations, as seen fit by the tournament administration.

#### 2.9.1.1 Leaving an event during the playoff stage

A team is considered to have left the event if they forfeit an elimination match during the playoff stage. If a team forfeits before the first round of the playoffs, they will be replaced by the next highest ranked team from the previous stage of the tournament, when possible. If a team forfeits during a later elimination round of the playoffs, the participant will be given a final placing as if they had lost in the previous elimination round, only earning the prize money or rewards from that placing.

In leagues, a team leaving the playoffs stage may be relegated to a lower division, if applicable.

### 2.9.2 Deletion of matches

All matches involving participants that have left a stage of the event after it has started will be reset and deleted. In playoff brackets, the most recent or the next upcoming match (depending on the situation) of the participant will be considered a default win for their opponent.

## 2.10 Penalties and consequences for being late

### 2.10.1 Punctuality in online matches

All matches in the event should start as stated in the tournament schedule. Any changes in the time must be accepted by the tournament administration and, when deemed necessary, by the opposing participant (if rescheduling is generally possible). All participants in a match should be in the lobby and ready to play, at the latest, ten (10) minutes before the match is scheduled to start. The time may be adjusted by the tournament administration if deemed necessary. In cases where previous series overrun, teams will always be given at least 15 minutes warning of the start of their next game.

#### 2.10.2 Not being punctual for an online match

If a participant is not on the server ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled match start time, they can be awarded one (1) penalty point and assessed with a level one (1) draft penalty. If they still do not join the server by five (5) minutes before the scheduled match start time, another one (1) penalty point may be

awarded and the draft penalty incremented to level two (2). If the participant is still not on the server and ready to play by the scheduled match start time, a further one (1) penalty point may be given and the draft penalty incremented to level three (3), with an additional one (1) penalty point applied every two (2) minutes until fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start time of the match, for a maximum of ten (10) penalty points. At that point, the participant will be considered a no-show.

### 2.10.3 Punctuality in offline matches

Players are expected to arrive at their designated tournament area no later than forty-five (45) minutes before their scheduled match start time, unless otherwise explicitly stated by the tournament administration. Coaches are expected to arrive at their designated tournament area no later than twenty-five (25) minutes before their scheduled match start time, unless otherwise explicitly stated by the tournament administration. If a participant knows that they will not be on time to their tournament area, they must notify the tournament administration at the earliest point possible. Mitigating circumstances and attempts to inform EWC about the lateness and minimise its impact may be taken into account when applying penalties. It is the participant's responsibility to monitor the tournament schedule, and any announcements made about changes to it, in order to avoid lateness.

### 2.10.4 Not being punctual for an offline match

On the first occasion that a participant fails to arrive at their designated tournament area within the first ten (10) minutes of their expected arrival time, they will receive a warning. After that point, for every five (5) minutes the participant is late, they will receive one (1) penalty point, for a maximum of eight (8) penalty points, and one (1) level of draft penalty, to a maximum of three (3).

If the lateness continues beyond the scheduled match start time, or if an issue occurs as a result of the late arrival of the participant which delays the match start time such as not yet being ready to play, participants will be awarded one and a half (1.5) penalty points for every two (2) minutes until fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start time of the match, for a maximum of twelve (12) penalty points. At that point, the participant will be considered a no-show.

### 2.10.5 Repeated lateness

If a participant is late in more than two matches in the same competition, they will be considered a repeat offender and the standard punishments will be increased as follows:

Match 3 and further incidents: +100% for penalty points, beginning with level two (2) for draft penalty.

In case a participant is considered a repeat offender on multiple occasions, they will be subject to the increased penalties at the start of the next EWC competition they attend. This will be communicated to the participant before their first match.

### 2.10.6 Participants not showing

If a participant is not ready to play by 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the match, they are considered a no-show. In that case, the participant will be penalised with an additional 5 penalty points on top of any penalty points accumulated for not being punctual for the match. The tournament administration can decide to award (partial) default losses in the case of a best of series, or disqualify the participant. After a second 15 minute period the opponent will be rewarded with a full match series win. In mitigating circumstances, the match may be rescheduled when appropriate, if the schedule allows it.

## 2.11 Match procedures

### 2.11.1 Selection priority

The in game “Automatic” selection priority setting will be used in almost every example. The tournament administration reserves the right to nominate a different method of selection priority in a given match.

## 2.12 Match protests

### 2.12.1 Definition

A protest is the official communication between the parties and an admin to report problems that may have affected the outcome of an official match, or are in the process of affecting them for ongoing matches.

### 2.12.2 Match protest rules

Protest must contain detailed information about why the protest was filed, how the issue came to be and when it occurred. A protest may be declined if proper documentation is not presented. Only one representative per team is supposed to be involved in the protest process. Insults and flaming are strictly prohibited during a protest and may result in penalty points or the protest being ruled against the insulting party.

#### 2.12.2.1 Deadline for match protests

The deadline for when participants are allowed to issue a match protest is the earliest of the three following:

- Twelve (12) hours after the scheduled starting time of the match
- The beginning of the next match for either of the two participants (a minimum of ten (10) minutes has to be kept between matches by all participants)
- Only at offline events - the end of the event day (departure of the tournament administration team)

## 2.13 Video presentation

In videos (e.g. interviews, feature videos, camera feeds or similar) that happen from an environment not controlled by EWC, the visible surroundings/background should be kept neutral, clean and presentable. Any plans to showcase sponsors, logos or advertisements (e.g. in a background banner or placed items) need to be approved by EWC beforehand. Obvious promotion of sponsor products (including consumption) is not allowed. Brand logos may never appear bigger than the players' faces on screen.

## 2.14 Voice/video communication & recording

The voice communication tool used by EWC at online events is the official Discord. Communication during matches is limited to the five players on the server and one coach. Additional personnel may join the communications channel but must be purely passive listeners (server muted at all times) from the time of the draft starting. The coach will be server muted once strategy time ends til the end of the game.

If a team has issues with Discord, EWC will provide a secondary google meets link to capture the video feed. If possible, the team will still use the official Discord for voice communication. If this is not possible, the team can submit a TeamSpeak server they will use instead, which will be monitored by a member of the administration.

For offline events, EWC will provide and monitor a local TeamSpeak server.

EWC reserves the right to record all communication during the matches. The tournament administration will join the TeamSpeak channel thirty (30) minutes before the start of the match, and will start recording the communications fifteen (15) minutes before the start of the match.

