



# BLAST PREMIER 2026

## HANDBOOK



# **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

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**Section 1 - Introduction to BLAST Premier 2026**

**1. OVERVIEW**

*All capitalised terms used in this Handbook have the meanings set out in the Definitions Table in Section 13*

Welcome to the new world of elite professional Counter Strike. We are excited to introduce you to BLAST's new tournament structure and format, which remains known as BLAST Premier (the "**Tournament**") for brand consistency and continuity. The 2025 season (called the "**Circuit**"), will mark the first year of our new Tournament, which consists of three categories of events (called "**Events**"):

- **BLAST Bounty:** A truly innovative, gameshow-like structure in which 32 Teams will compete to raise the bounty on their heads to take home a larger percentage of the Prize Pool.
- **BLAST Open:** Big arena events providing a truly global route for Teams from all Counter Strike regions and the opportunity to shine against the world's best Teams.
- **BLAST Rivals:** A battle of the elite where the best of the best will come toe-to-toe to see who reigns supreme.

Each Circuit will include six (6) Events in total (2 occasions of each of the Bounty, Open, and Rivals across two splits (Spring and Fall)).

These six Events bring with them far more opportunities for Teams than ever before, as well as much more Counter-Strike action for our fans both at home and in person.

**2. WHAT IS THE BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK?**

This document is the BLAST Premier Handbook ("**Handbook**"), which contains information about the Tournament and includes the Tournament Regulations for the 2025 Circuit.

Amongst other things, it covers the following:

- aspects of how the Tournament is operated, structured and commercialised; and
- the regulatory, contractual, legal and financial arrangements between Teams, Participants and BLAST.

The Handbook is updated ahead of each new Circuit and BLAST reserves the right to make further changes to the Handbook at any time during a Circuit. Any major Tournament Regulations changes will be publicly communicated.

The Handbook (and each of the Tournament Regulations) is the contract governing the relationship between each Team and each Participant with BLAST in relation to their respective involvement in the Tournament. Acceptance of the terms of this Handbook and the Tournament Regulations are conditions of Admission.

Each Team's and each Participant's acceptance of the Tournament Regulations and this Handbook are conditions upon which BLAST entitles a Team and each Participant to Participate in the Tournament, on the Circuit and at Events.

**Section 2 - Handbook Standard Terms AND Conditions**

**1. APPLICABILITY TO HANDBOOK**

- 1.1 Universal Application: the provisions of Paragraphs 2 to 22 (inclusive) of this Section 2 – Handbook Standard Terms and Conditions are deemed incorporated into each of the following:
- 1.1.1 Section 3 – the Participation Regulations
  - 1.1.2 Section 4 – the Eligibility Regulations
  - 1.1.3 Section 5 – the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations
  - 1.1.4 Section 6 – the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations
  - 1.1.5 Section 7 – the Intellectual Property and Commercial Rights Regulations
  - 1.1.6 Section 8 – the Promotional Obligations Regulations
  - 1.1.7 Section 9 – the Tournament Mechanics and Qualification Regulations
  - 1.1.8 Section 10 – the Technical Specifications and Match Regulations
  - 1.1.9 Section 11 – the Invitation Letter
  - 1.1.10 Section 12 – the Competitive Participant Release
  - 1.1.11 Section 13 - Definitions

**2. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH TEAM AND PARTICIPANT**

- 2.1 It is the responsibility of every Team and every Participant to comply with this Handbook and the Tournament Regulations (including without limitation the ESIC Codes).

**3. PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK**

- 3.1 The Handbook is for the benefit of all Tournament stakeholders, including Teams, Participants, BLAST and Tournament Partners. The purpose of the Handbook is to protect and maintain the integrity and competitive balance of the Tournament, and to set out the minimum standards to be expected of all Teams and Participants.

**4. ACCEPTANCE OF THE HANDBOOK**

- 4.1 The Handbook and the Tournament Regulations included herein, shall apply to, and be binding upon, the Teams and all Participants in accordance with, and from dates specified in Paragraph 3 of the Participation Regulations.

**5. AMENDMENTS OF THE HANDBOOK**

- 5.1 The elite level of professional CS2 is fast paced and developing quickly and as such:
- 5.1.1 the Handbook and the Tournament Regulations and any other rules or regulations imposed by BLAST in relation to the Tournament (including any Sanctions) may be amended by BLAST from time to time and any such amendments shall be binding upon the Teams and Participants. BLAST shall communicate all changes by way of a public announcement,

and BLAST shall use reasonable efforts to consult Admitted Teams on material amendments affecting them or the Event(s) for which they are Admitted. BLAST will use reasonable efforts to procure that any amendments to the Tournament Regulations and any other rules or regulations imposed by BLAST in relation to the Tournament are, wherever possible, implemented before the circulation of Invitations to an Event. However, this may not always be possible;

- 5.1.2 BLAST shall not be liable to a Team or any Participant for any claims arising in connection with any such amendment, modification or addition to the Handbook or Tournament Regulations (or any Sanction imposed) (save that no amendment, modification or addition will intentionally or knowingly place a Team in breach of its local law(s)).

## **6. APPLICATION OF THE HANDBOOK**

- 6.1 Subject to the ESIC Codes and the application thereof, Tournament Officials will always seek to resolve any issues and conflicts in a fair, reasonable and proportionate way. If the Handbook or Tournament Regulations do not cover a specific incident or sequence of events, Tournament Officials reserve the right to rule as they see fit considering sportsmanship, integrity, the spirit of the Tournament and applying the principles of reasonableness and proportionality. If necessary, the Tournament Operations Manager may take a decision at his/her sole discretion.

## **7. NO PARTNERSHIP**

- 7.1 There is no joint venture, partnership, agency or fiduciary relationship existing between BLAST and any Team or Participant, and no Team or Participant or BLAST intend to create any such relationship by this Handbook or the Tournament Regulations.

## **8. SEVERABILITY**

- 8.1 If a provision of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations (or part of any provision) is found by any court or other authority of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable, that provision or part-provision shall, to the extent required, be deemed not to form part of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations, and the validity and enforceability of the other provisions of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations (or any Sanction imposed) shall not be affected. If a provision of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations or Sanction (or part of any provision or Sanction) is found to be illegal, invalid or unenforceable, the provision shall apply with the minimum modification necessary to make it legal, valid and enforceable.

## **9. FURTHER ASSURANCE**

- 9.1 Each Team and Participant shall and shall use their respective best endeavours to ensure that any necessary third party shall, execute all such further documents, and do all such further acts and things as are necessary to give full effect to this the Handbook and/or Tournament Regulations.

## **10. THIRD PARTY RIGHTS**

- 10.1 Except as expressly stated herein, nothing in this Handbook or Tournament Regulations confers any rights on any Person, other than BLAST, a Team or a Participant whether under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 or otherwise.

**11. COSTS**

- 11.1 Each of BLAST, any Team and each Participant shall bear its own costs and expenses in connection with the negotiation, preparation, execution, and performance of any matters contemplated by or included within the Handbook or Tournament Regulations and any documents referred to in the foregoing.

**12. ASSIGNMENT**

- 12.1 BLAST may sub-license, sub-contract, assign and/or transfer all or part of its rights and obligations under the Handbook or Tournament Regulations to any subsidiary or representative of BLAST from time to time. The rights and obligations of a Team and each Participant arising under the Handbook or Tournament Regulations are personal to that Team or Participant (as applicable) and may not, without BLAST's prior written consent, be sold, sub-licensed, sub-contracted, assigned, transferred or otherwise disposed of.

**13. NOTICES**

- 13.1 Any notices, requests, consents or communications required to be given under the Handbook or Tournament Regulations must be in writing addressed as follows:
- 13.1.1 BLAST: BLAST ApS, Hauser Plads 1, 3rd floor 1127 Copenhagen K, Denmark. Email: legalnotices@blast.tv
- 13.1.2 Team: as set out in the applicable Invitation Letter
- 13.1.3 Participant: to their applicable Team and/or to any known address (email, social media or instant messaging platforms to suffice) whether set out in the Competitive Participant Release or otherwise.
- 13.2 Any notice is deemed to be received as follows: on the day of emailing if satisfactory completion of transmission to the correct email address or other social media or instant messaging profile/account before 5pm is evidenced and otherwise on the next working day after satisfactory completion of transmission; and in the case of service by registered recorded delivery post 2 working days after posting. No other method of service is permissible unless confirmed by BLAST.

**14. APPROVALS**

- 14.1 Any approval, consent, or agreement to be given under the Handbook or Tournament Regulations shall not be unreasonably withheld.

**15. WAIVER**

- 15.1 No failure or delay to enforce at any time any one or more of the terms of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations shall be a waiver by that Person of the term or right or shall prevent that Person at any time subsequently from enforcing all the terms of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations.

**16. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 16.1 A Team and/or any Participant may through it's or their Admission and/or Participation in an Event or the Circuit have access to BLAST's and/or other Licensed Parties' (and/or their respective parents', subsidiaries', affiliates' and/or business partners') confidential information including, but not limited to, business and other non-public information, as well as the results of any Matches

(which results shall be considered confidential up until such time as such results are publicly distributed by BLAST). No Team or Participant shall disclose any such confidential information to any third party unless so authorised by BLAST (except as required by law).

- 16.2 For the avoidance of doubt, BLAST shall be the first Party to announce the involvement of the Team in the Circuit or and/or any Event.

## **17. LIABILITY**

- 17.1 Liability: Participation in the Tournament constitutes an agreement by each Team and Participant that it/they will not hold liable, or make any claim, against BLAST or any of its parents, subsidiaries, affiliates and each of its respective successors, assigns, agents, employees, servants, or authorised representatives (including any Tournament Official, administrator or representative) for:

17.1.1 any losses, costs, charges, damages, compensation or expenses arising out of or in connection with any kind of injury or illness suffered by any Participant, spectator or other third party;

17.1.2 any damage to property of any kind;

17.1.3 any loss of or damage to goodwill;

17.1.4 any other indirect or consequential loss or for loss of profit incurred;

17.1.5 any loss in relation to the result of any Match, arising out of, or due to any decision or action that BLAST may take (or fail to take) under the Handbook or Tournament Regulations, of whatsoever nature (including but not limited in relation to a Sanction);

17.1.6 for any matters set out in Paragraph 18 or 19 of these Handbook Standard Terms and Conditions.

- 17.2 Nothing in the Handbook or Tournament Regulations limits any liability which cannot legally be limited, including liability for:

17.2.1 death or personal injury caused by negligence; or

17.2.2 fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation.

- 17.3 Relief: Each Team and Participant accepts:

17.3.1 that BLAST shall be entitled to injunctive or other equitable relief to prevent a breach of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations. Accordingly, it is accepted by each Team and Participant that a breach of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations could cause irreparable damage to BLAST and the Tournament.

17.3.2 that in the event of a breach of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations by BLAST, any application to enjoin or restrain the operation, production, distribution or exploitation of an Event, the Circuit or the Tournament or any rights set out in the Handbook or Tournament Regulations or derived therefrom would be excessively disruptive and unreasonably damaging. Consequently each Team and Participant agrees not to apply for any such relief and accepts that the recovery of damages, if any, in an action at law will provide a full and appropriate remedy for any loss or damage incurred by them as a result of any such breach. Notwithstanding the terms of Paragraph 20 of the

Handbook Standard Terms and Conditions, the Courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim arising out of this Paragraph 17.3.2.

17.3.3 each Team indemnifies, and keeps indemnified, BLAST against any Losses connected to any alleged or actual breach by that Team of the terms of the Handbook or the Tournament Regulations; and

17.3.4 each Participant indemnifies, and keeps indemnified, BLAST against any Losses incurred by BLAST connected to any alleged or actual breach by that Participant of the terms of the Handbook or the Tournament Regulations.

## **18. VALVE CORPORATION**

18.1 BLAST does not own or control the Intellectual Property Rights in the Game (with such rights vesting in the game publisher, Valve Corporation) and as such BLAST shall not be liable for any loss or damage howsoever arising from:

18.1.1 BLAST's use of (or inability to use):

(a) the Game; and/or

(b) any other Valve Corporation Intellectual Property Rights

18.1.2 any actions taken by, or on behalf of, Valve Corporation.

18.2 BLAST expressly makes no warranty in respect of its use of the Game or any Valve Intellectual Property Rights, whether in connection with the Tournament, the Circuit, an Event of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations or otherwise howsoever arising.

## **19. FORCE MAJEURE**

19.1 The performance by BLAST of the Tournament in whole or in part is subject to acts of God, war, government regulation, disasters, fire, accidents, strikes, lockout, work stoppages, labour disputes, acts or threats of terrorism or other causes beyond the Parties' control making it illegal, impossible or commercially impracticable for BLAST to perform its obligations under the Handbook and Tournament Regulations (a "**Force Majeure Event**").

19.2 It is hereby acknowledged that a Force Majeure Event shall also occur where Valve Corporation takes any action that may, for whatever reason, and in BLAST's reasonable opinion affect BLAST's running and operation of an Event, a Circuit or the Tournament as a whole.

19.3 If, by reason of any Force Majeure Event, BLAST is delayed or prevented from performing any of the provisions of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations, then such delay or non-performance shall not be deemed to be a breach of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations and no loss or damage shall be claimed by a Team or Participant by reason thereof. The obligations of BLAST shall be suspended during the period of such hampering, interference or interruption caused by such Force Majeure Event and shall be postponed for a period equivalent to the period of suspension, and BLAST shall use its reasonable endeavours to minimise and reduce any period of suspension.

19.4 Without limiting BLAST's rights under Paragraph 1.3 of the Participation Regulations, BLAST may postpone, cancel and/or reschedule any Event, the



Circuit or the Tournament without any liability to a Team or a Participant due to Force Majeure Events.

## **20. JURISDICTION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

- 20.1 Matters relating to any appeals to a Sanction are set out in Paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.
- 20.2 Any disputes in connection with the Handbook or Tournament Regulations, other than in respect of an appeal against a Sanction imposed by BLAST which is dealt with in Paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations, shall be referred to Sport Resolutions (UK) (a trading name of The Sports Dispute Resolution Panel Ltd - Company No. 3351039) for resolution by mediation in accordance with Sport Resolutions (UK)'s Mediation Procedure, which procedure is deemed to be incorporated by reference to this Paragraph 20.2 of the Handbook Terms and Conditions; and
- 20.3 if the dispute is not settled within sixty (60) days of the mediation being instituted, or within such other period as the Parties shall agree in writing, the dispute(s) shall be referred to Sport Resolutions (UK) and finally resolved by arbitration under the Arbitration Act 1996 and Sport Resolutions (UK)'s Arbitration Rules, which rules are deemed to be incorporated by reference to this Paragraph 20.3 of the Handbook Terms and Conditions. The decision of the arbitrator(s) shall be final and binding on the Parties.
- 20.4 Nothing in this Paragraph 20 of the Handbook Standard Terms and Conditions shall prevent BLAST from issuing proceedings in the courts of England for the limited purposes seeking injunctive relief or other equitable relief.

## **21. GOVERNING LAW**

- 21.1 The Handbook and each of the Tournament Regulations and any Sanction imposed and any dispute or claim arising out of or in connection with it/them or its/their foregoing subject matter or formation (including non-contractual disputes or claims) shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of England and Wales.

## **22. INTERPRETATION OF THE HANDBOOK**

- 22.1 The capitalised terms used in this Handbook shall, unless otherwise specified herein, have the meanings set out in Section 13 (*Definitions*).
- 22.2 Any phrase introduced by the terms "including", "include", "in particular", "for example" or any similar expression shall be construed as illustrative and shall not limit the sense of the words preceding those terms.
- 22.3 words and expressions importing natural persons include any individual, body corporate, unincorporated body, government, government department, agency and any municipal, local, statutory or other authority and any combination or association of individuals, bodies corporate, unincorporated bodies, governments, government departments, agencies and municipal, local, statutory or other authorities (in each case whether or not having a separate legal identity);

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- 22.4 Headings are for ease of reference only and do not affect the meaning of this Handbook or the Tournament Regulations.
- 22.5 The singular includes the plural and vice versa, and words importing a gender include other genders.
- 22.6 A reference to a clause, paragraph, section or schedule is a reference to a clause or paragraph, section or schedule to this Handbook and a reference to this Handbook includes any schedules or sections.
- 22.7 Unless specifically stated, each provision of the Handbook applies equally to online events as LAN events.
- 22.8 Other grammatical forms of defined words or expressions have corresponding meanings.
- 22.9 Statutory provisions are construed as references to those provisions as amended or re-enacted from time to time (whether before or after the date of the publication of this Handbook and the Tournament Regulations) and references to documents are construed as references to documents as replaced or amended from time to time after the date of the publication of this Handbook and the Tournament Regulations.
- 22.10 Save where expressly stated in the Handbook or Tournament Regulations or as provided for in an Invitation Letter or Competitive Participant Release, this Handbook comprises the entire agreement between each Team and Participant with BLAST in respect of that Team's or Participant's Participation in the Circuit and no earlier agreement, whether oral or in writing, in relation to any tournament or event or competition for the Game which is or was owned or operated by BLAST (each a "**Historic Agreement**") shall have any effect with effect from **1 January 2025** and such Historic Agreements shall be deemed automatically terminated and shall cease to have any effect.

**Section 3 - The Participation Regulations**

**1. BLAST'S RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

**1.2 Operation of the Tournament: BLAST:**

- 1.2.1 shall have discretion and autonomy over all aspects of the Tournament including but not limited to the Format, the Tournament Regulations, the Handbook, Sanctions and all structural, operational, governance and decision-making matters howsoever arising;
- 1.2.2 shall operate and manage the Tournament, the Circuit and each Event in accordance with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations; and
- 1.2.3 may subcontract with one or more third parties to perform any or all of its obligations (including but not limited to the establishment of a private and confidential dispute resolution chamber to deal with disciplinary matters and disputes relating to the terms of Handbook and the Tournament Regulations more generally).

**1.3 Format and Scheduling: BLAST:**

- 1.3.1 shall be responsible for deciding upon and setting the schedule for the Tournament, the Circuit and each Event, including the Tournament Dates. BLAST shall communicate the Tournament Dates for the Circuit as soon as reasonably practicable and the same shall be set out in the Handbook.
- 1.3.2 reserves the right to change or revise the Tournament Dates and will consult with applicable Admitted Teams ahead of any such change of Tournament Dates.
- 1.3.3 reserves the right to change or revise the Format. This may include extension of the Circuit, which will be at BLAST's sole discretion but and BLAST will consult with applicable Admitted Teams ahead of any such change to the Format of an Event for which the Admitted Team is due to Participate. The Format and all other key structural matters concerning the same are set out in the Tournament Mechanics and Qualification Regulations. BLAST does not intend to amend the Format for an Event following the circulation of the Invitations to that Event.
- 1.3.4 reserves the right to change or revise the Handbook and any Tournament Regulations, and any Sanction imposed, at any time.
- 1.3.5 without affecting any other right or remedy available to it, BLAST may postpone, reschedule, cease operating, cancel or disband the Tournament, the Circuit or any Event at any time, and without liability to the Team or any Participant, except for any outstanding payments owed to the Team.

