

Twitch is helping create a new eSports league

Esports Championship Series hopes to bring the business of pro-gaming closer to traditional sports.



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Twitch's list of competitive gaming partnerships is growing at a rapid pace. Following deals with the folks behind *Vainglory* and *Rocket League*, the broadcasting juggernaut is joining forces with leading eSports platform Faceit to launch the Esports Championship Series. Essentially, it's a pro-league that follows how the business/organizational side of typical stick and ball sports are handled. For the premiere *Counter-Strike* series, there are 20 teams split between the United States and Europe and the ECS offers co-ownership of teams -- a first according to ECS.

Further similarities between eSports and traditional sports include how player payments are handled, a code of conduct in terms of player treatment and ensuring that players and teams have a role in how the league functions moving forward. You know, deciding the boring stuff -- like rules and regulations and player welfare and holidays -- that's intrinsic to *any* organization's longevity.

If you're wondering where Twitch fits into all of this, well, Amazon's \$970 million baby will be the exclusive broadcast partner in addition to helping keep everyone happy while they're competing and traveling the world. The first round kicks off today at noon Eastern on Faceit's Twitch channel, with a pre-show starting a half hour prior and \$3.5 million in prizes and team financial support up for grabs.

And should you want in on this action yourself but your skills with an assault rifle need some honing, the ECS' second season will have a development league for training new players and teams, helping feed the growing sport. Could all of this be a sign of Twitch uniting the entirety of its eSports efforts under the ECS banner? Only time will tell.

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