## 2.15 Camera obligations

When specifically stated, each player in an online event must be able to provide a clean camera feed for broadcast. Every participant needs to activate their camera a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes before the start time of the match. Participants may turn off their cameras between games in a series, or between series if they play consecutively, but must turn them back on a minimum of five (5) minutes before the start of the next draft. Failure to provide a clean camera feed for the full duration of the game (including pre-match) will result in the participant being subject to fines. If at any point during the game the camera feed is not provided, it will be considered missing for the entire game. The following fines are standard punishments for each game missed:

Team:

20% of the lineup no camera: \$50 + 0.25% of the prize money winnings

40% of the lineup no camera: \$100 + 0.5% of the prize money winnings

60% of the lineup no camera: \$150 + 0.75% of the prize money winnings

80% of the lineup no camera: \$200 + 1% of the prize money winnings

100% of the lineup no camera: \$250 + 1.25% of the prize money winnings

If a participant fails to fulfil the camera obligations in more than two matches in the same competition, they will be considered a repeat offender and the standard punishments will be increased as follows:

Match 3: +100%

Match 4: +200%

Match 5 and further incidents: +300%

In case a participant is considered a repeat offender on multiple occasions, they will be subject to the increased penalties at the start of the next EWC competition they attend. This will be communicated to the participant before their first match.

## 2.16 Play area

Only the players in the lobby and the submitted coach are allowed to communicate within the play area assigned to the participants during matches, and the coach is only allowed to communicate during the draft. During online tournaments, additional personnel may be present in the area but may not communicate in any way or enter or exit the area when matches are live. All non-playing equipment electronics not provided by the tournament administration are forbidden within the play area, except cameras and devices used solely for communication with the tournament administration.

## 3 Esports World Cup

### 3.1 EWC Global Rulebook

The Dota 2 at 2026 Esports World Cup is under jurisdiction of the [EWC Global rulebook](#).

### 3.2 Flags and country identifiers

No flags and country identifiers are allowed to be present as part of player apparel or individual items during the tournament.

### 3.3 Esports World Cup Scheduling Conflict

A participant is not permitted to compete in any stage (qualifiers or main event) of a Dota2 at Esports World Cup tournament if they have already qualified for another Esports World Cup tournament that is scheduled during the same week.

Upon qualification for an Esports World Cup title, the participant is considered committed to that title for the corresponding competition week and is ineligible to enter or participate in other Esports World Cup titles (including qualifiers) occurring in the same timeframe.

### 3.4 Format

#### Group Stage

- **Participating Teams:** 24 Teams
- **Format:** Round Robin
- **Group Configuration:** 4 Groups of 6 Teams
- **Match Format:** Best-of-Two (Bo2)
- **Qualification:**
  - 1st Place per group advances directly to the Playoffs.
  - 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Place per group advance to the Survival Stage.
- **Elimination:**
  - 5th and 6th Place per group are eliminated from the tournament.

#### Survival Stage

- **Participating Teams:** 12 Teams
- **Format:** Single Elimination Bracket
- **Match Format:** Best-of-Three (Bo3)
- **Bracket Structure:**
  - 4th Place from groups compete against 3rd Place from groups.
  - The winner of this match advances to compete against 2nd Place from groups.
- **Qualification:**
  - The Top 4 teams from the Survival Stage qualify for the Playoffs.

## Playoffs

- **Participating Teams:** 8 Teams
- **Format:** Single Elimination Bracket
- **Match Format:**
  - All Matches (excluding the Final): Best-of-Three (Bo3)
  - Grand Final: Best-of-Five (Bo5)

## 3.5 Schedule

| Phase       | Dates             |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Group Stage | July 6 – July 11  |
| Survival    | July 13 – July 14 |
| Playoffs    | July 15 – July 18 |

## 3.6 Seeding Methodology

### 3.6.1 Group Stage

The Group Stage is composed of 4 groups of 6 teams.

The teams are composed of:

- 12 EPT Leaderboard Teams
- 1 ACL Champion
- 1 Defending Champion
- 10 Regional Qualifier Teams

The Group Draw will be semi-random with conditions. The conditions are as follows:

1. The EPT Leaderboard Teams must be divided evenly between the 4 groups, and there cannot be more than 1 team from each four ranks (between 1-4, 5-8, etc) in any single Group.
  - a. In scenarios where teams qualifying through other routes also have EPT Points, they will be seeded in sequence with the Leaderboard teams. (EG, Team Spirit would also be seeded as EPT Leaderboard Team despite being a defending champion due to also having EPT points.)
2. After all the teams with EPT Points have been seeded, the teams who qualified without attaining EPT points will be seeded using a GLICKO2 rating that considers all professional games.

3. For all draws, where a draw would cause a region to have an uneven distribution between groups (EG, one Chinese team is in Group A, and with only 2 total Chinese teams in the event, the draw randomly assigns a second Chinese team to Group A), the team will be re-drawn until there is an outcome that doesn't guarantee imbalance. If this is impossible, the draw resets to the first round where it no longer becomes impossible.

### 3.6.2 Playoffs

The playoffs consists of a seeded Single Elim bracket. 3rd and 4th from each group advances to the Ro16, 2nd to Ro12 and 1st to Ro8.

Each playoff 'arm' will be seeded to avoid teams from the same group rematching before the semi final stage.

For example:

Round of 16: A4 vs. B3

Round of 12: winner of Ro16 vs. C2

Round of 8: winner of Ro12 vs. D1

The exact placement of each team within the bracket will be randomly drawn keeping to this rule.

A dedicated broadcast moment is planned to introduce the competition playoffs. Teams qualified to Playoffs are required to make one (1) player available for this broadcast segment.

The specific schedule will be communicated in line with the overall daily schedule. The broadcast production team may require a specific player to be present, which will be communicated at least 3 hours prior to the segment.

For example we randomly draw A4 in the first slot. Thereafter, we can randomly draw B3, C3 or D3 into that matchup. Having drawn B3, C2 and D2 can be drawn into the Ro12 round in that arm of the bracket. After C2 is drawn, D1 must be the final team in that arm of the bracket. This process then repeats, less the teams that have already been drawn, for each arm of the bracket in sequence.