**1.4 Governance: BLAST shall be responsible for all aspects relating to the governance of the Tournament, the Circuit and each Event and all other related matters (including in relation to the Handbook, the Tournament Regulations and the enforcement of rights and where applicable the imposing of Sanctions). In respect of the 2025 Circuit, BLAST shall establish:**

- 1.4.1 A Tournament Executive Committee: consisting of BLAST selected C Suite representatives from Teams who hold an FFP Membership and for which BLAST shall consult in relation to matters of strategy, business development, commercial opportunities and financial matters for the Circuit; and
- 1.4.2 A Team Council: consisting of BLAST selected Team Managers and for which BLAST shall consult in relation to matters of tournament operations, updates on Format, Promotional Obligations and other commitments for Teams and Feedback from previous Events.
- 1.5 Commercial Exploitation of the Tournament: BLAST shall be responsible for commercially exploiting the Tournament and all aspects of the Circuit and each Event (including but not limited to the Commercial Rights). In this respect, for each applicable Event, BLAST shall use reasonable endeavours to:
  - 1.5.1 bring value to each Participating Team through marketing activities relating to the relevant Event and its Participation in the Circuit; and
  - 1.5.2 promote each Participating Team's social media channels on the official Event stream in connection with and during an Event at which the Team Participates and the Team's Matches in the relevant Event.
- 1.6 BLAST Obligations: BLAST shall:
  - 1.6.1 through the operation of a Tournament, use reasonable efforts to comply with all applicable laws (including Data Protection Legislation and anti-bribery laws);
  - 1.6.2 use reasonable efforts to notify the Teams of any restrictions regarding the use by any Team of Tournament IP over and above the restrictions contained in the Handbook and Tournament Regulations;
  - 1.6.3 not use any of any Team IP other than as provided for in the Handbook and Tournament Regulations;
  - 1.6.4 shall provide the BLAST Deliverables and such additional reasonable logistical support to Teams for each Event, exact details will be outlined in the Invitation Letter for each Event.

## **2. ADMISSION TO A TOURNAMENT**

- 2.1 Conditionality of Admission to the Tournament: a Team's right to Admission and each Team's and Participant's right to Participate in an Event is subject to its and their continued compliance with the Tournament Regulations.
- 2.2 Team Rights on Admission to an Event: subject to the terms of the Handbook and Tournament Regulations, Admission to an Event grants each Team a right to:
  - 2.2.1 Participate in the applicable Event via its Submitted Roster;
  - 2.2.2 receive Participation Fees and compete for Prize Money in accordance with the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations;
  - 2.2.3 become an FFP Eligible Team and obtain an FFP Membership, collect and hold FFP Tokens, and on obtaining FFP Full Membership receive an FFP Distribution Allocation in accordance with, and subject to, the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations; and

2.2.4 elect to be part of the Tournament Executive Committee.

2.3 **Team Obligations on Admission:** every Team that is Admitted to an Event:

2.3.1 agrees to be bound by and comply with the terms of the Handbook and the Tournament Regulations and any Sanction imposed by BLAST;

2.3.2 agrees to Participate in all Matches at the Event in which it is eligible to compete;

2.3.3 agrees that in all matters and transactions relating the Tournament, the Circuit or the Event, each Admitted Team shall behave towards every other Admitted Team and BLAST with the utmost good faith;

2.3.4 agrees to comply promptly and in full with any request for information made by BLAST, including but not limited to the provision of Supporting Information to BLAST by no later than the applicable Information Deadline and/or details of (including the copies of) Permits to BLAST by no later than the Permit Deadline;

2.3.5 confirms to BLAST that:

- (a) it has and will continue to have the full right, title and authority to:
  - (i) return the Acceptance Form and it confirms that the contents of the same are accurate;
  - (ii) be Admitted to the Event; and
  - (iii) grant the rights contained in this Handbook and the Tournament Regulations without infringing or violating the rights of any third party;
- (b) Admission to, and Participation in, an Event or the Circuit, and the performance by the Team of its obligations and duties in this Handbook and Tournament Regulations, do not and will not violate any agreement to which the Team is a party or by which it is otherwise bound;
- (c) it shall comply with all applicable laws (including the Data Protection Legislation and anti-bribery laws) and rules and regulations, including but not limited to the Handbook and Tournament Regulations;
- (d) it shall not infringe or misappropriate the BLAST IP or Tournament IP or any third-party Intellectual Property Rights, including their privacy or publicity rights, in the performance of its obligations hereunder;
- (e) it shall at all times present itself to the public in a professional manner, and will always ensure that its conduct is in accordance with the highest standards of honesty, morality, fair play and sportsmanship in the best interests of the Tournament;
- (f) it shall not violate a third party's privacy rights or publicity rights;

- (g) it shall promptly observe and comply with all instructions or directions or Sanctions issued by or on behalf of BLAST as organiser of a Tournament;
- (h) it shall not do or permit anything to be done which it or they know, or should reasonably have known, might adversely affect the rights of BLAST and/or the value of the Commercial Rights and shall provide all reasonable assistance to BLAST in relation to the exploitation by BLAST of the Commercial Rights;
- (i) it shall notify BLAST of any conflict of interest with another Participant attending or participating at an Event.

2.4 Competitive Participant Rights on its Team's Admission: Subject to the terms of the Handbook and Tournament Regulations, Competitive Participants are entitled to Participate in Matches. All financial arrangements relating to a Competitive Participant's Participation is a matter between that Competitive Participant and its Team. BLAST shall have no liability in this regard.

### **3. ACCEPTANCE OF TOURNAMENT RULES AND SANCTIONING**

3.1 General Obligations: it is the responsibility of each Team and each Participant to familiarise themselves with the terms of the Handbook and the Tournament Regulations.

3.2 Acceptance of and Compliance with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations: Without limitation to the requirement to enter the Invitation Letter and the Competitive Participant Release:

3.2.1 Admission to an Event automatically constitutes agreement by the applicable Team (for and on behalf of itself and each of its Participants) that it and each of its Participants shall be bound by and comply with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations in relation to all matters connected to, or deriving from, its and their Participation in the Circuit. The date on which a Team is deemed to agree to, and be bound by the Handbook and the Tournament Regulations shall be the date it received its Invitation Letter; and

3.2.2 notwithstanding Paragraph 3.2.1 above, each Participant shall be bound by the terms of the Handbook and the Tournament Regulations including but not limited to the terms of the Competitive Participant Release (and agrees to be bound by, and comply with, the same) in relation to all matters connected to, or deriving from, their Participation in the Circuit from the earlier of:

- (a) if the Participant is employed, engaged by or contracted to an Admitted Team on or before the date of Admission, the applicable date on which the Participant is bound by the Handbook and Tournament Regulations will be the date of Admission of its Admitted Team;
- (b) if the Participant is not employed, engaged by or contracted to an Admitted Team on or before the date of Admission, the applicable date on which the Participant is bound by the Handbook and Tournament Regulations will be the effective date that the Participant is employed, engaged by or contracted to the Admitted Team;

- (c) if the Participant is a Competitive Participant the deemed effective date of its Competitive Participant Release; or
- (d) the date the Participant first Participates in an Event, or a Circuit or more generally in, or with, the Tournament.

3.3 Consent of Participants: On a Team's submission of its Acceptance Form, the Team is representing to BLAST that it:

3.3.1 has informed each Participant of the obligations on it under the Handbook and Tournament Regulations and will:

- (a) procure compliance by each of its Participants of such Handbook and Tournament Regulations; and
- (b) be responsible for the actions of its Participants and any non-compliance by any of its Participants of the Handbook and Tournament Regulations.

3.3.2 has, or will, by no later than the Roster Lock Date (or as otherwise provided for in Paragraph 3 of the Eligibility Regulations), obtained the express consent of each of its Competitive Participants named on the Submitted Roster to be included on the Submitted Roster;

3.3.3 shall procure that by the Roster Lock Date (or as otherwise provided for in Paragraph 3 of the Eligibility Regulations) each of its Competitive Participants shall have validly signed and returned a copy of the Competitive Participant Release to BLAST.

3.4 Acceptance of and Compliance with Sanctions: Teams and/or Participants may be subject to Sanctions imposed by BLAST (or an entity appointed by it) for violation of, or non-compliance with, the terms of Handbook and Tournament Regulations. Each Team and Participant agrees that it/they shall, without limitation to their rights in Paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations:

3.4.1 comply with any Sanctions imposed by BLAST (or an entity appointed by it) as permitted herein and by the Handbook and Tournament Regulations; and

3.4.2 in the case of Teams, at the request of BLAST (or an entity appointed by it), enforce any Sanctions against any applicable Participant that is part of or connected to that Team.

3.5 Restrictions: no Team or Participant shall, without the prior written consent of BLAST in each instance:

3.5.1 stream or broadcast any Matches; or

3.5.2 involved with, or otherwise stream or broadcast any games, tournaments or matches during Tournament Dates involving the play of CS2 with another Team or a team in any CS2 league unless explicitly permitted otherwise in the Handbook and Tournament Regulations.

3.6 Duration: the provisions of the Handbook and Tournament Regulations which either are expressed to survive the end of the Circuit or from their nature or context it is contemplated that they are to survive the end of the Circuit, shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding the end of the Circuit. Any rights,

remedies of BLAST or any applicable Team or Participant that have accrued during the Circuit shall remain unaffected after the end of the Circuit.



**Section 4 - The Eligibility Regulations**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Qualification Criteria: the selection of Teams and/or required Qualifying Ranking of Teams and/or number of Teams for each category of Event on the Circuit varies based on the category of Event and the specifics of each are detailed in the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
- 1.2 Invitation Based Format: in accordance with the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations, Participation at an Event is initially determined by either:
- 1.2.1 the Valve Ranking Invites;
  - 1.2.2 BLAST's Wildcard Invites; or
  - 1.2.3 qualification via a Qualification Event (each a "**Qualifier**").

**2. INVITATION TO EVENTS**

- 2.1 Invitations: on or shortly after the Ranking Crystallisation Date, BLAST shall send the required number of initial Invitation Letters for the applicable Event as prescribed in the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations, and;
- 2.1.1 in the case of Wildcard Invites, at BLAST's sole discretion and irrespective of the Rank of its Roster on either the VGS or VRS; and
  - 2.1.2 in the case of Valve Ranking Invites, such Invitations will be:
    - (a) based on the Qualifying Ranking set by BLAST for the Event (in accordance with the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations); and
    - (b) sent to the Teams representing the Rosters that hold one of the applicable Qualifying Ranking positions as at the applicable Ranking Crystallisation Date.
  - 2.1.3 in the case of Qualifiers, such Invitations will be:

- (a) based on the Qualifier's performance at the applicable Qualification Event entitling the Qualifier to receive an Invitation; and
- (b) sent to the applicable Team representing the Roster that qualified via the Qualification Event.

2.2 Open Qualifier Restriction: BLAST does not place any restrictions on teams entering qualifiers run by 3rd parties.

2.2.1 In order for teams that win a 3rd party qualifier to accept the invite to the BLAST tournament then the team will need to have one of the following in place;

- (a) An organisation representing the players that BLAST can contract with and pay, which is registered in a jurisdiction where international transfers can be processed without restrictions.
- (b) A team leader or team representative who can represent the team that BLAST can contract with and pay in a jurisdiction where international bank transfers can be processed without restrictions.

2.2.2 If within 180 days post event an international bank where transfers can be processed without restrictions hasn't been provided by the team then the team will forfeit any prize money & team payments it earned from competing in the event.

2.3 Eligible Teams: for a Team to be eligible to accept an Invitation from BLAST to Participate in an Event and obtain and continue to hold Admitted status to the Event, it must be, and remain, an Eligible Team from the Invitation Date until the conclusion of the applicable Event. For the purposes hereof, an "**Eligible Team**" is a Team that:

2.3.1 is not an Ineligible Team; and

2.3.2 Has:

- (a) been Invited to an Event;
- (b) subject to BLAST's discretion as set out in Paragraph 4 of these Eligibility Regulations, complied with the Acceptance Process
- (c) in respect of any Valve Ranking Invite Team, the legal right to the services of no less than three (3) of the Players from the applicable Roster that holds the Qualifying Ranking for which the Invitation relates, or who played in the relevant Closed Qualifier (as applicable) ("**Core Players**") from period commencing on the Acceptance Date to the end of the applicable Event;
- (d) in respect of any Wildcard Invite, complied with the Wildcard Conditions as set out in the Invitation Letter;
- (e) in respect of any winner of the Closed Qualifier which was invited directly from the VRS, has on its Submitted Roster no less than three (3) Players who were on the Team's Roster for the VRS which they were invited from;
- (f) in respect of any winner of the Closed Qualifier which was not invited directly from the VRS, has on its Submitted Roster no less than three (3) Players who were on the Team's Roster for the applicable Closed Qualifier; and

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- (g) provided any of the information or documentation requested by BLAST in accordance with Paragraph 2.3 of these Eligibility Regulations.
- 2.4 Supporting Information: BLAST may:
  - 2.4.1 in the case of a Valve Ranking Invite, require a Team to provide written evidence of its legal right to represent the Core Players to which the applicable Ranking attaches; and
  - 2.4.2 in its sole discretion, require an Invited Team to produce such other supporting documents and/or evidence as BLAST may require and/or demonstrate that it has undertaken all necessary measures (and by such times or dates as prescribed by BLAST in writing) to ensure that the Invited Team and each applicable Participant can Participate in the applicable Event, including but not limited to the obtaining of Permits by the Permit Deadline.
- 2.5 Acceptance of an Invitation Letter: a Team accepts an Invitation to an Event by doing the following by the Acceptance Date:
  - 2.5.1 populating, signing and returning a copy of the Acceptance Form contained within the Invitation Letter; and
  - 2.5.2 providing:
    - (a) details of its intended Submitted Roster; and
    - (b) subject to Paragraph 3.2.2 of the Participation Regulations and Paragraph 3.3 and 3.4 of these Eligibility Regulations, copies of a Competitive Participant Release for each Person on the Submitted Roster
- 2.6 On BLAST's receipt of the Acceptance Form, and subject to that Team's compliance with these Eligibility Regulations to BLAST's satisfaction, that Team:
  - 2.6.1 shall be Admitted by BLAST to Participate at the applicable Event and granted the rights set out in Paragraph 2.2 of the Participation Regulations;
  - 2.6.2 without prejudice to Paragraph 2 and 3 of the Participation Regulations, confirms its agreement to:
    - (a) be bound by, and comply with, the terms of the Handbook and the Tournament Regulations and any Sanction imposed by BLAST in relation to all matters connected to, or deriving from, its Participation in the Circuit;
    - (b) procure each of its Participants' compliance with the Handbook and the Tournament Regulations and any Sanction imposed by BLAST in relation to all matters connected to, or deriving from, their Participation in the Circuit.
  - 2.6.3 in respect of any Valve Ranking Invite, represents that Paragraph 2.2.2(c) of these Eligibility Regulations applies such that it has the legal right to contract on behalf of its Roster and that the Roster will have no less than three (3) Core Players based on the applicable Qualifying Ranking for which the Invitation was based;
  - 2.6.4 represents that each Player on its Submitted Roster is and will remain an Eligible Participant.

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2.7 **Multi-Roster Teams**: BLAST acknowledges that certain Teams have multiple Rosters which may wish to participate in the BLAST Circuit (a "**Multi-Roster Team**"). The below rules apply to such Multi-Roster Teams:

2.7.1 **Open Qualifiers**: a Multi-Roster Team may only have one (1) Roster per regional open qualifier;

2.7.2 **Closed Qualifiers**: a Multi-Roster Team may not have more than one (1) Roster in the BLAST Closed Qualifiers. This restriction applies to all regions. To give effect to the foregoing:

(a) if a Multi-Roster Team has two (2) Rosters that are invited to a Closed Qualifier, the Multi-Roster Team must confirm in writing to BLAST which of the Rosters will be representing it; and

(b) if a Multi-Roster Team has a Roster which wins a regional open qualifier to gain a promotion slot to a Closed Qualifier, but that Multi-Roster Team already has a Roster in the Closed Qualifier, the promotion slot will instead be awarded to the runner up of the applicable open qualifier, and the Roster which won the regional open qualifier shall forfeit its right to the promotion.

2.7.3 **Main Event**: if a Multi-Roster Team has a Roster which wins a Closed Qualifier to gain a promotion slot to a Tournament, but that Multi-Roster Team already has a Roster in the Tournament, the promotion slot will instead be awarded to the runner up of the applicable Closed Qualifier, and the Roster which won the Closed Qualifier shall forfeit its right to the promotion.

### **3. ROSTER LOCK**

3.1 **Roster Make-Up**: a Team's Roster shall consist of five (5) starting Players of which three (3) must be Core Players and one (1) Coach. As part of the submission of Rosters, a Team may submit up to two (2) Substitutes as well as two (2) Support Staff on its Submitted Roster, and each such Persons are treated as a Competitive Participants hereunder. Coaches may be used as an extra Substitute if required. All the Participants on a Roster must be Eligible Participants.

3.2 **Submitted Roster**: a Team must provide its Submitted Roster for an Event (including all Competitive Participants) to BLAST in the live Google sheet provided by BLAST. A Team is required to provide its Submitted Roster as part of its Acceptance Form. Subject to maintaining three (3) Core Players (unless the terms of Paragraph 3.7 below apply), an Admitted Team is entitled to make changes to its Submitted Roster in the live Google sheet up until 1pm UTC on the Roster Lock Date. Subject to Paragraphs 3.6 – 3.7 below, only Eligible Participants included on the Submitted Roster as at 1pm UTC on the Roster Lock Date are eligible to Participate at the applicable Event. If the same Competitive Participant is included on the Submitted Roster of more than one (1) Team, the applicable Competitive Participant shall confirm to BLAST which of the Teams they are participating on behalf of (along with any evidence or documentation reasonably requested by BLAST) and the other Team(s) shall not be entitled to replace the applicable Competitive Participant on their Submitted Roster.

3.3 **Competitive Participant Releases**: in accordance with Paragraph 2.4 of these Eligibility Regulations, each Admitted Team is responsible for procuring that each of its Competitive Participants signs and returns a copy of the Competitive Participant Release. Each Team is required either to:

- 3.3.1 provide copies of each required Competitive Participant Release alongside its Acceptance Form; or
- 3.3.2 indicate within the Acceptance Form that some or all the Competitive Participant Releases will be provided separately and thereafter such Admitted Team will be responsible for procuring such Competitive Participant Releases are provided to BLAST in accordance with BLAST's direction.
- 3.4 Deadline for Submission of Competitive Participant Releases: BLAST must be in receipt of all validly signed and submitted Competitive Participant Releases for each Participant on the Submitted Roster by the Roster Lock Date (unless Paragraph 3.6 below applies). Subject to the terms of Paragraph 3.6 and 3.7 below, if a Team fails to comply with the terms of this Paragraph 3.4 of the Eligibility Regulations, then BLAST may in its sole discretion exercise one of more of the rights in 4.2.2 of these Eligibility Regulations.
- 3.5 Changes to the Submitted Roster: subject to the terms of Paragraph 3.1 and 3.6 - 3.7 of these Eligibility Regulations, a Team is entitled to make changes to its Submitted Roster up until 1pm UTC on the Roster Lock Date. To the extent that there are any cost consequences because of amendments to the Submitted Roster following the Acceptance Date, then those costs are the sole responsibility of the Admitted Team (by way of example only, such costs may include costs of changing flights, visas and hotel bookings). To the extent that BLAST pays (in whole or in part) such costs (at its sole discretion), it shall be entitled to repayment of such costs on a full indemnity basis (including but not limited to BLAST's right to set-off as provided for in Paragraph 16.7 of the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations). No changes to the Submitted Roster will be allowed after the Roster Lock Date, unless there are exceptional circumstances and in accordance with an Admitted Team's compliance with the process in Paragraph 3.6 and 3.7 below (as applicable), BLAST provides dispensation from the otherwise strict liability nature of the Roster Lock Date requirements.
- 3.6 Emergency Substitution Request: should a Team wish to make a change to its Submitted Roster after the Roster Lock Date, then the following process shall apply:
  - 3.6.1 the Team must provide written submissions to BLAST (in a form acceptable to BLAST) by way of an Emergency Substitution Request specifying the basis, reasoning and rationale for its request to make changes to its Submitted Roster after the Roster Lock Date (along with such supporting evidence as BLAST may require). The written submissions must be sufficiently detailed for BLAST to fully consider the matter;
  - 3.6.2 BLAST shall be provided a reasonable period to consider the Emergency Substitution Request and shall be entitled to request further information and/or documentation at any time. BLAST reserves the right to require oral submissions and/or interviews with such Persons as BLAST determines are relevant to the matter. The Team submitting the Emergency Substitution Request shall be responsible for procuring the co-operation and/or involvement of such requested Persons
  - 3.6.3 following BLAST's consideration of the Emergency Substitution Request, supporting information, documentation and submissions (as applicable) BLAST shall make a decision (in its sole discretion) on whether to allow

or reject the Emergency Substitution Request Without fettering BLAST's discretion, the starting assumption and basis on which any Emergency Substitution Request will be considered regarding the starting roster of Players is that, if BLAST is persuaded to accept an Emergency Substitution Request, that any replacement or amendment to the starting roster of Players should be filled by using the Coach as set out in the Submitted Roster.

