2024 Nexus Overwatch Rulebook

Last Updated: May 17, 2024

For questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to the Nexus Overwatch moderation team using a ticket in the Nexus Overwatch server before reaching out to Nexus Tournaments staff members.

Due to the unpredictable nature of the community, unique situations may arise that can not be possibly covered in this rulebook. As a result, Nexus Tournaments staff and admins reserve the right to make individual calls on a case by case basis.

By joining/participating in Nexus Tournaments, you agree to all league rules and clauses outlined in this document. Nexus Tournaments RESERVES ALL RIGHTS to take action against ANYONE we feel is in violation of our outlined League Rules.

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Player Eligibility

1.1 Sign-Up Requirements:
- ➢ Players must be 13 years or older in compliance with Discord rules and must be in the Nexus Overwatch Discord server.
- ➢ To participate in an official match, players must be signed to their team's roster by their team's designated captain or manager.
- ➢ Nexus Tournaments and Nexus Overwatch staff may compete, but any moderation actions involving the team must be handled by a neutral staff member.
  - ○ A neutral staff member is anyone who is not playing for the team or is directly involved with that team's organization.
    - ■ i.e. the staff member cannot be an admin for the team's organization. This is not considered neutral, even if the staff member is not playing on the team.
- ➢ Upon signing, players must submit their Battle.Net ID, Discord Username, and Console GamerTag[1].
  - ○ Captains must ensure that all player information listed above is updated and correct on their OPL team page before official matches can be played.
- ➢ Players must ALWAYS submit the rank of their HIGHEST account.
  - ○ It should be noted if a player has reported an Alternate (Alt) account's ranking instead of the ranking of the account they plan to play on in official matches.
    - ■ To note this, please open a ticket in the Discord server.
  - ○ Console players do not have to submit PC rankings, and vice versa.
- ➢ PC players must sign up to play in the PC league and console players must sign up to play in the console league.
  - ○ Console players may not use a mouse & keyboard, but PC players may use a controller. See Section 3.2 for more information.

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[1] When applicable

1.2 Xbox/PlayStation Account Requirements:
- ➢ Account must not be suspended or banned for any reason.
- ➢ There are no Trophy or GamerScore amount requirements for console accounts.
  - ○ However, low numbers of either may be used as evidence of cheating as it relates to other evidence. See Section 3.2 for more details.

1.3 Overwatch Account Requirements:
- ➢ Account must not be suspended or banned for any reason.
- ➢ Any and all Alternate (Alt) accounts that are ranked higher than a player's Main account (the account they play on in official matches) must be noted in a Discord ticket and the highest rank must be reported.
  - ○ Console players do not have to report or submit PC accounts, and vice versa.
- ➢ There are no play-time or level requirements for Overwatch accounts
  - ○ However, low play-time or leveling may be used as evidence of cheating as it relates to other evidence. See Section 3.2 for more information.

1.4 Career Profile Visibility:
- ➢ All player career profiles must be set to "Public" and they must always be open.
- ➢ Captains are responsible for making sure that each of their players has their Career Profile set to "Public".
- ➢ Refusal to open a Career Profile will be seen as suspicious behavior and can be used as evidence against a team.
  - ○ Players who do not open their Career Profiles set their teams up for questioning and potential forfeits. See Section 3.2 for more information.

1.5 Competitive Placement Requirements:
- ➢ All players must be placed on their highest role in the season that is in play at the beginning of the Nexus Overwatch season.
    - ○ Highest role is determined by placement in previous seasons.
    - ○ If two or more roles are tied for highest, the player should place the role that they are most likely to be playing in the tournament. (Though it is better if the player places both).
    - ○ Open queue placements have no impact on the ranking of a player and do not contribute to this placement requirement.
- ➢ Players have 14 days to place in the next season if a new season of competitive play launches during the Nexus Overwatch regular season.
    - ○ If players are not placed after 14 days, they are ineligible to play in official matches until they place.
    - ○ This rule does not apply during postseason matches.
- ➢ Players do not have to report re-ranking during the season unless their re-rank places them in a different tier than they previously qualified for.