## **4 Replacements**

### **4.1 Replacements**

If a participant is, for any reason, unable to compete in the event, a replacement will be called up. If this happens before the replacement deadline, the replacement will inherit any financial benefits like paid flights and hotels from the replaced participant.

Usually competition groups or brackets will not be reseeded if they were already publicly announced before the drop-out happened. In special cases, when the fairness of the competition is in jeopardy, the tournament administration can still change or even re-draw the competition.

Replacement participants will be considered and contacted to ask whether or not they want to participate.

#### **4.1.1 Replacement Tiebreakers**

If participants have an identical score/position on/in the relevant invite list or qualifier, the one with the smallest change in lineup since then will be preferred.

If that leaves several options, the tournament administration will make a choice based on other criteria, including potential played tiebreakers.

#### **4.1.2 Replacement deadline**

A replacement deadline will be set by the tournament administration. Its passing does not mean that there will be no further replacement, but the rules for replacing are different from that point on. If no replacement can be found, the stage may start with one less participant instead.

If no earlier deadline has been set, the public announcement of the competition drawing is usually the replacement deadline.

#### **4.1.3 Event specific replacement rules**

##### **4.1.3.1 Before the replacement deadline**

The next in line will replace from the same qualifier or invite list. If no one from the final stage of the same qualifier is available, the qualifiers of the other regions will be considered, starting with the home region. EWC reserves the right to forgo this option if they deem it necessary.

##### **4.1.3.2 After the replacement deadline**

The tournament administration will try to find any replacement by all available means.

## 5 In person event rules

### 5.1 Equipment

EWC always provides monitors, computers, SSDs and noise-cancelling headphones. Participants have to bring their own peripherals (in particular: keyboard, mouse, mousepad, in-ear headphones with long enough cables, sound cards if needed), and are also responsible for maintaining a set of replacements in the event that their primary hardware fails. Our machines do not support PS2-keyboards. All player equipment is subject to the approval of the tournament administration. EWC reserves the right to deny the use of any equipment and/or device if they deem it to be providing an unfair competitive advantage. Participants might be asked to hand in their equipment for additional checks. Participants who want to use more than one piece of the same equipment need to ask the tournament administration for approval.

It is expressly prohibited to attempt to modify any BIOS settings on computers provided by EWC, in tournament or practice areas.

### 5.2 Config and drivers

A player's Dota2 config will be pulled from Steam Cloud during SSD setup. Players are reminded to close their clients on any practice room PCs before heading to the tournament area to prevent uncertainty over whether the Steam Cloud needs to be updated before each official match and SSD setup.

If a player uses peripherals that require drivers, the name of the software required should be provided to the tournament administration at least 24 hours prior to SSD setup.

If players wish to keep notes for specific tweaks to launch options or in game settings, they can email a .txt file to the tournament administration at least 24 hours prior to SSD setup; this file will be accessible from within the tournament area.

### 5.3 Player and tournament brief

The player and tournament briefs are documents that are sent to the participants by mail before the tournament. They are meant as extensions to the rulebook for a specific event and are equally binding.

### 5.4 Technical checklist

After completing their setup process, both during SSD setup and before each official match, the player will sign the technical checklist. This process exists to ensure the integrity of the system used to compete before the match starts. Technical pauses caused by problems that should have been noticed if the checklist had been properly followed will be punished with one (1) penalty, as well as any relevant penalties for delays caused. By signing this document, participants confirm that they are ready to start their match as scheduled.

### 5.5 Missing media obligations

Not fulfilling media obligations will result in fines. Their range depends on the situation. The following fines are standard punishments for the most common cases:

- Not showing up complete and on time for the media day: \$4,000 + 5% of the prize money winnings
- Appearing incomplete or too late for a signing session:
  - 1-30% of the lineup missing: \$600 + 0.75% of the prize money winnings
  - 31-50% of the lineup missing: \$800 + 1% of the prize money winnings
  - 51-70% of the lineup missing: \$1,000 + 1.25% of the prize money winnings

- 71-99% of the lineup missing: \$1,200 + 1.5% of the prize money winnings
- 100% of the lineup missing: \$2,000 + 2.5% of the prize money winnings
- Appearing incomplete or too late for a press conference:
  - 1-30% of the lineup missing: \$360 + 0.45% of the prize money winnings
  - 31-50% of the lineup missing: \$480 + 0.6% of the prize money winnings
  - 51-70% of the lineup missing: \$600 + 0.75% of the prize money winnings
  - 71-99% of the lineup missing: \$720 + 0.9% of the prize money winnings
  - 100% of the lineup missing: \$1,200 + 1.5% of the prize money winnings

Similar punishments will be applied if other, comparable media obligations are missed. The fines can be reduced if the participant shows up with delay but still early enough to create the required content/have a reasonable session. The fines can be also/further reduced if the participant delivers proof of mitigating circumstances. The decision about that will be made by the tournament administration alone.

## 5.6 Stage matches

Each participant is required to play their stage matches, if they reach them. This is an integral component of the tournament and exceptions will not be allowed.

## 5.7 Internet access and allowed programs

Internet access on tournament computers is enabled, however, once the draft begins the only programs that are allowed to be open are:

- Drivers required for the operation of connected peripherals
- Dota2
- Steam
- Teamspeak

The administration may ask to verify that this is the case shortly before the beginning of the draft.

## 5.8 Warm-up period

A warm-up period of at least fifteen (15) minutes is normally provided before an offline match, although this period may not be guaranteed. Any time spent away from the tournament area during this fifteen (15) minute period will still be considered as part of the warm-up period.

## 5.9 Winners ceremony

Participants have to stay in the tournament area for the winners ceremony after the Grand Final.

## 5.10 EWC provided areas

Participants have to follow the hotel or venue rules in the practice areas. Only marketing activities that have been authorised by EWC are allowed in any EWC provided areas (e.g. tournament areas, practice rooms, hotel rooms etc.).

## 6 EPT Format and Structure

### 6.1 EPT Leaderboard

The EPT Leaderboard is the cross regional ranking for elite teams competing in the circuit's Tier 1 events. Points are only available at DreamLeague and ESL One events. The Leaderboard also serves as the primary method for inviting teams both to main events and qualifiers.

The point structure scales so that LAN events and events closer to EPT Finals are worth steadily more. Full details of the 2025/26 points structure are found in the appendices. There are also stage points available based on placement for teams advancing to the next stage of the competition for their exact finish within the advancing spots. This is to ensure that all games later in round robin stages retain purpose and value to the participants.