3.6.4 BLAST shall provide a written ruling on its decision regarding each Emergency Substitution Request. BLAST reserves the right to publish such ruling.

3.6.5 the Team submitting the Emergency Substitution Request may not appeal BLAST's ruling in accordance with Paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.

3.7 Absence of Core Players: the requirements regarding each Submitted Roster containing no less than three (3) Core Players (and each Team's line-up for a Match featuring at least three (3) Core Players) are set by Valve. BLAST reserves the right to seek special dispensation from Valve (or where applicable grant special dispensation itself) to deviate from the strict three (3) Core Player requirement in special or extreme circumstances (for example where there may be safeguarding or public policy concerns or matters reasonably necessitating a dispensation or relaxation of the requirements). Such potential scenarios are expected to be exceptionally rare.<sup>1</sup> If such special or extreme circumstances apply, the Admitted Team must make an Emergency Substitution Request in accordance with Paragraph 3.6 above.

#### **4. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ACCEPTANCE PROCESS**

4.1 Material Non-Adherence: BLAST shall have discretion over how it categorises and treats any failure by a Team to comply with the Acceptance Process. The scenarios in the below Paragraphs 4.1.1 to 4.1.2 will automatically be considered a Material Non-Adherence to the Acceptance Process:

4.1.1 the Invited Team no longer has the legal right to the services of the required Core Players for the Roster that held the Qualifying Ranking (and on which the Invited Team's Invitation was based) and special dispensation has not been provided under Paragraph 3.7 of these Eligibility Regulations has not been granted; or

4.1.2 the Invited Team fails to arrange for all Permits to be in place by no later than the Permit Deadline and/or fails to adequately demonstrate the same to BLAST (assessed by BLAST in its sole discretion)

4.1.3 the Invited Team makes (or seeks to make) changes to its Submitted Roster after the Roster Lock Date either in breach of Paragraphs 3.5 - 3.7 of these Eligibility Regulations or without dispensation to make such changes as provided for in Paragraphs 3.5 - 3.7 of these Eligibility Regulations.

4.2 Consequences of Non-Adherence to Acceptance Process: if a Team commits:

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<sup>1</sup> By way of illustrative example only a special or extreme circumstance may be (i) the occurrence of a significant physical or mental impairment to a Core Player due to Participate for an Admitted Team in the immediately preceding period before an Event (and whether before or after the Roster Lock Date) and (ii) that Admitted Team only has three (3) Core Players on its Submitted Roster, and (iii) that significant physical or mental impairment reasonably prevents that Core Player's Participation at the Event such that (iv) if there was no dispensation the Admitted Team would not be entitled to Participate.

- 4.2.1 a Material Non-Adherence to the Acceptance Process, BLAST shall (as soon as it has knowledge of the same (which may be before the applicable Acceptance Date)):
- (a) rescind a Team's Invitation and Admission status to the Event in accordance with Paragraph 5 below; and
  - (b) where possible, replace that Invited Team in accordance with Paragraph 6 below.
- 4.2.2 a failure of the Acceptance Process other than those detailed in Paragraph 4.1 of these Eligibility Regulations then BLAST shall, at its discretion, be entitled to exercise one or more of the following rights:
- (a) treat the failure as a Material Non-Adherence to the Acceptance Process; and/or
  - (b) extend the period upon which the Invited Team must comply with the Acceptance Process; and/or
  - (c) impose Sanctions against the applicable Invited Team, which where financial shall be no less than twenty-five percent (25%) of any Prize Money otherwise payable to the applicable Team from that Event; and/or
  - (d) rule that the Invited Team be considered the lower seed in all Matches (subject to the Format of the applicable Event). Where two (2) Teams for which this Paragraph 3.3.2 applies, BLAST shall have discretion over the Seeding.
  - (e) If an Invited Team accepts an Invitation to a The Open - Closed Qualifier event and subsequently forfeits its Admission to the same, such Invited Team shall not be Invited by BLAST to the next The Open - Closed Qualifier event.

## **5. RECISSION OF INVITATION LETTER AND ADMITTED STATUS**

- 5.1 Rescission of Invitation: without limitation to any other rights of BLAST under the Handbook and Tournament Regulations and without any liability to a Team or a Participant, BLAST:

- 5.1.1 shall rescind a Team's Invitation and Admitted status:
- (a) for a Material Non-Adherence to the Acceptance Process;
  - (b) if required by Valve; or
  - (c) the Invited Team becomes an Ineligible Team.
- 5.1.2 may rescind a Team's Invitation and any Admitted status:
- (a) by way of a Sanction;
  - (b) if an Invited Team seeks to field more than one (1) Roster at an Event in breach of Paragraph 2.6 of these Eligibility Regulations;
  - (c) if a Team becomes insolvent, enters into liquidation, whether voluntary or compulsory, passes a resolution for its winding up, has a receiver or administrator appointed over the whole or any

part of its assets, makes any composition or arrangement with its creditors or if anything analogous to or having a substantially similar effect to any such events shall occur under the laws of any applicable jurisdiction;

- (d) if a Team (or any of its Participants) commits a material breach of any of the terms of the Handbook or Regulations, which is either irremediable or if such breach is remediable, fails to remedy that breach within a reasonable time period as prescribed by BLAST.
- (e) at any time before the start of a Circuit or an Event in accordance with Paragraph 1.3.5 of the Participation Regulations.

**5.2 Consequences of Rescission:** Upon rescission of a Team's Invitation:

- 5.2.1 the Team shall immediately lose its Admitted status gained via its Invitation and shall not be eligible to Participate at the Event;
- 5.2.2 the Team may be considered an Ineligible Team and/or an FFP Ineligible Team for the rest of the Circuit (at BLAST's discretion);
- 5.2.3 the Team's FFP Membership may be terminated or suspended (at BLAST's discretion or as otherwise provided for under the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations);
- 5.2.4 the Team shall on BLAST's request:
  - (a) immediately deliver to, or dispose of, as directed by BLAST any and all materials and property belonging or relating to BLAST, including all confidential information, and all copies of the same then in its possession, custody or control;
  - (b) promptly take all reasonable steps to ensure that no further advertising and/or promotional materials are distributed or released in relation to the Team's Participation at the Event;
- 5.2.5 the Team shall not make or allow to be made any representation which gives the impression that there is still a partnership or relationship between the Team and BLAST (unless the Parties enter into a new contractual agreement) and the Team shall not use or exploit its previous connection with BLAST or the Tournament, whether directly or indirectly;
- 5.2.6 the provisions of the Handbook and Tournament Regulations which either are expressed to survive its termination or from their nature or context it is contemplated that they are to survive such termination, shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding such termination; and
- 5.2.7 any rights, remedies of BLAST that have accrued up to the date of termination, including the right to claim damages in respect of any breach of the Handbook or Tournament Regulations which existed at or before the date of termination shall remain unaffected.



**6. TEAM REPLACEMENT**

**6.1 If:**

**6.1.1 An Invited Team either:**

- (a) elects not to accept an Invitation; and/or
- (b) commits a Material Non-Adherence of the Acceptance Process;
- (c) loses or is stripped of its Admitted status to an Event; and/or

**6.1.2 BLAST exercises its discretion to rescind the Invitation; and/or**

**6.1.3 BLAST exercises its rights under Paragraphs 7 of these Eligibility Regulations**

**6.2 then BLAST shall be entitled to replace the Invited Team with another Team without further formality in accordance with Paragraph 6.2 below and the replaced Team shall, if already Admitted to the Event, be stripped of its Admitted status.**

**6.3 Replacing a Team: the process to replace an Invited Team will be determined by the Event category in question, such that:**

**6.3.1 Replacing a Team at one of The Bounty Events:**

- (a) If the Invited Team not able to attend is a Valve Global Standings Team then the Invited Team will be replaced by the next available team on the Valve Global Standings, or as otherwise approved by Valve.
- (b) If the Invited Team not able to attend is a Wildcard Invite then the applicable Invited Team will be replaced at BLAST's discretion.

**6.3.2 Replacing a Team at one of The Open - Closed Qualifier Events:**

- (a) If the Invited Team not able to attend is a Valve Regional Standings Team then the Invited Team will be replaced by the next available team on the Valve Regional Standings, or as otherwise approved by Valve;
- (b) If the Invited Team not able to attend is from a Qualifier Event then the Invited Team will be replaced by the runner up in the applicable Qualifier Event. If the runner up Team is not available or there is less than two weeks before The Open a team will be directly invited from the Valve Regional Standings.

**6.3.3 Replacing a Team at one of The Open Events:**

- (a) If the Invited Team not able to attend is a The Open - Closed Qualifier Team then the Invited Team will be replaced by the runner up in the The Open - Closed Qualifier Event that the Invited Team qualified from. If the runner up team is not available or there is less than two weeks before The Open a team will be directly invited from the Valve Global Standings, or as otherwise approved by Valve.

- (b) If the Invited Team not able to attend is Valve Global Standings Team then the Invited Team will be replaced by the next available team on the Valve Global Standings, or as otherwise approved by Valve.

6.3.4 Replacing a Team at one of The Rivals Events:

- (a) If an Invited Team is not able to attend is a Valve Global Standings Team then the Invited Team will be replaced by the next team in the Valve Global Standings, or as otherwise approved by Valve.
- (b) If the Invited Team not able to attend is a Wildcard Invite Team then the Invited Team will be replaced at BLAST's discretion.

**7. INDIRECT OWNERSHIP**

7.1 Purpose: The purpose of this Paragraph 7 is to afford certain regulatory controls in relation to the make-up, structuring and restructuring of Teams. It is not designed to preclude normal business practices, but BLAST requires this control to uphold the integrity of the Tournament, and so that it can regulate which Persons can Participate at Events and be part of the Circuit.

7.2 Common Control: an Invited Team must inform BLAST if:

7.2.1 it holds any Interest in any other Team; or

7.2.2 one of it's Participant, or any Associate thereof, has an Interest in a Team;

on receipt of such notification, BLAST shall have discretion over the action it may take, which shall include but shall not be limited to those rights in Paragraph 7.3 of these Eligibility Regulations.

7.3 Transfer of Rights: an Invited Team must inform BLAST of the sale or disposition of more than fifty percent (50%) of the combined voting power of the Team's then-outstanding equity interests (a "**Change of Control**") or as required by law. Following a Change of Control, BLAST shall have the right to:

7.3.1 issue a Sanction; and/or

7.3.2 in respect of Paragraph 7.2.2 above, treat any Participant as an Ineligible Participant

7.3.3 rescind a Team's Invitation to an Event, and/or

7.3.4 remove a Team's FFP Membership for the Circuit; and/or

7.3.5 treat that Team as an Ineligible Team for the remainder of the Circuit.

7.4 Mergers: in order to satisfy the requirements in Paragraph 7.2 and 7.3 of these Eligibility Regulations approval from BLAST (not to be unreasonably withheld) shall be required for any Merger between an Invited Team and any other Team that has or is due to Participate on the Circuit. Failure to obtain consent from BLAST in respect to any Merger may result in the applicable Teams' Invitation(s) to Events being rescinded or one or more of the rights of BLAST set out in these Tournament Regulations, including but not limited to Paragraph 7.3 of these Eligibility Regulations.

- 7.5 Breach: BLAST may, at any time by notice in writing, require a Team, or any Person whom it knows or has reasonable cause to believe is, or has at any time in the period of one (1) calendar year immediately preceding the date of such notice, been in breach of this Paragraph 7:
- 7.5.1 to confirm that fact or (as the case may be) to indicate whether or not it is the case; and
  - 7.5.2 where a Team or Person is, or has been, in breach as aforesaid, to give further information to BLAST as BLAST may reasonably require.
- 7.6 To the extent that BLAST has concerns over any current or potential future breach of this Paragraph 7, it reserves the right to rescind the Invitation Letter and a Team's Admitted status (if applicable) and the terms of Paragraph 6 above shall apply.

**Section 5 - The Code Of Conduct AND Disciplinary Regulations**

**1. GENERAL**

**1.1 Behaviour and Actions:** each Team and Participant must:

- 1.1.1 comply with the Handbook, Tournament Regulations and any Sanctions imposed by, or on behalf of, BLAST;
- 1.1.2 avoid any conduct (whether by act or omission) that is inconsistent with the Handbook, Tournament Regulations or any Sanction imposed by, or on behalf of, BLAST and in the case of a Team, it shall be responsible for ensuring that all of its Participants comply with paragraph 1.1.2 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations;
- 1.1.3 provide their services and perform their obligations in respect of any Event, Circuit or the Tournament as a whole in a professional manner in accordance with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations;
- 1.1.4 Participate in all of their allocated Matches in the applicable Event and do so to the best of their abilities;
- 1.1.5 notify BLAST within three (3) business days of any suspected or actual breach of the Handbook and/or the Tournament Regulations by the Team or any Participant.

**1.2 Punctuality:** each Team and Participant must attend all Event commitments (including but not limited to team briefings, Matches, signing sessions, Promotional Obligations, fan meets, pre-/post-match interviews and other PR responsibilities) at the specified time prior to their beginning. Being responsible (in whole or in part) for delaying the start of any such engagements may result in warnings and/or Sanctions including, in the case of a Match, a default loss.

**1.3 Respect:** each Team and Participant agree to treat Tournament Officials, other Teams and Participants, BLAST staff, Tournament Partners, members of the press and fans with the utmost respect. This extends to all equipment and hardware provided by BLAST/the venue and any damage or breakage of the aforesaid items may lead to warnings and/or Sanctions.

**1.4 Communication:** each Team and Participant agree to use respectful language when communicating with Tournament Officials, other Players, Competitive Participants, BLAST staff, Tournament Partners, members of the press and fans. Use of vulgar and/or inappropriate language may result in warnings and/or Sanctions.

**2. NON-DISPARAGEMENT**

**2.1** No Team or Participant shall:

- 2.1.1 undertake any actions, comments, statements or remarks by whatever means (including online) or fail to undertake any agreed action or statements in relation to BLAST, an Event, the Circuit or the Tournament, Tournament Partners and/or any other Team or Participant, including their agents or employees that:
  - (a) are or may be considered disparaging, derogatory or defamatory;  
or

- (b) may bring it or them or BLAST, an Event, the Circuit or the Tournament, Tournament Partners and/or any other Team or Participant into public disrepute, contempt, scandal or ridicule, or that shocks or offends the community or any protected group or class thereof, or that objectively reflects unfavourably on it or them or BLAST or an Event, the Circuit or the Tournament, Tournament Partners and/or any other Team or Participant whether or not that materially reduces the commercial value of either BLAST, an Event, the Circuit or the Tournament, Tournament Partners and/or any other Team or Participant
- 2.1.2 engage in any conduct which damages or adversely impacts the goodwill, image, commercial interests or reputation of BLAST, an Event, a Circuit or the Tournament, Tournament Partners and/or any other Team or Participant and shall not engage in any conduct which brings it/themselves or any of the foregoing into public disrepute or scandal;
- 2.1.3 become the subject of any criminal indictment or legitimate criminal or regulatory investigation relating to fraud, bribery, corruption, money laundering, tax evasion or other criminal indecency, harassment or unscrupulous commercial practices or similar illegal or morally or ethically questionable activity.
- 2.2 BLAST shall not make any comments, statements or remarks by whatever means (including online) in relation to a Team or Participant that brings a Team or Participant into disrepute (unless such comments, statement or remarks are either (i) true or (ii) relate to an on-going investigation by, or on behalf of, BLAST).

### **3. INTEGRITY**

- 3.1 Code of Conduct: Each Team and Participant shall comply with, and be bound by, the ESIC Code of Conduct, as amended from time to time (the "**Code of Conduct**") which is hereby incorporated into this Handbook by reference. It is each Team and Participant's duty to familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct and, by Participating in the Tournament, each Team and Participant accepts ESIC's jurisdiction with respect to the matters covered by the Code of Conduct.
- 3.2 Betting, Corruption, Inside Information: Each Team and Participant shall comply with, and be bound by, the ESIC Anti-Corruption Code, as amended from time to time (the "**Anti-Corruption Code**") which is hereby incorporated into this Handbook by reference. It is each Team and Participant's duty to familiarise themselves with the Anti-Corruption Code and, by Participating in the Tournament, each Team and Participant accepts ESIC's jurisdiction with respect to the matters covered by the Anti-Corruption Code.
- 3.3 Doping: Each Team and Participant shall comply with, and be bound by, the ESIC Anti-Doping Policy, as amended from time to time (the "**Anti-Doping Policy**") which is hereby incorporated into this Handbook by reference. It is each Team and Participant's duty to familiarise themselves with the Anti-Doping Policy and, by Participating in the Tournament, each Team and Participant accepts ESIC's jurisdiction with respect to the matters covered by the Anti-Doping Policy.
- 3.4 The Code of Conduct, the Anti-Corruption Code and the Anti-Doping Policy shall together be referred to as the "**ESIC Codes**" and can be viewed here:

<https://esic.gg/codes/>. The ESIC Codes' "Definitions" and "Disciplinary Procedure" are also incorporated into this Handbook by reference both of which can be found here: <https://esic.gg/codes/>.

#### **4. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND LIABILITY**

- 4.1 General: It is the responsibility of every Team and every Participant to comply with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations (including without limitation the ESIC Codes).
- 4.2 ESIC Codes: To the extent that a Team or Participant is in breach of the ESIC Codes, then the "**Disciplinary Procedures**" (as defined in the ESIC Codes) shall apply. This shall not prevent BLAST from taking its own disciplinary or other action against the Team(s) or Participant(s).
- 4.3 BLAST Sanctions: To the extent that a Team or Participant is in breach of this Handbook or the Tournament Regulations (or any other rules, policies or contractual obligations imposed by BLAST), BLAST shall have the right to impose a range of Sanctions against the offending Team and/or Participant, acting in its sole discretion. BLAST shall impose Sanctions which it believes to be reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances and the severity and nature of the Sanction will be determined by BLAST on a case-by-case basis. BLAST shall have the right (but not the obligation) to publish its findings and the Sanctions imposed. For the avoidance of doubt, the jurisdiction of ESIC in relation to the ESIC Codes shall not affect or otherwise prevent BLAST from imposing Sanctions against Teams and/or Participants where such Teams and/or Participants are also in breach of the Handbook, and/or any other provisions imposed by BLAST and/or ESIC (including but not limited to the ESIC Codes). Any Sanctions imposed on Participants shall be recognised and respected by all Teams and any Team that a Participant may move to during the tenure of the applicable Sanction. Each Team shall take all steps necessary to enforce and give effect to such Sanctions as against Participants. For the avoidance of doubt, any Match Suspensions imposed by BLAST shall apply only in respect of BLAST Events.