Tournament Structure

2.1 Tournament Format
- ➢ The division breakdown is as follows:
    - ○ Diamond 1 and below
    - ○ Champion 1 and below
- ➢ PC and console will have separate divisions and will not overlap during any phase of tournament play.
    - ○ Console players may play in the PC divisions, but PC players may not play in the console divisions.
- ➢ EU and NA will have separate divisions and will not overlap during any phase of tournament play.[2]

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[2] EU teams may request to play in the equivalent NA division if there are not enough EU teams for their own division, and vice versa. Teams are always subject to the time zone of the division they are in.

➢ The map pool is as follows and maps must be played in this order:
  ○ Control
    ■ Busan
    ■ Ilios
    ■ Lijiang Tower
    ■ Oasis
    ■ Antarctic Peninsula
  ○ Hybrid
    ■ Blizzard World
    ■ Eichenwalde
    ■ Hollywood
    ■ King's Row
    ■ Midtown
    ■ Numbani
    ■ Paraiso
  ○ Flashpoint
    ■ Survasa
    ■ New Junk City
  ○ Escort
    ■ Circuit Royale
    ■ Dorado
    ■ Havana
    ■ Junkertown
    ■ Rialto
    ■ Route 66
    ■ Shambali Monastery
    ■ Watchpoint: Gibraltar
  ○ Push
    ■ Esperanca
    ■ New Queens Street
    ■ Colloseo
➢ Teams who forfeit three matches in the main season will be **automatically disqualified** from participating in the rest of the tournament.

2.2 Match Scheduling

- ➢ Matches will be automatically scheduled by league moderators.
  - ○ Match schedules will be released a week in advance, by 4pm EST (or equivalent for EU) the Sunday before the match.
  - ○ Division brackets can also be viewed in OPL at any point in the season (linked in Discord server).
- ➢ Teams will be scheduled for 4 games per week. When schedules are released, teams will be automatically scheduled for 2 games on Saturday and 2 games on Sunday.
- ➢ Matches may be rescheduled by captains within the week (Sunday of schedule release - Sunday of following week) of their game.
  - ○ The match rescheduling process must be started at least 48 hours before the original scheduled time.
    - ■ If a match needs to be rescheduled but rescheduling does not commence at least 48 hours before the original match time, the captain who requested the reschedule will be forced to forfeit in the event that the teams cannot reach a consensus.
  - ○ Every effort must be made by both teams to facilitate a successful reschedule, regardless of whether rescheduling has commenced before or after the 48 hour grace period.
  - ○ In the event that both teams cannot agree on a rescheduled time, a moderator will decide which team forfeits based on each team's stated availability.

2.3 Tournament Schedule
- ➢ The team registration period will last 2 weeks.
  - ○ One week of official OPL sign-ups followed by one week of manual staff-directed onboarding
- ➢ The main season will last 2 weeks in an effort to keep seasons dynamic and fun.
  - ○ Teams may not play against every team in their division before post-season play commences.
  - ○ Teams will play 4 games per week.
- ➢ Playoffs will be 1-2 weeks long, using a single elimination bracket.
  - ○ Top 4 teams play -> Top 2 teams play -> Winner

Overwatch Code of Conduct

3.1 Official Matches
- ➢ All matches are played in a best-of-three (first to two) format.
    - ○ The "home" team (announced once game schedules are announced) will ask the other team to choose heads or tails, and will use the coinflip bot in the server to flip a coin. This must be done in the teams' designated match chat.
        - ■ The winner of the coin flip will host the lobby and pick the first map.
        - ■ For subsequent maps, the winner of the previous map chooses if they want attack or defense. The loser of the previous map chooses the next map.
    - ○ A draw counts toward neither team's score. Teams should continue their series as if the draw map did not exist.
        - ■ For the map following a draw, the team who chose the previous map chooses the next one, and the team who previously chose attack or defense chooses it again.
        - ■ Though draw maps do not count toward the score, teams will still move on to the next map type in the pool, they will not replay the same map type.
- ➢ All maps will be played with regular competitive settings.
- ➢ Only Nexus Tournament staff and members of the two teams currently playing are allowed to spectate an official match. Members of the team are defined as:
    - ○ Rostered players (including subs)
    - ○ Coaches
    - ○ Captains
    - ○ Team Managers
    - ○ Third-party streamers/casters (see 4.1)
        - ■ "Third-party" refers to any caster that a team has brought in to produce content of their game. Typically this looks like an