If two teams have equal points in the EPT Leaderboard, the team with the best single result within the season will be sorted first. If the teams have the same best single result, the team with the best result at the most recent EPT event will be sorted first. If the teams have the same result there as well, then the team with the best average finish across the season will be sorted first. If they are still tied, the tie will be broken by randomisation.

#### 6.1.1 Roster Rules and Control of Slots/Points

The EPT Leaderboards Points will only be assigned for teams that compete at DreamLeague/ESL One events. The points are assigned to the five players that compete at that event, unless an exception for the use of a substitute for factors outside of player and team control has been attained, in which case the points will be assigned to the intended roster. If a roster in possession of EPT Points intends to make a permanent roster move in season, they are obliged to provide forewarning to the administration at [dota2ref@efg.gg](mailto:dota2ref@efg.gg). Roster changes are considered as being simultaneous if they happen in the same window between EPT events, or, if the team is competing in them, the qualifiers to EPT events.

- If a team changes one player, there will be no penalty.
- If a team changes two players, there will be a 30% penalty to all EPT points earned, with the total held amount after the deduction rounded to the nearest whole.
- If a team makes three or more changes, their EPT points will be reduced to 0.
- If a team fails to notify the administration before making public a roster change of any kind, they will be penalised for 10% of their EPT points earned, with the total held amount after the deduction rounded to the nearest whole.

If a Team changes enough players that their EPT score is reset to 0, they lose the rights to competition in any Closed Qualifier or Main Event they had previously been invited to, with those rights passing to the majority of that team which has just left. If no majority remains, or the team otherwise withdraws, the slot will revert to the next strongest region's Qualifier, according to the EPT Regional Rankings (in the case of a Main Event slot becoming available), or to the Open Qualifiers (in the case of a Closed Qualifier slot becoming available).

#### 6.1.2 Qualifier Periods and Invitation Periods

The Invitation Period for each tournament is the moment from which the initial invitation emails are circulated to teams to the 23:59UTC the day before the first Open Qualifier to that tournament begins. The Invitation Period will begin no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of the first Open Qualifier.

The Qualifier Period for each tournament is the moment from which the first Open Qualifier begins to the moment the last Closed Qualifier finishes.

After these periods elapse, the rules governing slot assignment are waived and any future replacements may be made and reviewed under the Event License rules found above at 2.11.

### 6.1.3 Transfer Windows

In the case that a Qualifier Period or Invitation Period falls during a transfer window, the rule that allows for a team's slots in a Tournament to be waived in case of significant roster change will be suspended. Currently, the transfer windows are:

- The one month immediately following The International Grand Finals

Rosters are still subject to review and potential revocation of licence, as under the Event Licence rules found at 2.11. Any point penalties will be applied at the close of the Transfer Window, comparing only each team's rosters at the open of the Transfer Window and the end of said Window.

## 6.2 Season Overview

The Season is made up of up to two (2) LAN events and three (3) DreamLeague events, with these events qualifying to the EPT Finals. Each Regular Season event will have four (4) teams invited; those being the Top Four teams in the EPT Leaderboard at the start of the Invitation Period. The EPT Finals will have eight (8) teams invited, with those being the top eight teams on the EPT Leaderboard at the start of the Invitation Period. All six (6) EPT regions will be guaranteed at minimum one (1) Closed Qualifier slot to each EPT event, including the EPT Finals. Additional slots will be assigned based on the standings in the Regional Elo Ratings as outlined below.

### 6.2.1 Qualifier Slots

Each Qualifier will first be filled with all teams from a region currently in possession of EPT Leaderboard Points that did not receive a Direct Invite to the tournament as of the start of the Invitation Period, except in scenarios where inviting all such teams would deprive the region of the minimum of two (2) Open Qualifier slots, in which case the team with the fewest points from that region would be deprived of their invite til two such slots were opened.

Once the EPT Leaderboard teams are accounted for, additional teams will be invited to the Closed Event based on the Regional Rankings as follows:

- 1st and 2nd Regions according to the Regional Elo Ratings: until 2 Open Qualifier Slots remain
- 3rd and 4th Regions according to the Regional Elo Ratings: until 3 Open Qualifier Slots remain
- 5th, 6th and 7th Regions according to the Regional Elo Ratings: until 4 Open Qualifier Slots remain.

For a team to be eligible to receive an invite via the Regional Rankings, that team must have at minimum 1000 Regional Ranking points, equivalent to a contiguous roster that won a previous EPT Closed Qualifier in the last half year. If there are not enough eligible teams in a given region, additional slots will be handed to the Open Qualifiers. EWC reserves the right to exempt events from this requirement, particularly early in a new season with many fresh rosters.

Each Qualifier at most can have four (4) Main Event or Closed Qualifier slots assigned.

### 6.2.1.1 EPT Finals Qualifier Slots

The Qualifier for EPT Finals will have separate slot allocations. The only significant difference is that there will be only one Open Qualifier for the event, and only one slot guaranteed to the Open Qualifiers for each region.

### 6.2.2 First Event of a Season, or First Event Following a Major Transfer Window

In the case that an event immediately follows the Post TI Transfer Window and/or for the first event of an EPT Season, the administration will assign Closed Qualifier places and Main Event Invites based on a combination of the following factors:

- EPT Leaderboard Places on the current (if extant) and past season Leaderboard
- EPT Finals Placement
- The International Placement

The exact weighting of each category will be determined based on the exact timing of the event.

## 6.3 EPT Regional Rankings

### 6.3.1 Summary

All EWC events will ensure that there is to be a minimum of one team per region at each event.

Competitions that include multiple regions will have their points increased per each region competing assuming the representative of those additional regions are representative of the ability amongst the best teams in that region. Teams will continue to be placed within the region they compete in EPT Qualifiers in, or, if they are not competing in EPT Qualifiers, the region within which the majority of competitions they play in are located. Some competitions may belong to multiple regions. If it is still unclear which region the team should belong to, they will be assigned to a region based on the majority of their nationalities; if there is no majority, then a case by case judgement will be made by the rankings committee.

If a team moves between EPT regions, or the rankings committee determines that a team should be representing a different region, its points will be recalculated to include only tournaments which the new region had access to. If it is unclear if the region had fair access to the tournament, the default decision will be to award zero points for that competition.