#### **5. JURISDICTION AND APPEALS TO SANCTIONS**

- 5.1 Save in respect of any Non-Appealable Decisions (which are final and non-appealable), any Team and/or Participant shall have the right to appeal all decisions or Sanctions imposed by BLAST under this Handbook or the Tournament Regulations in accordance with the remainder of this Paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations:
- 5.2 The appeals procedure set out in the ESIC Codes shall apply where:
- 5.2.1 the ESIC Disciplinary Procedure has been initiated (including but not limited to a BLAST-imposed Sanction in relation to a Level 1 or Level 2 offence as provided for in the Code of Conduct); and/or
- 5.2.2 an appealable decision has been made by (or on behalf of) BLAST, or an appealable Sanction has been imposed, pursuant to Appendix 1 to this Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations (the "**Penalty Points System**"); and/or
- 5.2.3 an appealable decision has been made by (or on behalf of) BLAST, or an appealable Sanction has been imposed, pursuant to the Handbook or the Tournament Regulations which relates to in-Match or in-Tournament matters.

- 5.3 For any matters which do not fall within the scope of Paragraph 5.2, each Team and Participant shall have the right to appeal such decision within ten (10) working days of BLAST handing down its Sanction. Such appeal shall be made to a sole arbitrator appointed in accordance with the Arbitration Regulations of Sport Resolutions (UK). A party shall be at liberty to apply to the sole arbitrator for an extension of the timeframes stated for the lodging of an appeal and the decision of the arbitrator shall be binding in this regard. The appeal shall be governed by the Arbitration Act 1996 and Sport Resolutions (UK)'s Appeal Arbitration Regulations, which rules are deemed to be incorporated by reference to this Paragraph. The decision of the sole arbitrator shall be final and binding on all concerned. Each party shall bear its own costs of any appeal subject to any finding to the contrary by the appointed sole arbitrator.
- 5.4 To the extent that there is a conflict or ambiguity between which of Sports Resolutions or ESIC shall have jurisdiction to hear an appeal, then BLAST shall determine which entity should, in the first instance, be the correct entity to hear the appeal.
- 5.5 Any decisions and/or Sanctions imposed by BLAST under this Handbook shall remain in effect and binding upon the Teams and Participants pending the outcome of any appeal, unless the Chairman of the ESIC Panel or the Sport Resolutions sole arbitrator orders otherwise.

**Appendix 1 to The Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations - The Penalty Points System**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The Penalty Points System is designed to provide insight and clarity to Teams and Participants, and a transparent procedure under which matters of improper conduct can be dealt with fairly, reasonably and proportionately. The application of the Penalty Points System is not, however, an exhaustive option and BLAST reserves the right to impose a number of Sanctions dependent on the offence in question (including but not limited to fines).

**2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION**

- 2.1 This Penalty Points System shall apply to, and be binding upon, each Team and Participant.
- 2.2 The implementation of the Penalty Points System shall be used in conjunction with any financial or other Sanction imposed by BLAST pursuant the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations, which may be imposed by BLAST in addition to any Penalty Points imposed hereunder and/or any sanctions imposed by ESIC (as applicable).

**3. PENALTY POINTS**

- 3.1 To the extent that a Team or Participant is in breach of the Handbook and Tournament Regulations (or any other rules, policies or contractual obligations imposed by BLAST or ESIC), BLAST shall, amongst other things, have the right to impose Penalty Points against individual Teams and/or Participants, acting in its sole discretion. The imposition of any Penalty Points shall be made in accordance with the procedure set out in Paragraph 4 of this Appendix 1 – Penalty Points System.
- 3.2 The standard of proof in all cases brought under this Appendix 1 - Penalty Points System shall be whether BLAST is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, and considering all of the evidence before it, that the alleged offence has been committed by the applicable Team and/or Participant.
- 3.3 In exercising its discretion and determining the appropriate number of Penalty Points to impose, BLAST shall have regard to:
- 3.3.1 the non-precedential and non-exhaustive guidance table set out at the end of this Appendix 1 Penalty Points System (the “**Penalty Points Guide**”);
  - 3.3.2 any factors which it deems relevant to the mitigation or aggravation of the relevant offence; and
  - 3.3.3 all the evidence in front of it, including any answers provided by the Team or Participant as part of the investigation.
- 3.4 The Penalty Points Guide shall act as a reference point only and BLAST shall not be bound by the parameters set out in the Penalty Points Guide. Where examples of certain conduct have been provided in the Penalty Points Guide, such examples should be read as a non-exhaustive list.



- 3.5 Should a Participant transfer to another Team or Roster, any points already on the Participant's record shall not be affected and shall remain on their record for the full twelve (12) month period.
- 3.6 BLAST shall keep an accurate and up-to-date record of all Penalty Points imposed upon Participants, which will be made available on BLAST's website from time to time.
- 3.7 A Team will receive a financial Sanction of two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for each penalty point given to a Participant on its Roster. BLAST reserves the right to increase the financial Sanction amount per point depending on the severity of the infraction.
- 3.8 The financial Sanction towards a Participant listed on a Roster will be deducted from the Prize Money. If the financial Sanction exceeds the Prize Money, then the remainder will be deducted from the Team's Participation Fee.
- 3.9 The financial Sanction towards a Participant not on a Roster but associated with a Team will be taken away from that Team's Participation Fee.

#### **4. PROCEDURE**

- 4.1 Where BLAST becomes aware of a potential offence, BLAST shall, where applicable, carry out an initial investigation into the alleged offence and may ask for the input of the Participant or any other individual(s) connected to the alleged offence. BLAST may draw an adverse inference if the Participant refuses, without compelling justification, to answer any relevant questions within the timeframes communicated by BLAST. Following the initial investigation by BLAST (if applicable), the following procedure shall be followed:
- 4.1.1 If BLAST determines that an offence has been committed and Penalty Points are appropriate, BLAST shall provide the Participant with a Penalty Points Notice. It is intended that BLAST shall provide this Penalty Points Notice, or otherwise orally inform the Team that a Penalty Points Notice will be issued, within seven (7) days of the end of the applicable Event, save that BLAST may provide the Penalty Points Notice after the seven (7) days in exceptional circumstances or where new information comes to light following that period. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances where the imposition of Penalty Points is immediate, including but not limited to serious in-Match or in-Tournament matters, and otherwise where BLAST reasonably determines that immediate action is required ("**Extraordinary Penalty Points Sanction**"). In such circumstances, the Extraordinary Penalty Points Sanction shall be applied immediately whether communicated orally or in writing and shall remain in place for the remainder of the Event unless otherwise stated by BLAST. If the Extraordinary Penalty Points Sanction is communicated orally, then BLAST shall provide the written Penalty Points Notice as soon as reasonably practicable. Following the end of the applicable Event in which the Extraordinary Penalty Points Sanction has been imposed the Participant and/or Team on the Participant's behalf shall have the right to appeal such Extraordinary Penalty Points Sanction in accordance with the dispute resolution procedure set out in Paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.
- 4.1.2 On receipt of the Penalty Points Notice, the Participant shall inform BLAST within forty eight (48) hours whether it either: (i) admits the

offence and accepts the Penalty Points set out in the Penalty Points Notice; or (ii) denies the offence and does not accept the Penalty Points set out in the Penalty Points Notice. If the Participant does not inform BLAST of its decision within forty-eight (48) hours, the Participant shall be deemed to have admitted to the offence and accepted the Penalty Points. If the Participant denies the offence and does not accept the Penalty Points, the Participant shall (at the same time as informing BLAST of its decision to challenge the Penalty Points) provide written submissions setting out why it denies the offence and/or challenges the Penalty Points.

- 4.2 If the Participant accepts the Penalty Points then:
- 4.2.1 the Penalty Points set out in the Penalty Points Notice shall automatically be imposed on the Participant; and
- 4.2.2 the Participant automatically waives any right of appeal in respect of such Penalty Points.
- 4.3 Where the Participant challenges the Penalty Points and provides written submissions, BLAST shall consider such written submissions in good faith and shall thereafter provide its final decision on whether the Penalty Points are to be imposed. Such decision shall be final and can only be appealed by the Participant in accordance with Paragraph 6 of this Appendix 1 – Penalty Points System.

## **5. SUSPENSIONS**

- 5.1 One Match Ban: Where a Competitive Participant accumulates a total of six (6) Penalty Points during any successive twelve (12) month period, the Competitive Participant shall receive an automatic one (1) Match ban. The Competitive Participant's ban shall apply in respect of the Competitive Participant's next available Match on the Circuit (and may be carried across Events and Circuits (as applicable)).
- 5.2 Event Ban: Where a Competitive Participant accumulates a total of twelve (12) Penalty Points during any successive twelve (12) month period, the Competitive Participant shall receive an automatic one (1) Event ban (an "**Event Ban**"). The Competitive Participant's Event Ban shall apply in respect of the Competitive Participant's next full Event or, if the Competitive Participant is currently Participating in an Event, the remainder of the current Event and the first three (3) Matches of the next Event. An Event Ban will be carried across Events and Circuits (as applicable)
- 5.3 Any Participant not listed on the Submitted Roster who accumulates a total of six (6) Penalty Points during any successive twelve month period shall receive an automatic one (1) Event ban (an "**Event Ban**").
- 5.4 Those who receive an Event ban will not be allowed on any BLAST premises as well as not being allowed in any area with BLAST equipment.
- 5.5 Elapsing of Penalty Points: each Penalty Point imposed shall automatically elapse and be cleared and shall no longer be applied against a Participant once:
- 5.5.1 a period of twelve (12) months has elapsed since the date on which the Penalty Point(s) was awarded; or

- 5.5.2 a Participant has served an Event Ban in which case the first twelve (12) Penalty Points shall be deemed cleared but any balance of Penalty Points shall remain on the Participant's record held by BLAST.
- 5.6 Where a Participant's ban is due to apply in respect of a Match or an Event which is subsequently cancelled, postponed or otherwise abandoned, the Participant's ban shall roll-over to the next applicable Match or Event.
- 5.7 Any bans imposed on Participants under this Appendix 1 – Penalty Points System shall be recognised and respected by the applicable Team and any Team that a Participant may move to during a ban. The Team shall take all steps necessary to enforce and give effect to such bans. For the avoidance of doubt, any Match Suspensions imposed by BLAST shall apply only in respect of BLAST Tournaments.

## **6. APPEALS**

- 6.1 Subject to the provisions relating to Non-Appealable Decisions and the remainder of this Paragraph 6, Participants shall have the right to appeal any Penalty Points imposed by BLAST under this Appendix 1 – Penalty Points System in accordance with the appeals and dispute resolution procedure set out in Paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Participants shall have no right of appeal in respect of a decision by BLAST to impose three (3) or fewer Penalty Points.
- 6.2 Any Penalty Points which are the subject of an appeal shall remain in effect and be binding upon the Participant pending the outcome of any appeal, unless the Chairman of the ESIC Panel orders otherwise.

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Schedule 1 to Appendix 1 to the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations - Penalty Points Guide

### ***FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY AND NON-BINDING***

***EXAMPLES PROVIDED ARE FOR GUIDANCE ONLY AND MAY NOT BE THE FINAL RULING***

<b>Offence Type</b>	<b>Min Penalty 1<sup>st</sup> Offence</b>	<b>Max Penalty 1<sup>st</sup> Offence</b>	<b>Max Penalty Repeat Offence</b>
<p>Misconduct Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unprofessional attitude</li><li>• Ignoring BLAST staff instructions</li><li>• Late to call times</li><li>• Team Staff breaking team media rules</li><li>• Bringing in labelled drinks in tournament booth</li><li>• Failure to attend required meetings (Team briefings etc.)</li><li>• Early end of game socials (providing information about the game before shown on broadcast)</li><li>• Failure to Participate in content/media obligations</li><li>• Failure to Participate in fan interaction obligations</li><li>• Breaking a rule within the TPA</li></ul>	Warning	1 point	Unlimited
<p>Misconduct Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harassing BLAST Staff</li><li>• Threatening/assaulting other Participants, staff or fans</li><li>• Damaging team owned equipment</li></ul>	3 points	Unlimited	Unlimited

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<b>Offence Type</b>	<b>Min Penalty 1<sup>st</sup> Offence</b>	<b>Max Penalty 1<sup>st</sup> Offence</b>	<b>Max Penalty Repeat Offence</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">Misconduct Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unprofessional attitude</li> <li>• Ignoring BLAST staff instructions</li> <li>• Late to call times</li> <li>• Removing headset during a match</li> <li>• Team Staff breaking team media rules</li> <li>• Bringing in labelled drinks</li> <li>• Speaking during a Technical Pause</li> <li>• In-game bug abuse</li> </ul>	Warning	1 point	3 points
<p style="text-align: center;">Misconduct Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassing BLAST Staff</li> <li>• Threatening/assaulting other Participants, staff or fans</li> <li>• Damaging team owned equipment</li> <li>• Attempting to bribe staff</li> <li>• Communicating during a pause</li> <li>• Communicating with team staff whilst game is ongoing</li> <li>• Bringing banned technology into the booth</li> </ul>	3 points	Unlimited	Unlimited

## **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

### **Section 6 - Financial Mechanics And Distribution Regulations**

#### ***PRIZE MONEY & PARTICIPATION FEES***

The breakdown and allocation of Participation Fees for each Event on the Circuit is set out below but is subject to BLAST's discretion over the use and/or reallocation of any Forfeited Participation Fees. Participation Fee payment is based on a teams final placement post tournament.

#### **The Bounty Prize Money & Participation Fees:**

Finishing Position	Participation Fee
1st - 8th	\$40,000
9th - 16th	\$26,250
17th - 32nd	\$7,500

#### **The Open Prize Money & Participation Fees:**

Finishing Position	Prize Money	Participation Fee
1st	\$150,000	\$100,000
2nd	\$60,000	\$100,000
3rd - 4th	\$40,000	\$75,000
5th - 6th	\$20,000	\$55,000
7th - 8th	\$10,000	\$40,000
9th - 12th	\$7,500	\$25,000
13th - 16th	\$5,000	\$15,000

## **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

### **The Rivals Prize Money & Participation Fees:**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Prize Money</b>	<b>Participation Fee</b>
1st	\$125,000	\$125,000
2nd	\$75,000	\$125,000
3rd - 4th	\$40,000	\$90,000
5th - 6th	\$25,000	\$60,000
7th - 8th	\$10,000	\$50,000

**Section 7 - Event Technical Specifications Regulation**

**1. TOURNAMENT FORMAT**

- 1.1 The rules and regulations governing all aspects of the Tournament's Format and qualification mechanisms are set out in the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.

**2. ELIGIBILITY**

- 2.1 A Team and Participant's right to Participate at an Event is always subject to the Eligibility Regulations, and the compliance therewith.

**3. TEAM MATTERS AND ROSTER**

- 3.1 Team Name: Each Admitted Team will be referred to in the Tournament as they are commonly known and shall not include any title sponsor.

- 3.2 Team Kit and Sponsors: Unless advised otherwise by BLAST, Participants must wear official Team kits during all Matches, and during pre-match and post-match interviews organised by or for BLAST. Each Admitted Team shall provide BLAST Team kit details for the relevant, upcoming Event. Admitted Teams and Participants may include sponsors' logos/marks on their clothing and peripherals, save that sponsors from the Blacklisted Categories are strictly prohibited. Furthermore:

3.2.1 No non-Team branded jackets or coats may be worn on stage or in the Playing Area (including being stored on the back of chairs or under the table).

3.2.2 Players and Team Coaches must wear full Team apparel on stage and in the Playing Area at all times.

3.2.3 Players and Team Coaches must wear Team specific trousers (or dark long trousers) and proper shoes on stage and in the Playing Area at all times.

3.2.4 If an item of clothing (such as headwear) is deemed to provide an unfair advantage, the Participant may be required to remove it.

3.2.5 If an Admitted Team changes any of its sponsors during a season, BLAST shall be under no obligation to update or edit any content or other marketing or advertising materials in relation to the Admitted Team or the Admitted Team's involvement in the Tournament to take account of such sponsor change.

- 3.3 Third Party Online Matches: In exceptional circumstances, and subject to BLAST's prior approval on a case-by-case basis, Admitted Teams and Participants may participate in Third Party Online League Matches during the Tournament, provided that:

3.3.1 Such Third Party Online League Matches do not conflict with the Admitted Teams and Participants' obligations towards the Tournament including but not limited to competing in Matches and media/press obligations; and

3.3.2 Admitted Teams and Participants shall not, and shall procure that no third party tournament organisers shall not, schedule two BLAST



## **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

Admitted Teams to play a Third Party Online League Match while such Admitted Teams are attending the Tournament. Attendance at the Tournament is considered from arrival day until departure day unless specified otherwise.

- 3.3.3 BLAST reserves the right to not amend any schedule to fit a team who may have a conflict with a Third Party Tournament.
- 3.4 **Broadcasting:** Each Participant acknowledges and agrees that BLAST has the right to photograph, record, publish, broadcast, stream, disseminate, telecast, transmit, air, distribute, or otherwise exploit, in any manner whatsoever and in any and all media whether now known or hereinafter invented, all or any part of the Tournament and any services provided by, or image, representation or voice communications of, a Participant or an Admitted Team howsoever arising in respect of or connected to the Tournament (including but not limited to the products of such services).
- 3.5 **Team Coach:** In accordance with Paragraph 3 of the Eligibility Regulations, the Team Coach is eligible to stand behind the Players in the Playing Area. The Team Coach may only communicate to the Players during tactical timeouts and half time/side switches (including half time/side switches during overtime). If the Team Coach is required to be substituted into the starting Roster line-up of five (5) Players, a Player that was substituted or a Substitute may take the place of the Team Coach.
- 3.6 **Support Staff:** Without limitation to Paragraph 3 of the Eligibility Regulations, a Team may submit up to two (2) Support Staff as part of its Submitted Roster. A Team may use one of their Support Staff as a replacement Coach with BLAST's approval. Support Staff will be subject to all rules that would apply to a Coach save that a Support Staff that becomes a replacement Coach may not then be used as a Substitute.
- 3.7 **Match Line-up:** Admitted Teams must provide their line-up for their first Match within ten (10) minutes of the completion of Vetoes (only Players included in the Submitted Roster can be named, and each line-up must contain three (3) Core Players). If no line-up is submitted to the Tournament Operations Manager then Player one (1) to five (5) on the Submitted Roster will be the deemed Roster to start the applicable Match; and
- 3.7.1 At least three (3) Core Players must Participate in all Maps in a Match.
- 3.7.2 Core Players being in the Coach position do not count as one (1) of the required three (3) Core Players.
- 3.8 **Match Substitutions:** Admitted Teams may field a different line-up of Players for each subsequent Map provided that they can set-up the Player in the Playing Area within the pre-scheduled break times and there remains at least three (3) Core Players on the line-up. Line-ups for each Map must be submitted to the Tournament Operations Manager ten (10) minutes before the Map starts. If an Admitted Team cannot set up the Substitute(s) in time, this may result in the Substitute(s) playing on the starting Players' peripherals and/or settings. If a substitution is made:
- 3.8.1 the opposing Admitted Team will have two (2) minutes to confirm their line-up with the Tournament Operations Manager;
- 3.8.2 the substitution is final for that Map; and

- 3.8.3 any inclusion of a Substitute must not break any eligibility rules as set out in the Tournament Regulations.
- 3.9 Conflict of Interest: Where there is a conflict of interest in respect of a Player (for example if a Player is on loan from one Team to another Team, and both Teams are competing at the same Event), such conflict must be notified to BLAST in accordance with Clause 2.3.5 of Section 3 and both the Team(s) and the Player must provide to BLAST details of the applicable agreement and sign supporting conflict of interest waivers.
- 3.10 Player Regional Assignment: A players regional assignment will be based on their citizenship. BLAST reserves the right to request documentation to support a player's claim.
- 3.11 Roster Regional Assignment: A roster's Regional Assignment is the region represented by the majority of its players.
- 3.11.1 In the case of a tie, the Regional Assignment is the region with greater representation in the upcoming Major (i.e., Europe, then Americas, then Asia).
- (a) Example: 2 EU, 2 NA and 1 Asia = European Team
- 3.11.2 If the team contains at least one player from a region that isn't one of the three Major regions. The player not belonging to the three Major regions will be assigned a teammates region. This region will be the one that carries the lowest weight in the upcoming Major.
- (a) Example: 2 EU, 2 NA and 1 South African = North American Team

#### **4. SCHEDULING**

- 4.1 Match Schedule: BLAST shall provide the Match Schedule to all Teams once the Admitted Teams for the Event have been confirmed (and subject to the foregoing, BLAST shall use reasonable endeavours to provide the Match Schedule to all Teams at least two (2) weeks prior to the applicable Event. BLAST shall have the absolute right to amend and/or re-order the Match Schedule at any time.
- 4.2 Match Start Times:
- 4.2.1 As set out in the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations, and notwithstanding any other provisions of the Handbook, BLAST has the absolute right to amend and/or re-order the Match start time listed on the Match Schedule.
- 4.2.2 A Match start must, so far as possible, adhere to the time specified in the Match Schedule. If the Match start time has been rearranged, the new Match start time shall be published by BLAST. Should a Team require a delay of more than five (5) minutes, a request must be made to the Tournament Operations Manager.
- 4.3 Duration of Matches: the form, format and duration of Matches are set out in the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations at Appendix 3.
- 4.4 Setup/Warm-up:
- 4.4.1 In the case of an online Match or Closed Qualifier:

- (a) Players are required to connect and test connection to the game server (as provided by BLAST) one (1) hour before the Match start time to check any server related issues. If any Team has any issue(s) related to the game server provided, they must report the issue(s) a minimum of (30) minutes before the official start time of the Match to a Tournament Official. After this time period if no issue(s) have been raised to a Tournament Official BLAST will consider the game server to be satisfactory and therefore reserve the right to deny any requests for a new game server.
- (b) Players and Team Coaches are required to be Match Ready a minimum of ten (10) minutes before the official start time of the Match.