A team that changes a player will receive a 15% penalty to their current points earned. A team that changes more than 2 players between registering points at an eligible competition will be reduced to 0 points.

### 6.3.2 Base level invitations

All EWC events will ensure that there is to be a minimum of one team per region at each event. Additional teams will be added per region by measuring the strength of each region in previous events involving multiple regions.

Even prestigious events such as The Stockholm Major can be omitted, in this instance due to the absence of Chinese teams.

### 6.3.3 Regional Elo rating

Each team and each region has an Elo rating. The team's rating is updated after each game they play regardless of the opponent.

The regional rating tracks matches played between teams from different regions. These games can occur online and on LAN, and will contribute to the ranking. A team's score is not included in the calculation until it has reached a significant number of cross regional games played. A team's score may be removed if it does not play cross regional games within a selection window.

Team and regional elo will decay back towards the mean over time, and uncertainty will be increased, causing scores to fluctuate more dramatically, in the time immediately following major gameplay patches.

By default, for each region with 2 teams invited, it will exclude the best teams' results from its outcomes. This is to ensure that one good team is unable to earn its region a disproportionate number of slots. If a region only receives one slot through the above process, then the best teams' result will be included.

For each additional slot in a tournament, the region with the best elo score will receive the slot. After a region is awarded a slot at the tournament, the next best team from that region still included in the calculation will be removed after receiving the slot, the region's score recalculated, and the next spot assigned to a team through the same process. It is important to note that the removed team will be replaced by the next best rated team from that region. These steps will be repeated until all slots have been assigned to their respective regions. These additional slots can be assigned to qualifiers as opposed to directly to individual teams.

For competitions with 12 or fewer participants, all slots except the first slot per region will immediately be assigned using the above elo method.

Once the slots have been assigned, invites will be awarded to the teams in order of their position in each regional ranking.

Should a team decline an invitation, the invite will move down that region's rankings to the next eligible team. Failure to respond prior to the stated deadline will be treated as a declined invitation.

### 6.3.4 Regional Ranking Points System

Events within the Dota ecosystem will award points based on strength of field and diversity of regional inclusion. To ensure that a region is always able to attain points, teams will be considered pertinent both if they have competed in the most recent Closed Qualifier for their region, and if they are in the Top 8 of the EPT Regional Rankings with at least 520 points. This is equal to finishing 4th in one EPT Closed Qualifier.

The points will be assigned to each tournament at the tournament start date based on this criteria. The administration reserves the right to exclude tournaments that have questionable standards of integrity.

By default, if a team wins no games in its performance at a tournament, it will not receive any points for its performance. If a team participates in less than three series or six games in attaining its position in a tournament, the points it receives will be halved.

For full details of the points system, please see the appendix below.

### 6.3.5 Multi Team Organisations

Each organisation can only receive one invitation in the case of that organisation maintaining multiple rosters. If the rosters are in the same region and both qualify, the one with more points will receive the invite. If the rosters are in different regions, the one that is in the “higher” invite slot will receive the invite. If both are in the same invite slot, their points will be used to decide who receives the invite.

For example, below see a series of outcomes presented for hypothetical Team A1 and Team A2, two rosters signed to the same organisation, who in each case have both earned invitations to an EWC tournament:

- Scenario 1
  - Team A1: Region A, 1st, 4000 pts
  - Team A2: Region A, 2nd, 3900 pts
    - Team A1 is invited by virtue of having the most points within their region
- Scenario 2
  - Team A1: Region A, 1st, 2000 pts
  - Team A2: Region B, 2nd, 3500 pts
    - Team A1 is invited by virtue of being the higher rated team in their region
- Scenario 3
  - Team A1: Region A, 1st, 2500 pts
  - Team A2: Region B, 1st, 2200 pts
    - Team A1 is invited by virtue of having the most points, as both teams are rated the same within their region.

## 7 Dota2 Game Specific Rules

### 7.1 Defining Two Game Series

For the purpose of all stages in EWC tournaments, a two game series is to be defined as two bo1s played back to back against the same team with linked selection priority. In terms of scoring, there are three outcomes - a team can win both games, lose both games, or split the two games. Scores within the group will be expressed as score of individual games won to individual games lost.

### 7.2 Tiebreakers

Wherever possible tiebreakers will be resolved using the below matrix, with additional games being played. Under the current scheduling, it is not possible to guarantee additional games at ESL One events. Therefore, at ESL One events, even over positions of importance, the tie will be resolved using the matrix described in each case.

#### 7.2.1 Tiebreakers (Two Game Series)

For all ties that are not over positions of significance as defined by that tournament (in order of importance):

- Neustadt Score
- Head to head record between the tied participants taking only game score into account
- Record vs. the first team below the tied teams, continuing to each subsequent team below the tied teams til the tie is resolved.
- 1v1 Tiebreakers

If the tie is over a position of significance and involves exactly two (2) teams, a bo3 will be played to resolve the tie. If the tie takes place at an ESL One event with no schedule allowance for a bo3 and involves explicit elimination, then 1v1 tiebreakers will be played.

If the tie is over a position of significance and involves more than two teams, a bo1 round robin will be played to resolve the tie. If the tiebreaker does not resolve following the first round of the round robin, if it is a three team tiebreaker, the tiebreak will be replayed. If it is a four or more team tiebreaker, the above matrix will be used to resolve the tie, adding the information from the tiebreaker Bo1s to that gathered during the group stage proper.

#### 7.2.2 Tiebreakers (Bo3)

For all ties that are not over positions of significance as defined by that tournament (in order of importance):

- Number of 2-0 series in the group stage.
- Neustadt Score
- Head to head record between the tied participants taking only game score into account
- Record vs. the first team below the tied teams, continuing to each subsequent team below the tied teams til the tie is resolved.
- 1v1 Tiebreakers

If the tie is over a position of significance and involves exactly two (2) teams, a bo3 will be played to resolve the tie. If the tie takes place at an ESL One event with no schedule allowance for a bo3 and involves explicit elimination, then 1v1 tiebreakers will be played.

If the tie is over a position of significance and involves more than two teams, a bo1 round robin will be played to resolve the tie. If the tiebreaker does not resolve following the first round of the round robin, if it is a three team tiebreaker, the tiebreak will be replayed. If it is a four or more team tiebreaker, the above matrix will be used to resolve the tie, adding the information from the tiebreaker Bo1s to that gathered

during the group stage proper.