4.4.2 In the case of an LAN (or offline) match:

- (a) Admitted Teams will be provided with at least thirty (30) minutes of setup and warm-up time prior to their first Match of each day. After the Admitted Team's first Match of each day there is no more set up/warm-up time allocated as Matches will follow on from each other in quick succession.
- (b) Team setup and warm up time will not be lost due to mandatory stage activities. i.e. Team walkouts.
- (c) Unless a Player or Team Coach is required for other official duties (such as an arena walk-in or interview) all Players and Team Coaches must be positioned at their desk and Match Ready to play at least ten (10) minutes prior to the start of each Match.

4.5 Abandoned Matches: If the Tournament Operations Manager deems it necessary to abandon a Match for any reason then, irrespective of the status of the Match, the result and score of that Match may be determined by the Tournament Operations Manager, in their absolute discretion. The Tournament Operations Manager may also order the Match to be replayed, in which case the Match will take place on a date, and with a start time, determined by BLAST.

4.6 Late Arrival or Failure to Arrive: BLAST takes breaches of Match scheduling very seriously. In the case of being late for a Match (**Late Show**) or failing to show for (or properly compete in) a Match (**No Show**) , BLAST is, therefore, entitled to impose Sanctions on any offending Admitted Team (who are vicariously liable for the actions of Participants hereunder) and/or Participant, which will take immediate effect. Furthermore:

- 4.6.1 except in the case of a Force Majeure, a Team will be deemed to have committed a Late Show if, after five (5) minutes before the scheduled Match start time, all five (5) starting Players are not present at the Playing Area and Match Ready.
- 4.6.2 sanctions may be imposed on Participants and/or Admitted Teams at the discretion of BLAST and based on the length (in minutes) of the Late Show.
- 4.6.3 a Team will be deemed to have committed a No Show and, subject to BLAST's discretion to rule otherwise, shall automatically forfeit the Match if, after thirty (30) minutes following the scheduled Match start time, all five (5) starting Players are not present at the Playing Area and Match Ready.

- 4.7 Failure to Arrive – Open Qualifier: For an Open Qualifier, a Team will have ten (10) minutes after the communicated start time to have all five (5) Players ready in the server. If a Team is not ready within those ten (10) minutes they will be subject to a map forfeit, save that BLAST and its representatives have the absolute right to allow additional time for a Team to be ready.
- 4.8 Forfeit: If a Team wishes to forfeit a Match, for any reason, it must make a formal request to the Tournament Operations Manager for permission to forfeit, who shall decide on such request at his or her sole discretion. The Tournament Operations Manager can choose to accept, or reject, the forfeit request, in accordance with whatever conditions they deem appropriate, bearing in mind the overriding requirement to protect the integrity of the Tournament. Teams who choose to forfeit a match will be subject to a financial Sanction and potential other Sanctions.

## **5. PLAYING AREA**

### **5.1 For an online Match:**

- 5.1.1 Access: Admitted Teams are allowed a total of eight (8) persons in the Playing Area for the duration of the Match. The six (6) Participants in the Match (five Players (at least three (3) of which must be physically playing in the region of the Tournament) and one Team Coach) with the addition of two (2) extra Persons, which could include but are not limited to Substitutes, Team Manager, Content Team, Support Staff or Sports Psychologists. All staff with access to the Playing Area must be pre-approved by the Tournament Operations Manager. BLAST reserves the right to remove any staff, acting in its sole discretion.
- 5.1.2 Temporary Region Change: BLAST reserves the right to allow a team to participate in an open qualifier in a region that isn't their own. Teams may request this via email at [teams@blast.tv](mailto:teams@blast.tv)
- (a) If a team that has been given approval wins the open qualifier, they will only gain entrance to that region's closed qualifier and not their original region.
  - (b) Teams must provide evidence why they must play outside of their region.
- 5.1.3 Documents: Admitted Team(s) and Player(s) may take physical documents such as paper, binders and notepads into the Playing Area for tactical purposes.
- 5.1.4 Food and Drink:
- (a) All food must be placed under the table and out of sight.
  - (b) Players must not have any branded drinks within the Playing Area and drinks should not be on display.
  - (c) BLAST reserves the right to ask for the removal of any food or drink from the Playing Area if it deems appropriate.
- 5.1.5 Electronic and USB devices: Other than gaming peripherals, no Participant may bring an electronic or USB device (including mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, pagers and laptops) into the Playing

Area at any point during the Tournament, unless approved by the Tournament Operations Manager on a case-by-case basis.

- 5.1.6 Marketing: Save for official sponsors on Admitted Team clothing and peripherals, and/or as directed by BLAST, Admitted Teams and Participants shall not be permitted to have third party brands within view during an online Match, and shall not promote or market (or seek to promote or market) any third party brands, including without limitation by directly or indirectly suggesting, or creating, a commercial connection or association between the third party (and its products, services or brand) and BLAST or the Tournament. Any exceptions to this to be agreed with the Tournament Operations Manager.
- 5.1.7 Cameras: All Players and Coaches are required to have a; webcam, camera or phone camera on during the tournament. Failure to be on camera will result in at least a financial Sanction.
- 5.1.8 BLAST reserves the right to request any individual to change, edit or remove parts of their set up during an online Match. This includes but is not limited to:
- (a) Removal of any additional screens from the room
  - (b) Providing additional camera feeds of alternative angles of the room
  - (c) Monitor capturing software
  - (d) Limiting who can be physically present in the room whilst a game is live
- 5.1.9 Should BLAST request any of the additional requirements or edits as set out in paragraph 5.1.7 above, BLAST confirms that it will not publish to any broadcast or third party such additional streams without the prior written consent from the relevant Team. Any failure by a Team or a Participant to adhere to paragraph 5.1.7 may lead to a Sanction for either the Team and/or the Participant.

5.2 For a LAN (Offline) Match:

- 5.2.1 Access: Teams are allowed a total of eight (8) persons in the Playing Area during pre-match setup. In the case that the space does not allow for eight (8) persons the Tournament Operation Manager will have the right to reduce this number to seven (7). Non-Participants (e.g content staff, managers) will be asked to leave the Playing Area shortly before the Map goes live. Refusal to do so will be seen as a strict Tournament Integrity breach. Prior to Match start, only the six (6) Participants in the Match (five Players and one Team Coach) are allowed in the Playing Area;
- 5.2.2 Tournament Officials may ask non-Participants (e.g. content staff) to leave the Playing Area from thirty (30) minutes prior to the Match starting. Any exceptions to this to be agreed with the Tournament Operations Manager;
- 5.2.3 Any Person(s) refusing to leave the Playing Area when instructed, will not be allowed to enter the Playing Area for a period time communicated by BLAST;

5.2.4 Documents: Team(s)/Player(s) may take physical documents such as paper, binders and notepads into the Playing Area for tactical purposes. Coaches are not allowed to interact or gesture towards documents during periods they're not allowed to communicate with their Players.

5.2.5 Food and Drink:

- (a) All food must be placed under the table and out of sight.
- (b) Only water or drinks provided by BLAST/Tournament Partners may be placed on the tables. If a Player(s) wishes to drink anything else they must obtain a bottle or cup from BLAST.
- (c) BLAST reserves the right to remove any food or drink from the Playing Area if it deems appropriate.

5.2.6 Electronic and USB devices:

- (a) Other than gaming peripherals, no Participant may bring an electronic or USB device (including mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, pagers and laptops) into the Playing Area at any point during the Tournament, unless approved by the Tournament Operations Manager on a case-by-case basis.
- (b) If a Player requires a mobile phone to login to Steam then the Player may bring a mobile phone into the Playing Area solely for that purpose and the mobile phone must then be immediately handed to Tournament Officials.
- (c) Participants may be subject to random metal detector searches at any time whilst they are in the Playing Area.

5.2.7 Additional Prohibited Items: BLAST reserves the right to restrict items that enter the tournament area based on regional, political or sponsor restrictions.

- (a) Any person(s) who chooses to ignore BLAST instructions may have the item(s) removed and receive further sanctions.

## **6. DURING THE MATCH**

6.1 Leaving the Playing Area: Players must not leave the Playing Area at any time during the ten (10) minutes prior to or during a Match without the express permission of the Tournament Officials.

6.2 Leaving the Server: Players must not leave the server during a Match without the express permission of the Tournament Officials. If a Player leaves the server without permission and does not return in time for the next Round, no pause will be granted and the Match will continue. The Team may call tactical timeouts to extend the freeze time.

6.3 Tactical Timeouts: Teams may take up to three (3) tactical timeouts during regulation Rounds. These may be used in separate Rounds or in succession. To call a tactical timeout, the Team must use the in-game "call vote" function. Team Coaches may communicate with the Players during tactical timeouts. After Relegation is over, all tactical timeouts are reset to one (1) per team. After six (6) overtime rounds if a winner hasn't been decided teams will reset to one (1) tactical timeout each. This will repeat until a winner has been decided.

6.4 Anti-Cheat: In the case of an online Match, all Players and Team Coaches will be notified of what Anti-Cheat they should use. The Tournament Operations manager will inform teams via official channels what Anti-Cheat programs are required in order to be eligible to play.

6.5 Technical Pause:

6.5.1 In the case of an online Match:

- (a) Admitted Teams are limited to ten (10) minutes total of technical pauses per Map. After this time has run out a Team may use a tactical timeout to allow more time to resolve issue(s). If no tactical timeouts are available, Teams are able to make a substitution or play the Match out.
- (b) Admitted Teams are allowed to donate a portion of their technical time to their opponent during the Match.
- (c) If an issue cannot be resolved within the allotted ten (10) minutes, Admitted Team(s) can request additional time from the Tournament Operations Team. This additional time will be given at the discretion of the Tournament Operations Manager.
- (d) Technical pauses may be called at any time but will come into effect at the next freezetime, or immediately if called during a freezetime. The Player who has an issue must immediately notify the Tournament Official in their Playing Area.
- (e) All communication (including but not limited to text and voice communication between Players and Team Coaches) is forbidden during a technical pause. Warnings will be given for first infringement and more severe Sanctions will be imposed for multiple breaches including but not limited to Penalty Points and/or fines.
- (f) Players must continue to play out any ongoing Round until the pause has come into effect to allow Tournament Officials to make a decision according to the Handbook.
- (g) The misuse of a Technical Pause for a non-technical issue will result in the game being un-paused.

6.5.2 In the case of a LAN (or offline) Match:

- (a) Technical pauses may be called at any time but will come into effect at the next freezetime, or immediately if called during a freezetime. The Player who has an issue must immediately notify the Tournament Official in their Playing Area.
- (b) All communication (including but not limited to text and voice communication between Players and Team Coaches) is forbidden during a technical pause. Warnings will be given for first infractions and more severe Sanctions will be imposed for multiple breaches.
- (c) Players must continue to play out any ongoing Round until the pause has come into effect to allow Tournament Officials to make a decision according to the Handbook.

6.6 Match Interruptions:

- 6.6.1 Any Match interruption shall be immediately reported to the Tournament Operations Manager by the Team and any Participant also affected.
- 6.6.2 In the case of a technical issue the Round will be restarted unless the Round has reached the point of incidents.
- 6.6.3 The point of incident is to be defined exclusively by the Tournament Operations Manager, generally this will include either team receiving significant damage, a clear information advantage, or the Round has less than one (1) minute remaining.
- 6.6.4 All decisions made by the Tournament Operations Manager in respect of Match interruption are final and non-appealable.
- 6.6.5 If during an online Match, a Player(s) incurs a serious issue (e.g. internet issues, power outage etc.) that cannot be resolved quickly, their Team may request a substitution from their pre-approved Submitted Roster. This substitution request is at the discretion of the Tournament Operations Manager. The Match can be paused for the change to be made if required, however this delay must not exceed five (5) minutes.

6.7 Scripts: Except for buy, toggle and jump, all scripts are prohibited this includes but is not limited to movement scripts. If a Player is unsure on the validity of a script, they should contact the Tournament Officials before usage.

- 6.7.1 So called "Jumpthrow" scripts and binds are specifically allowed.
- 6.7.2 r\_cleardecals is specifically allowed.
- 6.7.3 Binds that allow the player to drop grenades are allowed.

6.8 Custom Data: Apart from changing of CS2 Skins, Players shall not use any form of custom Game file that may be used to manipulate any of the following: huds, crosshairs, scoreboards, player models, weapon models and sprite.

6.9 Unfair Advantage/Cheating: Without in any way limiting the terms of the Code of Conduct or the powers of ESIC, trying to gain any unfair advance during a Match, cheating, or in any way bringing into question the authenticity and/or integrity of a Match or an Event, the Circuit or the Tournament (in whole or in part) is strictly prohibited hereunder and will be a punishable/Sanctionable offence (in addition to any investigations and/or sanction imposed by ESIC).

6.10 Peripheral Advantages: BLAST reserves the right to ban the use of software or hardware if it is deemed as an unfair advantage. Below is a list of banned advantages and example software:

- 6.10.1 Ignoring a pressed keyboard stroke if another is pressed afterwards; Razer Snap Tap, Wooting SOCD and Snappy Tappy.

6.11 Bugs and Glitches: Use of bugs or glitches is strictly prohibited and any use of the same will be punished depending on the severity of the case. A bug or glitch includes but is not limited to:

- 6.11.1 moving through clipped areas where movement is not intended by the design of the Map;



- 6.11.2 planting the bomb in a way that removes the planting sound or beeping sound;
  - 6.11.3 planting the bomb where the opposing Team cannot reach or defuse the bomb (note that planting where the opposing Team needs a boost from a teammate is permitted);
  - 6.11.4 boosting is allowed except where Players are boosted to a position where they can see through/over an area that is not intended with the design of the Map;
  - 6.11.5 being stood on a non-visible ledge, also known as "pixel walking";
  - 6.11.6 standing on a player or holding on a ramped surface known as "surfing" is permitted;
  - 6.11.7 pushing a player's point of view through a wall or surface to gain visual information which they otherwise wouldn't get; and
  - 6.11.8 purposefully positioning a player point of view to see through a texture which is usually opaque.
- 6.12 Permitted bugs and/or glitches: these will be communicated to the Admitted Teams by Tournament Officials prior to the start of the Tournament and if any Team/Player has a question regarding what they believe might be a permitted bug or glitch, they should ask the Tournament Officials at the team briefing which takes place prior to the start of the Matches in order to clarify the position.
- 6.13 New Positions: If a Team has found a new position but is unsure of its validity within the Tournament Regulations they should contact the Tournament Officials before usage to check whether such a position complies with the Handbook.
- 6.14 Nicknames: Players must use the nicknames provided on their team sheet which must match the Players' typically used alias including any modifications (e.g. capitalisation/special characters). If the Player has played a Valve Major, the name used in the Valve Major shall be used regardless. No sponsors are allowed in Player nicknames.
- 6.15 Communication: During Matches, Players shall not communicate with any person not involved in the Match, even if the Match is paused. Involvement in the Match is limited to Players, Team Coaches and Tournament Officials. In the case of an online Match:
- 6.15.1 Coaches will be allowed to communicate to any person involved in the Match at any time, except during Technical Pauses in accordance with Section 9, clause 6.5.1 (e); and
  - 6.15.2 to the extent that the functionality is made available, Coaches will be allowed to connect to the server.
- 6.16 Chat: Game related chat is permitted, for example asking the health points of an opponent or answering a question by the Tournament Officials. Players shall not advertise or seek to advertise any company, products, sponsors or services.
- 6.17 Item Name Tags: Players may not use items which have name tags that are vulgar in nature, promote companies/sponsors/partners/services or which violate the spirit of the game (e.g. taunts an opponent).

- 6.18 Sticker Placement: Players may not use items which have in-game stickers which are vulgar in nature, political or promote companies/sponsors/partners/services or which violate the spirit of the game.
- 6.19 Incorrect Buy: Players are responsible for what they buy in-game and no Round will be restarted due to a Player buying an item they did not intend to.
- 6.20 Line of Communication: During an online Tournament the official line of communication between Team(s) and Tournament Officials will be the BLAST Discord. Invites to said Discord will be sent one (1) week prior to the Match.
- 6.21 POVs: All Players and Team Coaches are required to record their POVs of each Map and upload them via the online Google form. Players must have uploaded their POVs within one (1) hour post the relevant map. Failure to upload a POV will result in at least a financial Sanction.

## **7. AFTER THE MATCH**

- 7.1 Complaint Procedure: If a Team wishes to file a complaint regarding the result of a Match then they have up to fifteen (15) minutes following the completion of such Match to put forward their case as to why the result should not stand. The Team must provide as much evidence as possible to support their case and the case must be put forward to the Tournament or Teams Operations Manager. If no case has been made within fifteen (15) minutes after the Match finishes, the result will stand. Where such complaint relates to a Participant potentially breaching the ESIC Codes, the complaint must be made to the Match Official. BLAST shall consider any complaints in good faith and determine a fair and reasonable course of action, taking into account the merits (if any) of the complaint.
- 7.2 For the avoidance of doubt, no complaints may be made against the decisions of the Tournament Officials during the Match, such decisions being final and non-appealable.

## **8. TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS**

- 8.1 Tournament Officials: BLAST shall notify the relevant Teams of the Tournament Officials appointed for each Match.
- 8.2 Responsibilities: The Tournament Officials are responsible for making decisions and judgement calls on Match play and Tournament related issues which take place immediately before, during and immediately following a Match. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- 8.2.1 starting and closing the Match;
  - 8.2.2 monitoring the Playing Area;
  - 8.2.3 monitoring the Participants' behaviour;
  - 8.2.4 issuing appropriate in-Match Sanctions; and
  - 8.2.5 making decisions on Match related issues.
- 8.3 Independence: Tournament Officials shall, at all times, conduct themselves in an appropriate, professional and impartial manner, as befitting the Tournament and BLAST. For the avoidance of doubt, Tournament Officials shall show no prejudice towards any Team or Participant.

8.4 Decision Making: Subject to the application of the ESIC Codes (where applicable), the decisions made and Sanctions applied by Tournament Officials during a Match or otherwise during an Event are final and binding on all Teams and Participants unless otherwise provided for herein. Only those decisions that are not Non-Appealable Decisions can be appealed, and the process for such appeal(s) is set out in Paragraph 14 below.

8.5 Payments to Tournament Officials: Without limitation to the ESIC Codes, no Team, Participant, or any other person acting on their, or its behalf, shall make, or offer to make, any payment whatsoever to a Tournament Official, whether in cash or in kind, and whether by way of fee, allowance or reimbursement of expenses, except as may from time to time be approved or determined by BLAST.

## **9. MATCH SETTINGS**

9.1 Server:

- 9.1.1 Startmoney – \$800
- 9.1.2 Round time – 1 minute 55 seconds
- 9.1.3 Freeze time – 20 seconds
- 9.1.4 Bomb timer – 40 seconds
- 9.1.5 Timeouts – 3 timeouts of 30 seconds each
- 9.1.6 Overtime – Max Rounds 6, \$12,500 start money
- 9.1.7 Round restart delay: 5 seconds
- 9.1.8 Break during half time: 3 minutes
- 9.1.9 Break during half time in overtime: Disabled
- 9.1.10 sv\_vote\_failure\_timer 10

9.2 Server Add-on: The Tournament will use a server plugin and system with full Round backup functionality.

9.3 Maps: Unless otherwise communicated by BLAST in advance, Valve's prescribed active duty map pool will be followed at each Event.

9.4 Seeding: Team(s) will be seeded in accordance with the Eligibility Regulations. The Teams' original Seeding will remain the same for the first period of the Event (e.g. round robin, upper bracket). After each Event section has been completed Team(s) will be re-seeded based on previous results in the earlier period of the applicable Event. For example:

- 9.4.1 During The Open teams will only be re-seeded after the first double elimination stage has been completed. Seeding will be based on finishing position in the double elimination.
- 9.4.2 Double Elimination (first stage of the Open) teams will be re-seeded as they enter the lower bracket. This means teams entering the lower bracket will have a higher seed than teams already in the lower bracket.

9.5 Map Veto: During the stages of The Bounty, Open and Rivals, Map Vetoes will

take place on the day of the Match. These will be between ninety (90) minutes and when the Match before starts the second map. After the conclusion of the Map Veto, the identity of the Maps must be kept strictly confidential by the Team(s)/Participant(s) until they are released officially by BLAST.

9.5.1 In the case where there is not ninety (90) minutes of allotted time between Match, e.g. Consolidation Final into Championship Final Vetoes will take place ten (10) minutes after the match has finished.

9.5.2 **Best-of-One (BO1):** The higher seeded Team will choose whether to be Team A or Team B in the following system:

1. Team A will ban one map.
2. Team B will ban one map.
3. Team A will ban one map.
4. Team B will ban one map.
5. Team A will ban one map.
6. Team B will ban one map.
7. The remaining map is played.

9.5.3 **Best-of-Three (BO3)** The higher seeded Team will choose whether to be Team A or Team B in the following system:

1. Team A will ban one map.
2. Team B will ban one map.
3. Team A will pick the first map.
4. Team B will pick the second map.
5. Team A will ban one map.
6. Team B will ban one map.
7. The remaining map will be played third if needed.

9.5.4 **Best-of-Five (BO5)** The higher seeded Team will choose whether to be Team A or Team B in the following system:

1. Team A will ban one map.
2. Team B will ban one map.
3. Team A will pick the first map.
4. Team B will pick the second map.
5. Team A will pick the third map.
6. Team B will pick the fourth map.
7. The remaining map will be played fifth if needed.

9.5.5 Teams must provide up to two (2) representatives for Map Vetoes. Only these two members must be involved in the Map Veto process. BLAST may at any time remove external members from the area in which the Veto process takes place.

9.5.6 Once Map Vetoes have started representatives can't leave until the process is over and both teams have confirmed the Map Veto process was done correctly. BLAST reserves the right to allow someone to leave during the Map Veto process.

## 9.6 Server selection (for online games):

9.6.1 Once the Map Veto is complete teams will have up to 30 minutes prior to the Match to test the available servers.

9.6.2 At the end of the testing period, if both Admitted Teams cannot agree to a server location, the Tournament Operations Manager will decide the server location. The decision will be based on the applicable Player(s) and Admitted Team(s) average pings and this data will be recorded

directly from the server (not the CS2 client information). This decision is final and cannot be contested.

**9.7**     Side Choice

9.7.1     In any BO1 match: The winner of a knife Round chooses which side they will start on.

9.7.2     In any BO3 match: Teams will pick a side (CT/T) on their opponent's map. On the third map the winner of a knife Round chooses which side they will start on.

9.7.3     In any BO5 match: Teams will pick a side (CT/T) on their opponent's map. On the fifth map, the winner of the knife Round chooses which side they will start on.

9.8     Game Version: Each Event will use a previous version of the Game, via the Steam Beta system which BLAST shall communicate in advance. If the version is considered problematic due to bugs or extreme balance changes, an older version will be used (as determined by BLAST) and the Teams will be informed by BLAST.

9.9     The Tournament Operations Manager will decide which beta version will be used one (1) week before the first Match of an Event. Once the beta is locked, it won't change for the rest of the Event unless it has a problematic bug .

9.10    Restricted Weapons: The Tournament will use the current live restricted weapons enforced by Valve. If a weapon is added to the Game within an unreasonable time before an Event, BLAST may add it to the restricted weapons list and the Teams will be informed by BLAST.

**10.     SOFTWARE AND SETTINGS**

10.1    General: Players are allowed to configure certain aspects of their PC, software and game client or monitor settings to suit their preferences. These include but are not limited to:

10.1.1   Digital Vibrance

10.1.2   Brightness, Gamma, Contrast

10.1.3   3D Settings through Nvidia Control Panel key

10.1.4   Sound/Audio

10.1.5   Mouse acceleration, pointer precision, sensitivity

10.1.6   Keyboard

**10.2    Overlays:**

10.2.1   Players shall not use any form of overlay that provides information on top of the game client. This includes but is not limited to tools such as Nvidia SLI Display, RivaTuner, Teamspeak/Overwolf.

10.2.2   Steam overlays such as fps and the main steam overlay are permitted, unless such overlay provides a competitive advantage see Paragraph 11.9.

10.3 Configurations and Drivers:

10.4 In the case of an LAN (or Offline) event:

10.4.1 Configurations must be emailed to teams@blast.tv one week before the applicable tournament. It is recommended that Players take photos of their graphic settings and any other important settings so that they can be replicated easily.

10.4.2 Players must submit the name of the drivers they need to the Tournament Officials at the same time as configuration submission. Players will only be allowed to use drivers from the official manufacturer's website.

10.4.3 Players must use the following email address to submit configurations and driver requests: teams@blast.tv.

10.4.4 Razer tournament drivers will be created at the Tournament in front of the Tournament Officials. Players should screenshot their settings from home and bring them to the event to ensure they create a driver with the correct settings.

10.4.5 No other software or configurations will be allowed once the Tournament begins.

10.5 Teamspeak: BLAST will provide a Teamspeak server with passworded channels for each Team(s), which also includes a private staff channel for staff not included in the match. All Team(s)/Participant(s) are required to connect and have this Teamspeak server as their only source of voice communication for the duration of all Matches while at the Tournament. BLAST reserves the right to record all Team(s) communications during the Tournament. Players must use their correct alias when joining the server.

10.5.1 In the case of an Online event: During official Matches BLAST will allow up to two (2) members of support staff to be within the Teamspeak channel. These members will be muted by BLAST during all official matches.

10.5.2 All recorded Team(s) communications will abide to the BLAST Team Communication Use and Storage Policy.

**11. HARDWARE**

11.1 Provided by Player: Players will be expected to bring the following hardware (and any spares) with them for the duration of the Tournament.

11.1.1 Mouse

11.1.2 Keyboard

11.1.3 in-ears

11.1.4 Mousepad

11.1.5 Mouse bungee (if required)

11.1.6 Headset (practice area only)

11.2 Failure to bring Hardware: Tournament officials may be asked to provide missing

hardware for LAN tournaments only. This request may be denied based on availability of such hardware, and it is not expected that players will be able to rely on these as back up. Any hardware provided will be done so at costs recuperated through a deduction in tournament prize money.

**11.3 Provided by BLAST:**

11.3.1 In the Playing Area, Players must use the PC, monitor, headset, table and chair provided by BLAST. If there are any issues with the hardware provided by BLAST, Player(s) should immediately inform the Tournament Officials. The PC, monitor, headset and table will be the same model for all Tournament Play Areas.

11.3.2 The minimum hardware specification BLAST will use it for the Playing Area and Practice Rooms:

- (a) AMD Ryzen 7 9800X3D or equivalent
- (b) RTX 5080 or equivalent
- (c) DDR5 32GB, 6000MHz memory or equivalent
- (d) Monitor: 360 hz, 1ms response time or equivalent

**11.4 BLAST reserves the right to make changes to the hardware setup.**

**Section 8 - Tournament Mechanics AND Qualifications Regulations**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. There are three (3) categories of Events during the Circuit:
  - 1.1.1. The Bounty
  - 1.1.2. The Open; and
  - 1.1.3. The Rivals.
  - 1.1.4. Each category of Event takes place twice during a Circuit, in accordance with the Format at Appendix 1 to these Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.

**2. THE BOUNTY**

- 2.1. Participating Teams: The Bounty is made up of thirty-two (32) teams who will be invited to play in The Bounty. These invites come from both the Valve Regional and Global Standings.
  - 2.1.1. Valve Global Standings: Top twenty eight (28) will be invited to play in The Bounty
  - 2.1.2. Wildcard: BLAST reserves the right to invite four (4) compliant Wildcard Teams to Participate.
    - 2.1.2.1. In the instance a Wildcard team isn't invited to participate, BLAST will continue to follow the Global VRS until a total of thirty-two (32) teams are participating in the tournament.
- 2.2. The Bounty - Structure:
  - 2.2.1. **Playing Time**: The Bounty Events will be played in two halves. The first half, which is played online, consists of six (6) days to determine the top eight (8) Admitted Teams. The second half will consist of four (4) days the following week, played offline in a LAN setting.
  - 2.2.2. **Matches**: Round 1 to Semi Finals will be played as a Best-Of-Three (Bo3), Grand Final will be played as a Best-Of-Five (Bo5).
  - 2.2.3. **Bounty Seeding**: will be based on the Valve Global Standings. Seeding will take place on the Acceptance Date. A Team's Seed in Round 1 of the Bounty Event remains its Seeding throughout the applicable Event, irrespective of whether it wins a Match against an opponent Team with a higher Seed. If a Team informs BLAST that it can no longer participate in a Bounty Event after the Match Schedule has been confirmed, the replacement Team shall take that leaving Team's place in the Match Schedule and be placed against the same opponent. If a Team informs BLAST that it can no longer participate in a Bounty Event before the Match Schedule has been confirmed, BLAST shall seed the Tournament as if the replacement Team was participating in the Tournament from the outset.
  - 2.2.4. **Format**: a thirty-two (32) Team single elimination Event of 5 Rounds competing for Available Bounties. Before each Round starts Teams will be split into 2 pots:



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- (a) Pot 1: Top 50% of Seeded Teams left in the Tournament.
  - (b) Pot 2: Bottom 50% of Seeded Teams left in the Tournament.
- 2.2.5. Matchups: The matchups for each Round are determined by the highest Seed in Pot 2 picking a Team to play from Pot 1. Following that, it will follow sequentially such that the next highest Seed in Pot 2, will pick an opponent from the remaining Teams in Pot 1 until all Teams have an opponent. In this respect:
- (c) For the Round of 32, Teams will be notified of a date and time in which they need to submit their choice of opponent Team. This will be done via the official BLAST Discord.
  - (d) For the Round of 16, Teams will submit their opponent to BLAST post the end of the last game of the Round of 32. BLAST will instruct Teams when they should make submissions.
  - (e) Further rounds will be drawn in person, under the supervision of BLAST.
  - (f) If a Team in Pot 2 fails to provide an opponent or fails to be present to pick their opponent, they will automatically be placed against the closest remaining seeded Team from Pot 1 that doesn't have an opponent.
- 2.2.6. **Rounds:** Initial Online Bo3 Single Elimination Matches are played over 6 days:
- (a) Match 1 - Round of 32
  - (b) Match 2 - Round of 32
  - (c) Match 3 - Round of 32
  - (d) Match 4 - Round of 32
  - (e) Match 5 - Round of 32
  - (f) Match 6 - Round of 32
  - (g) Match 7 - Round of 32
  - (h) Match 8 - Round of 32
  - (i) Match 9 - Round of 32
  - (j) Match 10 - Round of 32
  - (k) Match 11 - Round of 32
  - (l) Match 12 - Round of 32
  - (m) Match 13 - Round of 32
  - (n) Match 14 - Round of 32
  - (o) Match 15 - Round of 32
  - (p) Match 16 - Round of 32

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- (q) Match 17 - Round of 16
- (r) Match 18 - Round of 16
- (s) Match 19 - Round of 16
- (t) Match 20 - Round of 16
- (u) Match 21 - Round of 16
- (v) Match 22 - Round of 16
- (w) Match 23 - Round of 16
- (x) Match 24 - Round of 16

2.2.7. Offline Bo3 Final Matches with a Bo5 Grand Final played over 4 days:

- (a) Match 1 - Quarter Final
- (b) Match 2 - Quarter Final
- (c) Match 3 - Quarter Final
- (d) Match 4 - Quarter Final
- (e) Match 5 - Semi Final
- (f) Match 6 - Semi Final
- (g) Match 7 - Grand Final

2.2.8. **Forfeit:** Where a Team forfeits a Match after Round One, the Team which is not given an opponent in the draft will be given a bye to the next round.

2.2.9. **Prize Pool:** The total Prize Money for each Bounty Event will be \$500,000 USD which shall be used as Available Bounties in accordance with paragraph 2.2.9 – 2.2.11 below.

2.2.10. **Financial Bounties:** for the first Round of each Bounty Event, the total amount of Prize Money for the Event shall be awarded to the Teams holding the sixteen (16) top Seeds for the Event as their Initial Bounty ("**Gifted Bounty Teams**"), as follows:

- (a) Initial Bounty for Seed 1 - 4: \$60,000
- (b) Initial Bounty for Seed 5 - 8: \$30,000
- (c) Initial Bounty for Seed 9 - 12: \$20,000
- (d) Initial Bounty for Seed 13 - 16: \$15,000

2.2.11. **Staking of Financial Bounties:**

- (a) The following terms shall have the following meanings:
  - (i) "**Bank**" means the act by which a Team secures Prize Money at The Bounty Events as provided for hereunder;

- (ii) **"Banked Amount"** means Prize Money earned from Match wins in The Bounty which can't be lost.
  - (iii) a **"Crystallising Bounty Event"** means the trigger point at which a Team obtains the right to Bank by beating an opponent that has a Staked Bounty;
  - (iv) an **"Earned Bounty"** means the Staked Bounty of the losing Team to a Match;
  - (v) a **"Gifted Bounty Team"** means a top sixteen (16) Seeded Team in Round 1 of The Bounty Events which are automatically provided with an Initial Bounty in accordance with paragraph 2.2.9 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations;
  - (vi) an **"Initial Bounty"** means the amount of Prize Money initially awarded to the Gifted Bounty Teams in accordance with paragraph 2.2.9 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations;
  - (vii) a **"Staked Bounty"** means the amount of a Team's Prize Money that it is required to stake on the outcome of a Match of a The Bounty.
- (b) **Staking Bounties:** Each Team must risk a Staked Bounty for each Match during The Bounty Events in accordance with the Format and the terms of this paragraph 2.2.10 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations. The amount representing a Staked Bounty is as follows:
- (i) subject to paragraph 2.2.10(e) below, for a Gifted Bounty Team it's Staked Bounty must be 100% of its Initial Bounty until it achieves a Crystallising Bounty Event; and
  - (ii) once a Team achieves a Crystallising Bounty Event, it's Staked Bounty will thereafter be the amount representing its Initial Bounty (if applicable and as adjusted accordingly to paragraph 2.2.10(e) below) plus 100% of its Earned Bounty before the start of a Match multiplied by zero point five (0.5)
- (c) **Winning / Losing Bounties:** Upon winning a Match the winning Team will receive the losing Team's Staked Bounty. The losing Team in a Match will be eliminated from the Event but will retain, by way of Prize Money, whatever it has been deemed to have Banked prior to the start of the Match that it lost.
- (d) **Banking Bounties:** subject only to paragraph 2.2.10(e) below, the right of a Team to Bank is triggered by achieving a Crystallising Bounty Event:
- (i) if a Team is a Gifted Bounty Team, then save for the provisions of paragraph 2.2.10(e) below, the first instance it can Bank is if it is victorious in Round 2 of The Bounty Event, whereby it can Bank 50% of it's Initial Bounty (as adjusted by paragraph 2.2.10(e) below) plus 50% of it's Earned Bounty from Round 2;

- (ii) if a Team is not a Gifted Bounty Team, it can begin to Bank as soon as it registers its first victory at The Bounty Event whereby it can bank 50% of the Earned Bounty from Round 1; and
- (iii) for all Matches where both Teams have a Staked Bounty, the victorious Team will Bank 50% of its Earned Bounty from that Match. The balance of the Earned Bounty will be added to the Staked Bounty for that Team's next Round Match, save in the event of The Bounty final, whereby the winner Banks 100% it's Staked Bounty and its Earned Bounty.
- (e) Gifted Bounty Team Round 1 Winnings: notwithstanding paragraph 2.2.10(a)-(d) above, where a Gifted Bounty Team wins it's Round 1 Match, it shall be entitled to Bank \$2,500 of its Initial Bounty and for Round 2 that Gifted Bounty Team's Staked Bounty and Banked Amount will be adjusted accordingly.