### 7.2.3 1v1 Tiebreakers

In the case that 1v1 Tiebreakers are required, then one player nominated from each team will play a single 1v1 solo mid game to determine who receives the higher seed. The game will be contested as a Shadow Fiend mirror match.

The tiebreaker will be contested under the rules of the 1v1 solo mid game mode. The game ends when one player destroys one tower or achieves two hero kills. The runes do not spawn at 2 minutes, but do at 4 minutes and subsequent 2 minute intervals.

## 7.3 Before the Match

All games have to be played with the most up to date version of "Dota 2" by Valve.

### 7.3.1 Game Mode

Matches are to be played in Captain's Mode, unless the tournament explicitly calls for a different mode. Occasionally, remakes after the draft will use All Pick.

### 7.3.2 Servers

These are the default servers:

- WEU/EEU: Europe West
- WEU: Europe West
- EEU: Stockholm
- MENA: Dubai
- Americas: US East
- North America: US East
- South America: Argentina
- South America, majority of players based in Peru: Peru
- South America, majority of players based in Brazil: Brazil
- SEA/China: Singapore, Shanghai
- SEA: Singapore
- China: Shanghai

The server can only be changed if both teams agree on another one. In some cases, the administration reserves the right to overrule such an agreement.

### 7.3.3 Selection Priority

#### 7.3.3.1 In Game Feature/Coin Toss

Wherever possible the administration will use the in game automatic selection priority feature. This calls for:

- A cointoss before game 1. The winner has a free choice of Radiant/Dire or First Pick/Second Pick. The other team makes a selection from the remaining choice.
- The order of priority inverts for game 2 in a Bo3 or 2 Game Series, and for games 2, 3 and 4 in a Bo5
- The final game of an odd numbered series will feature a second coin toss.

## 7.4 During the Match

### 7.4.1 Number of Players

Each team must start a game or series with 5 players. When the captain disconnects from the draft, the draft will be paused in-game and the pause timer will begin to tick. If the game requires a remake to complete the draft, the administration reserves the right to apply a Draft Penalty appropriate to the team that caused the remake, should they have already used bonus time, and the remade draft must exactly mirror the original.

When the draft is over, the game has started and a player drops from the game and cannot return in the allowed pause time;

- if it happens before GOR, there will be a new game made with the same draft and it will be allowed to bring back the original player or replace him with a substitute
- if it happens after GOR, the game or series will continue
- If a team loses more than 1 player the current game will be a forfeit win for the opponent and if there are more games in the match series, the countdown will start for the next game

There may be exceptions allowed by the lead referees if the game was clearly coming to a conclusion (for example; when the Ancient is nearly destroyed)

Examples of conditions which establish a "Game of Record" (GOR) can be found below.

#### 7.4.1.1 Substitutes

Generally, teams may only use substitutes who:

- Are not registered for another team competing in the same tournament in the same stage
- Have not previously competed for another team in the same tournament in the same stage as a substitute
- Are not scheduled to compete in an official Valve sanctioned match at the same time as the scheduled EWC match.

A team using a substitute is advised to provide as much notice as possible to the administration to ensure the substitute is legal. If a team fails to provide appropriate notice, or if there are logistical or competitive integrity concerns, the administration may insist that a team use its coach or other member of support staff as the substitute. Coaches are always considered eligible substitutes for the team they are registered with. No substitution may be made that reduces a team to less than three of its five core members.

#### 7.4.1.2 Coach

A team is permitted to have one coach, who will be allowed to communicate with the team during the drafting phase until the end of strategy time.

### 7.4.2 Pauses

Any player has the option of pausing and unpausing the game via F9.

Pause may be invoked by either a tournament referee or a player when there are technical issues that could put a team at a disadvantage.

Tournament referees can order the pause of a match for any reason. Tournament referees are allowed to execute a pause command on any player station, but will usually make it from the admin station.

Players can pause the match at any time, but must signal a tournament referee immediately after the pause to identify the reason, ideally by writing in all chat. If the players do not comment with a reason in a reasonable amount of time, the team can receive sanctions including Draft Penalties and Monetary Fines.

A match cannot be resumed without both teams giving their visible agreement, as in: "g".

If the situation clearly requires the game to be paused and any player is aware of it, they are supposed to invoke it as quickly as possible.

Below are examples of accepted reasons for a player issued pause, but an acceptable reason is at the sole discretion of a tournament referee:

- After any player has disconnected from the game due to any form of network disconnect or computer crash. (e.g. "Player has disconnected" message appears on screen.)
- Hardware malfunctions (e.g. monitor, peripheral, etc)
- Physical disruption of the player (e.g. fan interference, table or chair breakage)

Using a pause to take a break, or toilet visit, or other non-technical issues is strictly not allowed, and will be punished by the administration by sanctions including Draft Penalties.

If a player pauses or unpauses the game without a reason deemed valid by tournament referees, it will be considered unfair play. Penalties can be applied up to and including forfeit of the series, depending on the perceived severity of the incident.

Maximum pause time is 10 minutes per team per map.

### 7.4.3 Scripts and Macros

The use of scripts and macros via console commands, config binds, or third-party tools is prohibited. Whenever more than one command is issued with a single bind, it is considered illegitimate. Penalties can extend to disqualification from the tournament.

### 7.4.4 Game of Record

A game of record ("GOR") refers to a game where all ten players have loaded, and which has progressed to a point of meaningful interaction between opposing teams. Once a game attains GOR status, the period ends in which incidental restarts may be permitted and a game will be considered as "official" from that point onward. After the establishment of GOR, game restarts will be allowed only under limited conditions and with a new draft.

Examples of conditions which establish GOR:

- Any attack or ability is landed on enemy structures or heroes.
- Line-of-sight is established between players on opposing teams.
- Setting foot, establishing vision or targeting a skillshot ability in the opponent's jungle.
- Creepwaves meet in the middle lane.

### 7.4.5 Game Restart

A game can be restarted only at the discretion of the Lead Referees. Below are examples of acceptable reasons for a game restart, but an acceptable reason is at the sole discretion of the lead referees.

- If a referee determines that technical difficulties will not allow for the game to resume as normal (including a team's ability to be in proper position for certain game events such as creep spawn).
- If the game experiences a critical bug at any point during the match that significantly alters game state or gameplay mechanics.
- If a referee determines that there are environmental conditions that are not conducive to fairness.
- If one or multiple players crash before "Game of Record" and cannot get back in before the allowed technical pause time has been exceeded.