### **3. THE OPEN – Closed Qualifiers**

- 3.1. Participating Teams: Asia, Europe, North and South America will have a The Open - Closed Qualifier Event. Eight (8) Teams will Participate in each The Open - Closed Qualifier. Four (4) Teams invited from the top of the respective Valve Regional Standings (excluding Teams already directly invited to the Open) and four (4) additional Teams from open qualifiers, subject to paragraph 4.2.2(g) of Section 4.
- 3.2. The Open - Closed Qualifier - Format:
  - 3.2.1. Playing Time: The Open - Closed Qualifier Final will be played over three (3) days.
  - 3.2.2. Matches: Best-Of-Three (Bo3)
  - 3.2.3. Format: This will be played as an eight (8) Team single elimination tournament, with the winner of each region qualifying to the Open.
- 3.3. Seeding will be based on the Valve Regional Standings. Seeding will take place on the Acceptance Date.
- 3.4. Match Format:
  - 3.4.1. Quarter Finals (all matches are Bo3)
    - (a) Match 1
    - (b) Match 2
    - (c) Match 3
    - (d) Match 4
  - 3.4.2. Semi Final Matchups (all matches are Bo3)
    - (a) Match 5 (Winner Match 1 v Winner Match 2)
    - (b) Match 6 (Winner Match 3 v Winner Match 4)

3.4.3. Grand Final Match Up (Bo3)

- (a) Match 7 (Winner Match 5 vs Winner Match 6)

3.5. The Open - Closed Qualifier Prize Pool: There will be no prize pool for The Open - Closed Qualifier tournament.

**4. THE OPEN**

4.1. Participating Teams: The Participating Teams consist of sixteen (16) Teams. Twelve (12) Teams invited from the top Valve Global Standings and the winners of all four (4) The Open - Closed Qualifier regional tournaments.

4.2. The Open:

4.2.1. Playing Time: The Open will be played in two halves. The first half consists of six (6) days to determine the top six (6) Teams. The second half being a three (3) day play-off, usually in a separate location.

4.2.2. Matches: Best-Of-Three (Bo3), Grand Final will be played as a Best-Of-Five (Bo5).

4.2.3. Format: This will be played as two eight (8) Team double elimination brackets over the first half. The top three (3) Teams from each group will play in a six (6) Team single elimination playoff. The Teams will be split into initial groups as below:

- (a) Group 1 – Seed 1, Seed 4, Seed 5, Seed 8, Seed 9, Seed 12, Seed 13 and Seed 16
- (b) Group 2 – Seed 2, Seed 3, Seed 6, Seed 7, Seed 10, Seed 11, Seed 14 and Seed 15

4.3. Seeding: The Open Seeding will be based on the Valve Global Standings. Seeding will take place when the final The Open - Closed Qualifier is complete.

4.4. Initial Matchups (all matches are Bo3)

4.4.1. Match 1 - Group A - Quarter Final

4.4.2. Match 2 - Group A - Quarter Final

4.4.3. Match 3 - Group A - Quarter Final

4.4.4. Match 4 - Group A - Quarter Final

4.4.5. Match 5 - Group B - Quarter Final

4.4.6. Match 6 - Group B - Quarter Final

4.4.7. Match 7 - Group B - Quarter Final

4.4.8. Match 8 - Group B - Quarter Final

4.4.9. Match 9 - Group A - Lower Bracket Round 1

4.4.10. Match 10 - Group A - Lower Bracket Round 1

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- 4.4.11. Match 11 - Group A - Upper Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.12. Match 12 - Group A - Upper Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.13. Match 13 - Group B - Lower Bracket Round 1
- 4.4.14. Match 14 - Group B - Lower Bracket Round 1
- 4.4.15. Match 15 - Group B - Upper Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.16. Match 16 - Group B - Upper Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.17. Match 17 - Group A - Lower Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.18. Match 18 - Group A - Lower Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.19. Match 19 - Group B - Lower Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.20. Match 20 - Group B - Lower Bracket Semi Final
- 4.4.21. Match 21 - Group A - Upper Bracket Final
- 4.4.22. Match 22 - Group A - Lower Bracket Final
- 4.4.23. Match 21 - Group B - Upper Bracket Final
- 4.4.24. Match 22 - Group B - Lower Bracket Final
- 4.5. Playoff (all matches are Bo3 except Grand Final which is Bo5)
  - 4.5.1. Match 1 - Quarter Final 1 (Group A 2nd vs Group B 3rd)
  - 4.5.2. Match 2 - Quarter Final 2 (Group B 2nd vs Group A 3rd)
  - 4.5.3. Match 3 - Semi Final (Group B 1st vs Match 1 Winner)
  - 4.5.4. Match 4 - Semi Final (Group A 1st vs Match 2 Winner)
  - 4.5.5. Match 5 - Grand Final (Match 4 Winner vs Match 5 Winner)

## **5. THE RIVALS**

- 5.1. Participating Teams for 2025: The Rivals is made up of eight (8) Teams who will be invited to play in The Rivals. These invites come from both the Valve Global Standings and Wildcards
  - 5.1.1. Valve Global Standings: Top four (4) Teams will be invited directly from the top of the Valve Global Standings
    - (a) Wildcard: BLAST reserves the right to invite four (4) Wildcard Teams to Participate.
  - 5.1.2. In the event no Wildcard team is invited to The Rivals, BLAST will continue inviting from the Global VRS list.
- 5.2. The Rivals:
  - 5.2.1. Playing Time: The Rivals is played out over five (5) days in accordance with the Match Schedule.

## **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

- 5.2.2. Matches: Best-Of-Three (BO3), Grand Final will be played as Best-Of-Five (BO5)
- 5.2.3. The eight (8) Teams will be split into two (2) groups of four (4), playing out a GSL format over the first two days leading to Quarter Finals, Semi Finals then a 3rd / 4th playoff and Grand Final. The Teams will be split into initial groups as below:
  - (a) Group 1 – Seed 1, Seed 4, Seed 5 and Seed 8
  - (b) Group 2 – Seed 2, Seed 3, Seed 6 and Seed 7
- 5.2.4. Bounty Seeding will be based on the Valve Global Standings. Seeding will take place on the Acceptance Date.
- 5.2.5. Initial Matchups (all matches are Bo3)
  - (a) Match 1 (Group 1 - Seed 1 v Seed 8)
  - (b) Match 2 (Group 1 - Seed 4 v Seed 5)
  - (c) Match 3 (Group 2 - Seed 2 v Seed 7)
  - (d) Match 4 (Group 2 - Seed 3 v Seed 6)
  - (e) Match 5 (Group 1 - Loser Match 1 v Loser Match 2)
  - (f) Match 6 (Group 1 - Winner Match 1 v Winner Match 2)
  - (g) Match 7 (Group 2 - Loser Match 3 v Loser Match 3)
  - (h) Match 8 (Group 2 - Winner Match 3 v Winner Match 4)
- 5.2.6. Quarter Final Matchups (all matches are Bo3)
  - (a) Match 9 (Loser Match 6 v Winner Match 7)
  - (b) Match 10 (Loser Match 8 v Winner Match 5)
- 5.2.7. Semi Final Matchups (all matches are Bo3)
  - (a) Match 11 (Winner Match 9 v Winner Match 8)
  - (b) Match 12 (Winner Match 10 v Winner Match 6)
- 5.2.8. Final Matchups (all matches are Bo5)
  - (a) Match 13 - Grand Final (Winner Match 11 v Winner Match 12)

## **SCHEDULE: OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR**

## BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026

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### 2026 SCHEDULE DETAIL

2026 SCHEDULE	WEEK DATES	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MATCHES	MATCH PLAY
THE BOUNTY	JAN 12 - 18		4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	24	72hrs
	JAN 19 - 25			M (all)	2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	1 x Bo5	7	23 hrs
THE OPEN	QUALIFIERS FEB 6-8				8 x Bo3	8 x Bo3	8 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	28	112 hrs
	MAR 16 - 22		M (all)	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	24	72 hrs
	MAR 23 - 29	4 x Bo3				2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	1 x Bo5	5	17 hrs
THE RIVALS	APRIL 27 - MAY 3		M (all)	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	1 x Bo5	13	41 hrs
THE BOUNTY	JULY 20 - 26		4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	24	72 hrs
	JULY 27 - AUG 2			M (all)	2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	1 x Bo5	7	23 hrs
THE OPEN	QUALIFIERS JUL 9-11				8 x Bo3	8 x Bo3	8 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	28	112 hrs
	AUG 24 - 30		M (all)	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	24	72 hrs
	AUG 31 - SEPT 6	4 x Bo3				2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	1 x Bo5	5	17 hrs
THE RIVALS	NOV 9 - 15		M (all)	4 x Bo3	4 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	2 x Bo3	1 x Bo5	13	41 hrs
TOTAL									202	674 hrs

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### 2026 SEASON CALENDAR

Bounty Season 1	
Tournament Invite	2nd December at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the December 1st VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	4th December at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	9th January
Roster Lock Date	9th January at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	22nd January
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 13th - 18th January Phase Two: 22nd - 25th January
Open Season 1	
Tournament Invite	3rd February at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the February 2nd VRS</i>
Qualifier Dates	6th - 8th February
Invite Accepted By	5th February at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	13th March
Roster Lock Date	13th March at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	17th March
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 18th - 23rd March Phase Two: 27th - 29th March
Rivals Season 1	
Tournament Invite	3rd March at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the March 2nd VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	5th March at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	24th April
Roster Lock Date	24th April at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	28th April



## **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

Tournament Dates	30th April - 3rd May
<b>Bounty Season 2</b>	
Tournament Invite	June 2nd at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the June 1st VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	June 4th at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	17th July
Roster Lock Date	17th July at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	29th July
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 21st - 26th July Phase Two: 30th July - 2nd August
<b>Open Season 2</b>	
Tournament Invite	7th July at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the July 1st VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	9th July at 13:00 UTC
Qualifier Dates	9th - 11th July
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	21st August
Roster Lock Date	21st August at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	25th August
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 26th - 31st August Phase Two: 4th - 6th August
<b>Rivals Season 2</b>	
Tournament Invite	6th October at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the October 5th VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	8th October at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	6th November
Roster Lock Date	6th November at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	10th November
Tournament Dates	11th - 15th November

### **2027 SEASON CALENDAR**

<b>Bounty</b>	
Tournament Invite	8th December at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the December 7th VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	10th December at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	8th January
Roster Lock Date	8th January at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	20th January
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 12th - 17th January Phase Two: 21st - 24th January
<b>Open</b>	
Tournament Invite	2nd February at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the February 1st VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	4th February at 13:00 UTC
Qualifier Dates	<b>TBC</b>
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	12th March at 13:00 UTC
Roster Lock Date	12th March
Media Day	16th March

## **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

Tournament Dates	Phase One: 17th - 22nd March Phase Two: 26th - 28th March
<b>Open</b>	
Tournament Invite	6th April at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the April 5th VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	8th April at 13:00 UTC
Qualifier Dates	<b>TBC</b>
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	7th May
Roster Lock Date	7th May at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	11th May
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 12th May - 17th May Phase Two: 21st - 23rd May
<b>Bounty</b>	
Tournament Invite	6th July at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the July 5th VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	8th July at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	27th August
Roster Lock Date	27th August at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	8th September
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 31st August - 5th September Phase Two: 9th - 12th September
<b>Open</b>	
Tournament Invite	7th September at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the September 6th VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	9th September at 13:00 UTC
Qualifier Date	<b>TBC</b>
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	1st October
Roster Lock Date	1st October at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	5th October
Tournament Dates	Phase One: 6th - 10th October Phase Two: 15th - 17th October
<b>Rivals</b>	
Tournament Invite	5th October at 13:00 UTC - <i>Using the October 4th VRS</i>
Invite Accepted By	7th October at 13:00 UTC
BLAST Announces Rosters Publicly After	5th November
Roster Lock Date	5th November at 13:00 UTC
Media Day	9th November
Tournament Dates	10th - 14th November

**Section 9 - Definitions**

For the purposes of the Handbook, the following definitions will apply:

<b>Acceptance Date</b>	means the date by which BLAST must have received a Team's Acceptance Form in accordance with the Eligibility Regulations.
<b>Acceptance Form</b>	means the acceptance form in an Invitation Letter which a Team must sign and return to BLAST in accordance with the Eligibility Regulations.
<b>Acceptance Process</b>	means the process by which a Team accepts an Invitation and provides the information required by BLAST in accordance with the Eligibility Regulations.
<b>Admission</b>	means admission by BLAST of an Invited Team to Participate in an Event and obtain the rights and privileges of Admitted Teams as provided for in this Handbook and the Tournament Regulations.
<b>Admitted</b>	means having Admission to an Event.
<b>Ambush Marketing</b>	means unauthorised marketing and promotional activities that seek to, or do, take advantage of the profile, attraction, goodwill and value of BLAST, the Tournament IP or the Tournament by either directly or indirectly suggesting, or creating, a commercial connection or association between the third party (and its products, services or brand) and BLAST, the Tournament or the Tournament IP and/or by attempting to seek promotional and marketing exposure and recognition whether through utilising, or associating itself with, the Tournament or Tournament IP or otherwise, without BLAST's consent.
<b>Anti-Corruption Code</b>	means the ESIC Anti-Corruption Code as amended from time to time.
<b>Anti-Doping Policy</b>	means the ESIC Anti-Doping Policy as amended from time to time.
<b>Appearance Obligations</b>	means the obligations on a Team and that Team's Competitive Participant in respect of the promotional and commercial appearances throughout the Circuit as more particularly described in the Promotional Obligations.
<b>Applicable Third Party</b>	means any third party connected to either the Team, the Competitive Participant, a Team Partner or a Competitive Participant Partner.

<b>Associate</b>	means in relation to any company, another company which is a subsidiary or a holding company of that company, or which controls or is controlled by or is in common control with that company; or in relation to any company, person or body, another company, person or body which is an associate thereof within the meaning of Section 435 of the Insolvency Act 1986.
<b>Bank</b>	has the meaning in paragraph 2.2.10 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
<b>Banked Amount</b>	has the meaning in paragraph 2.2.10 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
<b>Blacklisted Categories</b>	means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firearms or firearm accessories;</li><li>• Pornography;</li><li>• Tobacco products (but specifically excluding vaping);</li><li>• Prescription drugs (but specifically excluding CBD);</li><li>• Counterfeit goods;</li><li>• Political campaigns;</li><li>• Religious or political positions; and</li><li>• Esports tournaments, leagues or event organisers (it being understood that participation in other tournaments or leagues – and the contractual promotion thereof – shall not constitute a breach).</li></ul>
<b>BLAST</b>	means BLAST ApS of Hauser Plads 1, 3 sal, 1127 Copenhagen K, Denmark. VAT: DK38074466.
<b>BLAST Commercial Agreements</b>	mean any and all Commercial Rights agreements entered into by BLAST solely in relation to the Tournament and relating to Tournament IP through which BLAST and the Tournament derives financial or other benefit, including, but not limited to, agreements with Licensed Parties, official sponsors, broadcasters, subscriptions to Tournament channel(s); data companies and other data exploitation.
<b>BLAST Deliverables</b>	means the services, facilities, transportation, accommodation and other deliverables to be provided by BLAST to a Team at or in connection with the Tournament as further specified in the Handbook.
<b>BLAST IP</b>	means BLAST's owned or operated Intellectual Property Rights other than the Tournament IP.
<b>Circuit</b>	means each calendar year season of the Tournament as set out in the Format and the Tournament Mechanics and Qualification Regulations.
<b>Circuit Completion Date</b>	the date on which a Circuit concludes as set out in the Format for that year.

<b>Circuit Excluded Revenue</b>	means all gross revenue and income derived from sources other than the Circuit Gross Revenue including but not limited to; (i) revenues not directly connected to or solely relating to the BLAST Commercial Agreements; (ii) any value derived from so-called value in kind (VIK) arrangements with Tournament Partners or any other party and whether received pursuant to a BLAST Commercial Agreement or otherwise; (iii) sums received by BLAST from the Teams whether by way of Sanctions or otherwise (iv) Prize Money and the Prize Pool; and (vi) any form of tax rebate.
<b>Circuit Gross Revenue Baseline</b>	means the amount of Circuit Gross Revenue set out in Appendix 3 to the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations.
<b>Circuit Gross Revenue</b>	means the total gross monetary revenue paid to, and actually received by, BLAST, deriving solely from the BLAST Commercial Agreements other than, and specifically excluding, the Circuit Excluded Revenue.
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	means the ESIC Code of Conduct as may be amended from time to time.
<b>Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations</b>	means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 5 of the Handbook.
<b>Commercial Rights</b>	means all commercial and/or revenue generating opportunities and/or rights, title and interest directly connected and solely relating to the Tournament including without limitation Tournament specific advertising rights, broadcasting rights, merchandising rights, sponsorship rights, marketing rights, vending rights, rights to exploit data, licensing rights, ticketing rights, hospitality rights, internet rights, and all other similar rights.
<b>Commercial Strategy</b>	means BLAST's commercial and promotional strategy for which the Promotional Obligations are a central component.
<b>Competitive Participant</b>	means each Participant that is either (i) named on a Submitted Roster by an Admitted Team or (ii) that otherwise Participates in an Event, on the Circuit or otherwise in respect of a Tournament (and includes any Coach, Substitutes and Support Staff).
<b>Competitive Participant Release</b>	means the release and consent form set out at Section 12 of the Handbook which (i) binds all Participants and for which (ii) each member of a Submitted Roster is required to sign and return to BLAST in accordance with the Eligibility Regulations and the Participant Regulations.
<b>Core Players</b>	means the Players from the applicable Roster that holds the Qualifying Rank on Valve's VRS at the applicable Ranking Crystallisation Date for which an Invitation was based.

<b>Crystallising Bounty Event</b>	has the meaning in paragraph 2.2.10 of The Tournament Mechanics and Qualification Regulations.
<b>CS2</b>	means Counter-Strike 2 published by Valve Corporation.
<b>Data Protection Legislation</b>	means all applicable data protection and privacy legislation in force from time to time in the UK including the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679); the Data Protection Act 2018; the Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive 2002/58/EC (as updated by Directive 2009/136/EC) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 2426) as amended; any other directly applicable European Union regulation relating to privacy and all other legislation and regulatory requirements in force from time to time which apply to a party relating to the use of Personal Data and the privacy of electronic communication.
<b>Disciplinary Procedure</b>	has the meaning given in the ESIC Codes.
<b>Earned Bounty</b>	has the meaning in paragraph 2.2.10 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
<b>Eligibility Regulations</b>	means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 4 of the Handbook.
<b>Eligible Participant</b>	means any Participant that is not an Ineligible Participant.
<b>Eligible Team</b>	means any Team that is not an Ineligible Team.
<b>Emergency Substitution Request</b>	means the form of request that a Team is required to make should it wish to make amendments to its Submitted Roster after the Roster Lock Date in accordance with Paragraph 3.5 and 3.6 of the Eligibility Regulations.
<b>ESIC</b>	means the Esports Integrity Commission.
<b>ESIC Codes</b>	means the Code of Conduct, the Anti-Corruption Code and the Anti-Doping Policy.
<b>Event</b>	means each event of the Circuit as set out in the Format and further detailed in the Tournament Mechanics & Qualification Regulations.
<b>Event Ban</b>	shall have the meaning set out in Appendix 1 to the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.
<b>Event Technical Specifications Regulations</b>	means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 9 of the Handbook.
<b>Extraordinary Penalty Points Sanction</b>	means the notice defined in Paragraph 4.1.1 of Appendix 1 to the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.