If the "Game of Record" was not established, there will be a restart "All-Pick" with the same heroes. If the "Game of Record" was established, there will be a restart with a new Captain's Mode draft.

### 7.4.6 Surrender

If either team writes "gg" or "ggwp" after the GOR, the map is immediately lost for them. This includes chatwheel options that begin the end of game countdown. The intention of this rule is to prevent a team from faking a surrender, take advantage of their opponent's celebration, and then cancel it. In cases where the administration believes this not to be the case, they may waive this rule.

### 7.4.7 Bug Abuse

The intentional use of any bugs, glitches, or errors in the game can be assessed with penalties up to and including default losses. Furthermore, it is up to the referees' discretion whether or not the use of said bugs had an effect on the match, and whether or not they will force a rematch. In extreme cases, the penalty for abusing bugs may be even higher. Issues wherein the game behaves unusually or not as expected based on an individual's interpretation of patch notes, ability text and so on will not be considered a bug unless there is direct comment on the matter from the administration.

## **8 Appendix**

### **8.1 Regional Affiliation by Country**

If your country is not listed below or you are uncertain about which country is yours ask an admin.

KEY:

\* = part of the Australasia sub region

\*\* = part of the Sub Saharan Africa sub region

\*\*\*\* = part of the South Asia sub region

\*\*\*\*\* = part of the East Asia sub region

#### **China**

Hong Kong, Macau, People's Republic of China

#### **Eastern Europe**

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

#### **Europe & Africa**

Poland

#### **Middle East and South West Asia**

Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Palestinian territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates

#### **Middle East and South West Asia/Western Europe**

Jordan, Lebanon

#### **North America**

Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Cayman Islands, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, Sint Maarten, Trinidad and Tobago, United States Virgin Islands, United States of America

#### **South America**

Antarctica, Argentina, Bolivia, Bouvet Island, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Falkland Islands, French Guiana, French Southern and Antarctic Lands, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Uruguay, Venezuela

#### **South East Asia**

American Samoa, Bhutan\*\*\*\*, Brunei, Cambodia, Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea\*\*\*\*, East Timor, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Heard Island and McDonald Islands, Indonesia, Japan\*\*\*\*, Kiribati, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mongolia\*\*\*\*, Nauru, Nepal\*\*\*\*, New Caledonia, New Zealand\*, Niue, Norfolk Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Pitcairn Islands, Republic of Korea\*\*\*\*, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Taiwan, Thailand, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Yemen

## **South East Asia / Middle East and South West Asia**

Afghanistan, Bangladesh\*\*\*\*, British Indian Ocean Territory\*\*\*\*, India\*\*\*\*, Pakistan\*\*\*\*, Sri Lanka\*\*\*\*

## **Western Europe**

Åland, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola\*\*, Ascension Island, Austria, Belgium, Benin\*\*, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana\*\*, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso\*\*, Burundi\*\*, Cameroon\*\*, Cape Verde, Central African Republic\*\*, Chad\*\*, Comoros\*\*, Côte d'Ivoire\*\*, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo\*\*, Denmark, Djibouti\*\*, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea\*\*, Eritrea\*\*, Estonia, Ethiopia, European Union, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Gabon\*\*, Germany, Ghana\*\*, Gibraltar, Greece, Greenland, Guernsey, Guinea\*\*, Guinea-Bissau\*\*, Hungary, Iceland, Isle of Man, Israel, Italy, Jersey, Kenya, Lesotho\*\*, Liberia\*\*, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Madagascar\*\*, Malawi\*\*, Mali\*\*, Malta, Mauritania\*\*, Mauritius\*\*, Mayotte\*\*, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique\*\*, Namibia\*\*, Netherlands, Niger\*\*, Nigeria\*\*, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Congo\*\*, Republic of Ireland / Northern Ireland, Réunion, Romania, Rwanda\*\*, Saint Helena, San Marino, São Tomé and Príncipe\*\*, Senegal\*\*, Seychelles\*\*, Sierra Leone\*\*, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia\*\*, South Africa\*\*, South Sudan\*\*\*\*, Spain, Suriname\*\*, Svalbard and JanMayenIslands, Swaziland\*\*, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania\*\*, The Gambia\*\*, Togo\*\*, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United Kingdom, Vatican City, Western Sahara, Zambia\*\*, Zimbabwe\*\*

## **Western Europe/Eastern Europe (Ongoing Conflict)**

Serbia, Ukraine

## 8.2 Regional Point System

If teams are tied in a place, the points for those places are summed and divided equally.

|      | TI/EPT Finals |
|------|---------------|
| 1st  | 8000          |
| 2nd  | 6600          |
| 3rd  | 5400          |
| 4th  | 4400          |
| 5th  | 3600          |
| 6th  | 3000          |
| 7th  | 2400          |
| 8th  | 1800          |
| 9th  | 1400          |
| 10th | 1000          |
| 11th | 600           |
| 12th | 400           |
| 13th | 300           |
| 14th | 200           |
| 15th | 120           |
| 16th | 80            |
| 17th | 60            |
| 18th | 40            |
| 19th | 20            |
| 20th | 10            |

|     | DreamLeague/EPT LAN 6<br>region event with at least<br>1 top 5 team per region |
|-----|--|
| 1st | 6000   |
| 2nd | 5000   |
| 3rd | 4200   |
| 4th | 3600   |
| 5th | 3000   |
| 6th | 2400   |
| 7th | 2000   |
| 8th | 1600   |

|      |      |
|------|------|
| 9th  | 1200 |
| 10th | 800  |
| 11th | 500  |
| 12th | 300  |
| 13th | 100  |
| 14th | 80   |
| 15th | 60   |
| 16th | 40   |
| 17th | 20   |
| 18th | 10   |
| 19th | 5    |
| 20th | 0    |

|      |  |
|------|--|
|      | 5+ regions event; at least one top 5 team from each region |
| 1st  | 2500   |
| 2nd  | 2100   |
| 3rd  | 1800   |
| 4th  | 1500   |
| 5th  | 1200   |
| 6th  | 1000   |
| 7th  | 800  |
| 8th  | 600  |
| 9th  | 450  |
| 10th | 300  |
| 11th | 200  |
| 12th | 100  |
| 13th | 60   |
| 14th | 40   |
| 15th | 20   |
| 16th | 10   |
| 17th | 5  |
| 18th | 0  |
| 19th | 0  |

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 20th | 0 |
|------|---|

|      |  |
|------|--|
|      | 4+ regions event, at least one top 5 team from each region |
| 1st  | 2000   |
| 2nd  | 1650   |
| 3rd  | 1350   |
| 4th  | 1100   |
| 5th  | 850  |
| 6th  | 700  |
| 7th  | 550  |
| 8th  | 400  |
| 9th  | 300  |
| 10th | 200  |
| 11th | 125  |
| 12th | 75   |
| 13th | 40   |
| 14th | 20   |
| 15th | 10   |
| 16th | 5  |
| 17th | 0  |
| 18th | 0  |
| 19th | 0  |
| 20th | 0  |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
|     | 3+ regions event, at least one top 5 team from each region,<br>2+ regions event, at least one top 5 and 4 total pertinent teams from each region |
| 1st | 1500   |
| 2nd | 1200   |
| 3rd | 1000   |
| 4th | 800  |
| 5th | 650  |
| 6th | 500  |

|      |     |
|------|-----|
| 7th  | 400 |
| 8th  | 300 |
| 9th  | 225 |
| 10th | 150 |
| 11th | 90  |
| 12th | 50  |
| 13th | 25  |
| 14th | 10  |
| 15th | 5   |
| 16th | 0   |
| 17th | 0   |
| 18th | 0   |
| 19th | 0   |
| 20th | 0   |

|      |  |
|------|--|
|      | 2+ regions, at least one top 5 team from each region; 3+ regions, at least one pertinent team from each region |
| 1st  | 1250   |
| 2nd  | 1000   |
| 3rd  | 800  |
| 4th  | 650  |
| 5th  | 525  |
| 6th  | 400  |
| 7th  | 300  |
| 8th  | 240  |
| 9th  | 180  |
| 10th | 120  |
| 11th | 70   |
| 12th | 40   |
| 13th | 20   |
| 14th | 10   |
| 15th | 5  |
| 16th | 0  |
| 17th | 0  |

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 18th | 0 |
| 19th | 0 |
| 20th | 0 |

|      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
|      | 1 region, at least 6 pertinent teams |
| 1st  | 1000                                 |
| 2nd  | 800                                  |
| 3rd  | 640                                  |
| 4th  | 520                                  |
| 5th  | 420                                  |
| 6th  | 320                                  |
| 7th  | 240                                  |
| 8th  | 190                                  |
| 9th  | 145                                  |
| 10th | 100                                  |
| 11th | 55                                   |
| 12th | 30                                   |
| 13th | 15                                   |
| 14th | 10                                   |
| 15th | 5                                    |
| 16th | 0                                    |
| 17th | 0                                    |
| 18th | 0                                    |
| 19th | 0                                    |
| 20th | 0                                    |

|     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | 1 region, at least 1 top 5 team and total 4 pertinent teams |
| 1st | 750   |
| 2nd | 600   |
| 3rd | 480   |
| 4th | 390   |
| 5th | 315   |
| 6th | 240   |

|      |     |
|------|-----|
| 7th  | 180 |
| 8th  | 140 |
| 9th  | 105 |
| 10th | 75  |
| 11th | 45  |
| 12th | 25  |
| 13th | 12  |
| 14th | 8   |
| 15th | 4   |
| 16th | 0   |
| 17th | 0   |
| 18th | 0   |
| 19th | 0   |
| 20th | 0   |

|      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
|      | 1 region, at least 3 pertinent teams |
| 1st  | 500                                  |
| 2nd  | 400                                  |
| 3rd  | 325                                  |
| 4th  | 250                                  |
| 5th  | 175                                  |
| 6th  | 115                                  |
| 7th  | 60                                   |
| 8th  | 30                                   |
| 9th  | 15                                   |
| 10th | 5                                    |
| 11th | 0                                    |
| 12th | 0                                    |
| 13th | 0                                    |
| 14th | 0                                    |
| 15th | 0                                    |
| 16th | 0                                    |
| 17th | 0                                    |

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 18th | 0 |
| 19th | 0 |
| 20th | 0 |

### 8.3 Leaderboard Point System

| <b>DreamLeague Season 27</b> |               |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Overall Placement</b>     | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                          | 3000          |
| 2nd                          | 2500          |
| 3rd                          | 2000          |
| 4th                          | 1600          |
| 5th-6th                      | 1100          |
| 7th-8th                      | 500           |
| 9th-24th                     | 100           |
| <b>Per Swiss Win</b>         | <b>100</b>    |

| <b>DreamLeague Season 28</b> |               |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Overall Placement</b>     | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                          | 4800          |
| 2nd                          | 4000          |
| 3rd                          | 3200          |
| 4th                          | 2560          |
| 5th                          | 1920          |
| 6th                          | 1600          |
| 7th                          | 960           |
| 8th                          | 640           |
| 9th-10th                     | 400           |
| 11th-12th                    | 200           |
| 13th-14th                    | 112           |
| 15th-16th                    | 48            |
| <b>GS1 Placement</b>         | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                          | 420           |
| 2nd                          | 210           |

|                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 3rd                  | 105           |
| <b>GS2 Placement</b> | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                  | 420           |

| <b>ESL One Birmingham 2026</b> |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Overall Placement</b>       | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                            | 8000          |
| 2nd                            | 6000          |
| 3rd                            | 5000          |
| 4th                            | 4000          |
| 5th-6th                        | 2800          |
| 7th-8th                        | 1300          |
| 9th-10th                       | 700           |
| 11th-12th                      | 350           |
| 13th-14th                      | 180           |
| 15th-16th                      | 100           |
| <b>Groups Placement</b>        | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                            | 800           |

| <b>DreamLeague Season 29</b> |               |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Overall Placement</b>     | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                          | 6000          |
| 2nd                          | 5000          |
| 3rd                          | 4000          |
| 4th                          | 3200          |
| 5th-6th                      | 2200          |
| 7th-8th                      | 1000          |
| 9th-10th                     | 500           |
| 11th-12th                    | 250           |
| 13th-14th                    | 140           |
| 15th-16th                    | 60            |
| <b>Groups Placement</b>      | <b>Points</b> |
| 1st                          | 600           |
| 2nd                          | 300           |
| 3rd                          | 150           |