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<b>Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations</b>	means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 6 of the Handbook.
<b>Force Majeure Event</b>	shall have the meaning set out in Paragraph 20.1 of Handbook Standard Terms and Conditions.
<b>Forfeited Participation Fee</b>	means any Participation Fees that are forfeited by Teams in accordance with a BLAST Sanction or otherwise as set out in the Tournament Regulations.
<b>Format</b>	means the format of the Tournament, the Circuit and each Event which is owned and operated by BLAST as further specified in of the Handbook, including without limitation any or all the concepts, structures, settings, themes, titles and orders of the Tournament format from time to time.
<b>Game</b>	means CS2.
<b>Gifted Bounty Team</b>	has the meaning in paragraph 2.2.10 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
<b>Handbook</b>	means this BLAST Premier Handbook relating to the Tournament as published by BLAST from time to time along with all appendices, schedules, and annexures.
<b>Handbook Standard Terms and Conditions</b>	means the Handbook Terms and Conditions set out in Section 2 of the Handbook.
<b>Ineligible Participant</b>	<p>means a Participant for whom one or more of the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- is under the age of sixteen (16)</li><li>- they are serving a ban imposed by BLAST and/or ESIC and/or any other applicable authority recognised by BLAST and/or ESIC;</li><li>- they have been Valve Anti-Cheat (VAC) banned during the two (2) years prior to the first match date of the applicable Event;</li><li>- they have a direct or indirect financial interest (whether through the holding of shares or otherwise) in any other professional esports Team (excluding the Team they represent) Participating in any BLAST qualifier, The Open - Closed Qualifier or BLAST Premier Event.</li></ul>

<b>Ineligible Team</b>	<p>means a Team for which one or more of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- holds a position in the Rankings but either (i) that Roster doesn't actively exist at the time of Invitations and/or (ii) that Team no longer has the legal right to the services of three (3) Core Players for that applicable Roster and special dispensation under Paragraph 3.6-3.7 of the Eligibility Regulations has not been awarded</li><li>- (iii) a Team that is unable to field a Roster of Eligible Players (including but not limited a minimum of three (3) Core Players) and special dispensation under Paragraph 3.6-3.7 of the Eligibility Regulations has not been awarded; or</li><li>- (iv) a Team that is serving a ban imposed by BLAST (whether as a result of a Sanction, or otherwise) or ESIC or Valve.</li></ul>
<b>Initial Bounty</b>	<p>has the meaning in paragraph 2.2.10 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.</p>
<b>Intellectual Property and Commercial Rights Regulations</b>	<p>means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 7 of the Handbook.</p>
<b>Intellectual Property Rights</b>	<p>means without limitation all current and future legal and/or equitable rights and interests in copyright and rights in the nature of copyright, design rights, patents, trademarks, domain names, business names, database rights, data rights (including but not limited to digital and/or data processed models and/or synthetic likenesses, clones or recreations), 'image rights' (including but not limited to name(s), nicknames, slogans, catch phrases, logos, avatars, images and imagery, pictures, tags, likeness, biographical information, voice, footage, interviews, performance, initials, photographs, silhouettes or forms, animation, persona, autograph/signature, statistics, backstory and other personal indicia, identifying characteristics), applications for any of the foregoing, moral rights and any similar rights in any country and all other rights of whatever nature, or any other intellectual property rights whether or not registered and whether subsisting in the UK or any other part of the world.</p>
<b>Interest</b>	<p>means, in relation to a relevant company, firm, entity, or body: (a) the direct or indirect holding of any legal or beneficial ownership or voting right; and/or (b) any position or association that may enable the exercise of a material, financial, commercial, administrative, managerial or any other influence, whether directly or indirectly and whether formally or informally.</p>
<b>Invitation Category</b>	<p>means the category of Invitation as specified in the Invitation Letter.</p>



<b>Invitation Letter</b>	means the letter provided by BLAST to a Team containing an Invitation to an Event a copy of the model form of which is provided in Section 11 of the Handbook.
<b>Invitation or Invite</b>	The official written invitation to an Event provided by (or on behalf of) BLAST and the receipt by a Team of an Invitation Letter.
<b>Invited</b>	means being in receipt of a valid and in force Invitation.
<b>Invited Team</b>	means a Team that is Invited.
<b>Licensed Parties</b>	means BLAST and all Tournament Partners, and all of its and their affiliates, agents, licensors, licensees, successors and assignees.
<b>Losses</b>	means any losses, damages, liabilities, costs (including without limitation legal costs) and expenses suffered or incurred by BLAST (including by way of any third-party claim).
<b>Map</b>	means in respect of the Game a single MR12 inclusive of any overtime Rounds or, when referring to in Game levels map can be defined as one of the official maps from the competitive map pool e.g. Inferno.
<b>Map Veto</b>	means the process of selecting a Map for a Match.
<b>Match Ready</b>	means all applicable Players and Team Coaches being connected to the game server, connected to the TeamSpeak server (unmuted) and with cameras turned on in their applicable discord channel.
<b>Match Schedule</b>	means a separate document setting out the Match schedule for the applicable Event (but which shall not be Team-specific).
<b>Match(es)</b>	means any match forming part of the Tournament to determine a winner between two opponents. A Match can be either Best-of-Three or Best-of-Five.
<b>Material Non-Adherence to the Acceptance Process</b>	means a breach of the Acceptance Process set out in Eligibility Regulations that is material in nature entitling BLAST to rescind the Invitation and Admission status of the Team.

<b>Merger</b>	means the bringing together of separate entities into one economic entity as a result of one entity uniting with or obtaining control over the net assets and operations of another in which the shareholders of the combining entities come together in a partnership for the mutual sharing of risks and benefits of the combined entity, and in which no party to the combination in substance obtains control over any other, or is otherwise seen to be dominant, whether by virtue of the proportion of its shareholders rights in the combined entity, the influence of its directors or otherwise.
<b>Messaging Obligations</b>	means the obligations on the Team and the Competitive Participant in respect of posting and/or communicating of promotional and commercial materials via the Team's and/or the Competitive Participant's owned and/or controlled Social Channels and as more particularly described in the Promotional Obligations.
<b>Multi-Roster Team</b>	has the meaning in paragraph 2.6 of Section 4.
<b>Non-Appealable Decisions</b>	<p>means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- any decisions or Sanctions of the Tournament Officials made during a Match;</li><li>- any decisions relating to Penalty Points which the Participant has accepted in accordance with Paragraph 4.2 of Appendix 1 to the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations; and/or</li><li>- any decisions relating to three (3) or fewer Penalty Points.</li></ul>
<b>Non-Redeemable FFP Token</b>	means an FFP Token awarded to, and held by, and an Eligible FFP Team with an FFP Probationary Membership in accordance with the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations and which can be converted to a Redeemable FFP Token in accordance with the terms of Paragraphs 12 – 13 of the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations.
<b>Owner(s)</b>	means a Person with the power to exercise, or to be able to exercise or acquire, direct or indirect control over the policies, affairs and/or management of the Team, whether that power is constituted by rights or contracts (either separately or in combination) and having regard to the considerations of fact or law involved.
<b>Participant</b>	shall have the meaning prescribed to it in the ESIC Codes, and for the avoidance of doubt it shall include all Players, Competitive Participants, Team Owners and any other Person Participating in an Event.
<b>Participant IP</b>	means the Participant's owned or operated Intellectual Property Rights.
<b>Participant Partners</b>	means all sponsor or partners of a Participant.

<b>Participating</b>	means the verb form of Particate or Participation.
<b>Participation Fees</b>	means the fees payable to a Team for Participating at an Event which are set out in the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations and otherwise subject to the terms of the Tournament Regulations.
<b>Participation or Participate</b>	means any involvement by a Team or a Participant in an Event, the Circuit or the Tournament more generally including but not limited to competing in Matches, performing Promotional Obligations or otherwise carrying out any act as instructed by, or on behalf of, BLAST. The date on which Participation is deemed to have first occurred by a Team or a Participant is set out in Paragraph 3.2 of the Participation Regulations.
<b>Participation Regulations</b>	means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 3 of the Handbook.
<b>Penalty Points</b>	means any penalty points imposed on a Participant by BLAST in accordance with the Penalty Points System.
<b>Penalty Points Guide</b>	shall have the meaning set out in the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations.
<b>Penalty Points Notice</b>	<p>means the notice provided by (or on behalf of) BLAST which sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the details of the offence;</li><li>- the number of Penalty Points which BLAST intends to impose on the Participant; and</li><li>- any other information which BLAST deems relevant in the circumstances.</li></ul>
<b>Penalty Points System</b>	means the system relating to Penalty Points as specified in Appendix 1 to The Code of Conduct And Disciplinary Regulations.
<b>Person</b>	means a natural person, partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, company limited by guarantee, public limited company or other form of body corporate or legal entity howsoever arising.
<b>Permit</b>	shall mean any and all necessary work permits, visas and other forms of consent required to enable all Competitive Participants to legally travel to, provide services in, and remain in the country where, an Event is held for the entire duration of the Event and thereafter for such duration as may be required by BLAST.
<b>Permit Deadline</b>	shall mean the date set out in the Invitation Letter.

<b>Player</b>	means a player contracted or otherwise engaged by a Team as a professional CS2 player in competitive esports (as opposed to streaming only), whether or not the Player is part of a Roster in a Match.
<b>Playing Area</b>	means the area in which the Players compete as part of the Tournament.
<b>Practice Room</b>	means the room provided by BLAST from practice while at the event.
<b>Prize Money</b>	means the prize money payable by BLAST to eligible Admitted Teams at an Event as further detailed in the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations.
<b>Prize Pool</b>	means the prize pool of Prize Money for the Tournament made available by BLAST on a Circuit-by-Circuit basis which shall be shared between the competing Teams as provided for in the Handbook and Tournament Regulations.
<b>Promotional Content</b>	means all of a Team's content as required in the Promotional Obligations.
<b>Promotional Obligations</b>	means the Team and/or Participant orientated and specific promotional and marketing obligations relating to the Team's and/or Participant's Participation in the Tournament as provided for in the Promotional Obligations Regulations.
<b>Promotional Obligations Regulations</b>	means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 8 of the Handbook.
<b>Qualification Event</b>	means an event through which an Eligible Team can qualify for an Invitation to an Event, including but not limited to a The Open - Closed Qualifier Event.
<b>Qualifier</b>	means an Eligible Team qualifying for an Event via a Qualification Event.
<b>Qualifying Ranking</b>	means the applicable range of Rankings required to be eligible for a Valve Ranking Invite to an Event as prescribed by BLAST which varies dependent on the Event (both in terms of the range but also whether the Ranking is on the VRS or the VGS), and the details of which are set out in the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
<b>Qualifying Wager Match</b>	means a Match where both opponents have a Crystallised Bounty prior to the start of the Match.
<b>Ranking</b>	means the official Valve published ranking of a Team on the Valve Global Standings or Valve Regional Standings.

<b>Ranking Crystallisation Date</b>	means the date on which BLAST will determine the Rankings for an Event, with all applicable dates for the Circuit being set out in Appendix 1 to the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
<b>Redeemable FFP Token</b>	means an FFP Token awarded to and held by an Eligible FFP Team with an FFP Full Membership in accordance with the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations, and which entitles its holder to receive an FFP Distribution Allocation calculated and governed by the terms of the Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations.
<b>Redeemable FFP Token Value</b>	the value of each valid and subsisting FFP Redeemable Token by dividing the FFP Pool for the applicable Circuit by the number of valid and subsisting FFP Redeemable Tokens in circulation for the Circuit as at the Circuit Completion Date.
<b>Roster</b>	means a collection of five (5) specific Players, irrespective of their current or later association with a given Team organization.
<b>Roster Lock Date</b>	means the date by which BLAST must have received a Team's Submitted Roster in accordance with the Eligibility Regulations. Details of all applicable Roster Lock Dates are set out in Appendix 1 to the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations with the default date being the last Friday before the Event in question.
<b>Round/(s)</b>	means a round of Matches at an Event (as set out in the Format).
<b>Sanction</b>	means any adverse consequence to a Team and/or Participant imposed by (or on behalf of) BLAST for failing to comply with the Handbook or Tournament Regulations, including but limited to fines, awarding of Penalty Points, ruling of failure to achieve Technical Completion, bans or such other sanction as BLAST may in its sole discretion decide upon.
<b>Seed/Seeding</b>	means the preliminary Event ranking given to Admitted Teams for the purposes of the applicable Event.
<b>Seeded</b>	means the past participle of Seed.
<b>Social Channels</b>	means all official social media channels including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Snapchat and YouTube and such other social media channels as BLAST may confirm from time to time.
<b>Staked Bounty</b>	has the meaning in paragraph 2.2.10 of the Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations.
<b>Submitted Roster</b>	means the details of a Team's Roster of Competitive Participants that must be submitted to BLAST in accordance with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations.

<b>Substitute</b>	means a reserve Player that is not in the starting line-up of five (5) Players on the Submitted Roster.
<b>Support Staff</b>	means a Participant of the Team that is not a Player, Coach or Substitute.
<b>Team</b>	means the Person entitled to the services of the applicable Roster of Eligible Players and which is the recipient of the Invitation and signatory to the Acceptance Form.
<b>Team Coach</b>	means the Team's appointed head coach from time to time.
<b>Team Kit</b>	means the official uniform worn by Players and Competitive Participant which must be worn during the entirety of each Match, and during pre- or post-Match interviews or engagements.
<b>Team Manager</b>	means the Team's appointed manager from time to time.
<b>Team Nominated Bank Account</b>	means the bank account nominated by the Team in and provided to BLAST and into which BLAST shall pay any amounts owed to the Team.
<b>Team Partners</b>	means all the Team's commercial partners, suppliers and sponsors, whether connected solely to the Team's participation in CS2 or otherwise connected to the Team's participation in other competitive esports game titles.
<b>Team x Participant Agreement</b>	means the binding contracts between each applicable Participant and a Team under which that Team is granted all necessary rights, consents and waivers as required under the Handbook and Tournament Regulations.
<b>Team's IP</b>	means the Team's owned or operated Intellectual Property Rights.
<b>Technical Completion</b>	<p>means the completion by an Admitted Team of its obligations in respect of an Event to BLAST's satisfaction, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- obtaining and maintaining Admission status;</li><li>- Participation in the Event;</li><li>- completion of all Matches in accordance with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations;</li><li>- compliance with the Handbook and Tournament Regulations, including but not limited to the Eligibility Regulations;</li><li>- completion of its Promotional Obligations for that Event.</li></ul>
<b>Technical Completion Certificate</b>	means the written notice provided by BLAST to a Team Participating at an Event confirming its achievement of Technical Completion for that Event.

## **BLAST PREMIER HANDBOOK 2026**

<b>Third Party Online League Matches</b>	means any online professional CS2 league match operated by a third-party league.
<b>Tournament</b>	means the professional esports tournament based on the Format, currently known as the BLAST Premier, which is owned and operated by BLAST.
<b>Tournament Dates</b>	means the scheduled periods of time and/or dates for each Event on the Circuit Season.
<b>Tournament Executive Committee</b>	means the executive body set up by BLAST for consideration of various matter pertaining to the Tournament, a Circuit of Events (at BLAST's discretion).
<b>Tournament IP</b>	means all Intellectual Property Rights and other rights, title and interest in and to all aspects of the Tournament, including but not limited to all goodwill and other assets, property rights, and materials related to the same including but not limited to the Format (and all names, scheduling set ups and other format, broadcasting or other aspects howsoever arising), Tournament Merchandise, the Tournament Related Content, all Intellectual Property Rights in the Tournament's name, logo, tag, nickname, uniform design, colour scheme, voice lines, mascot, fight song and any other trade mark used to brand the Tournament from time to time but expressly excluding any Team IP and/or Participant's IP.
<b>Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations</b>	means the Tournament Regulations set out at Section 10 of the Handbook.
<b>Tournament Merchandise</b>	means such Tournament focused and related memorabilia, apparel and merchandise whether related to the Tournament as whole, one or more Events and/or Circuits (and which may include multiple or all of the Admitted Teams' Intellectual Property Rights, but not individual Admitted Teams' Intellectual Property Rights as a standalone unless otherwise prior approved by the applicable Admitted Team), which may be created by BLAST, or a party on BLAST's behalf, in accordance with the terms herein.
<b>Tournament Officials</b>	means the Tournament officials appointed by BLAST from time to time, including the Tournament Operations Manager.
<b>Tournament Operations Manager</b>	means the Tournament Operations Manager appointed by BLAST from time to time.
<b>Tournament Partners</b>	means the commercial partners, suppliers and sponsors of the Tournament, a Circuit or any Event or Events and any third party that is a signatory to, or benefits from, a BLAST Commercial Agreement and/or a grant of Commercial Rights, as the same may be amended from time to time.

**Tournament Regulations**

means individually and collectively:

- Section 2 - the Handbook Standard Terms and Conditions
- Section 3 - Participation Regulations
- Section 4 - Eligibility Regulations
- Section 5 - Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations
- Section 6 - Financial Mechanics and Distribution Regulations
- Section 7 - Event Technical Specifications Regulations
- Section 8 - Tournament Mechanics and Qualifications Regulations
- Section 9 – Definitions
- Section 10 - Change Log

and all schedules, appendices and documents/policies referred to or included therein.

**Tournament Related Content**

shall have the meaning set out in Paragraph 2.2 of the Intellectual Property and Commercial Rights Regulations.

**Valve**

means Valve Corporation which, amongst other things, is the publisher of the Game.

**Valve Global Standings or VGS**

means the updated standing for the global Counter-Strike ecosystem published by Valve [here](#).

**Valve Ranking Invite**

means the method of selecting Rosters for an Event according to their Ranking on either the Valve Global Standings or the Valve Regional Standings.

**Valve Ranking Invite Team**

means a Team that receives (or is eligible to receive) an Invitation because of its holding of a Qualifying Ranking in accordance with the Tournament Mechanics and Qualification Regulations.

**Valve Regional Standings or VRS**

means the updated standings for either the [Americas](#), [Asia](#) or [Europe](#) in the Counter-Strike ecosystem published by Valve.

**Venue**

means a venue where an Event is held.

**Wildcard Conditions**

means any conditions attached to the Invitation sent to a Wildcard Invite as prescribed by BLAST in its sole discretion, and as contained in the applicable Invitation Letter.

**Wildcard Invite**

means an Invitation made by BLAST at its sole discretion which is not a Valve Ranking Invite or otherwise dependent on a Team's Rank.

**Wildcard Team**

means an Invited Team by way of a Wildcard Invite





**Section 10 - Change Log**

**CHANGE LOG**

20/11/2025

- The following sections have been moved to the XX document
  - Commercial and promotional obligation
  - Deliverables
  - Financial distribution of funds
  - Participation fee
  - Prize money payment
  - FFP mechanics and breakdown
  - Intellectual property
  - Sponsor restrictions and blacklisted categories
  - Appearance and messaging obligations
  - Invitation and obligation templates
- Added rules to state what is needed for an Orgless team to accept an invitation to a BLAST tournament
  - Including a rule on payment terms
- Added a rule on player(s) regional assignment
- Added a rule on team regional assignment
- Added the ability for teams to request a temporary region change for open qualifiers
- Added a rule to restrict items in a tournament booth on a case by case basis
- Added rules on BLAST's process of inviting teams when a Wildcard slot is not used (Bounty & Rivals)
- Removed all Bounty Wager rules
- Removed Regional Wildcard invites from Rivals

30/10/2025

- Addition of the Change Log
- Converted all timings to UTC
- Miscellaneous text updates
  - Correcting mistakes
- Removed 1 team per organisation for each event
- Added rules on organisations with multiple rosters
  - Teams still have restriction in order to stop two rosters competing in the same section of a tournament
- Added a conflict of interest clause
- Added roster restrictions for teams coming from a closed qualifier to the main event
- Added Failure to Arrive rules for open qualifiers
- Added replacement rules for any team that forfeits their slot post draft
- Added a rule regarding the draft when a team forfeits post Round 1
- Added a rule stating the punishment for a team who accept an invite to the Open closed qualifier and then forfeit
- Reduced teams minimum setup/warm up time on stage during a offline tournament
  - Was 45 minutes, now 30 minutes in total
- Updated our warning rules to note verbal warnings
- Updated our rule on eligibility for online matches.
  - Teams must have 3 players playing from within the region
- Updated wording on coaches during online play
  - Made it more clear that coaches may speak during an online match
- Updated wording on how BLAST receives rosters from teams
  - Additionally adding wording on how BLAST treats roster information from teams

- Updated wording around Support Staff to reflect the intention of the rule