organization having org-specific streamers that they would like to create content for their organization.
  - Third-party casters must be approved by Nexus moderators.
- A player may not swap roles between rounds within a single map, but may swap roles between maps.
- Being rude and/or hateful to the opposing team (In Discord, DMs, PSN or Xbox messages, or in any public chat) during or directly before/after a league match will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and be a punishable offense pending review.
- All members of the team that are currently in the lobby must be in a Nexus Discord voice channel for the duration of their game.
  - Coaches and players on the bench should be muted during gameplay, but may talk between maps (see 5.5 for more information on coaches in voice channels).
  - Both PS and Xbox are now Discord Voice Call compatible. If necessary, a moderator can show console players how to link their Discord call to their console. Moderators must be alerted to this need as early as possible so that gameplay is not delayed.
  - Voice Channel descriptions should be changed to the name of the team in the channel so that moderators and casters can easily navigate if necessary.
- Coaches and other players on the bench are not allowed to talk or give callouts mid game.
  - Staff may join Discord calls randomly throughout the season to ensure that this is not a problem. If coaches or benched players are caught giving callouts mid game, the team will no longer be allowed to have the coaches and benched players who have broken this rule in their call during the match.
    - Benched players under this penalty may rejoin the call if they are subbed into the game, but must leave the call again if they are later moved back to the bench.

3.2 Cheating
- Common forms of cheating include (but are not limited to):
  - **Smurfing:** Using a secondary account lower than your peak ranked account to compete in a lower division.

- **Account Sharing:** Giving account information to another user and allowing the unverified user to play on one's account during official league play. An unverified player posing as a rostered player.
- **Match Fixing:** Weakening competitive integrity by intentionally throwing or leaving league matches, predetermining league matches to end in or against a team's favor.
- **Stream Sniping:** Watching the official league match live cast while playing/specating and giving you and your team callouts.
- **Using Mouse and Keyboard (In Console Matches):** Using MNK instead of a Playstation or Xbox controller. If a player faces a certain number of reports of MNK, a hand-cam may be required.
- **DDoS:** DDoSing stands for Distributed Denial of Service. Such attacks can be used to temporarily boot a user offline, find their location or IP, etc. The following actions are non-tolerable and will result in an IMMEDIATE ban from all Nexus Tournaments.
- **Sandbagging:** Intentionally not playing Competitive Play to stay within a certain rank range for tournament play.
- Map glitches, map bugs, or using methods to get to **illegal spots on maps**

➢ For these reasons, Nexus staff require that Career Profiles are ALWAYS open.

➢ Low-level accounts (based on PS trophies/Xbox Gamerscore/Blizzard Career Profiles/etc.) are not suspicious on their own, because of the changing and growing nature of the Overwatch player base. However, low levels may be used in conjunction with other reasonable preexisting evidence to implicate a player of smurfing or sandbagging.

➢ All situations are handled on a case-by-case basis by Nexus moderators. Moderators have extensive time working as league staff members and competing, and have been through screening to verify their understanding of these situations prior to their promotion to staff member.

➢ PC players using a console controller are not considered to be playing illegally or cheating because controllers do not give the player an inherent advantage. For a more in-depth explanation of the mechanics

behind controller use on PC or Mouse & Keyboard use on console, please open a ticket in the Nexus Overwatch Discord server.

3.3 **Console** Mouse & Keyboard Use/Hand-Cam Requirements
➢ All use of Mouse & Keyboard (MNK) within console tournaments is strictly prohibited.
➢ Players must use a fair controller. Modded controllers are strictly prohibited (though Pro/Elite controllers are acceptable).
➢ If concern is raised regarding a player's integrity, replay codes for the matches in question will be first shared with a panel of staff who have been trained to recognize Mouse & Keyboard use on console.
➢ Moderators will review panel feedback and decide on the next reasonable course of action. Hand-cam requirements are decided on a case-by-case basis.
➢ For players that are deemed suspicious, a hand-cam policy will be strictly enforced for a set amount of games.
○ The player must stream a video of their controller, hands, and screen on either Twitch, YouTube, or a private call with a Nexus staff member. All three (hands/controller/screen) must be in view of the camera at the same time for the duration of the stream.
➢ Failure to abide by this policy will result in a suspension of play until the hand-cam policy is followed.

3.4 Reporting Players and Involving Moderators
➢ To file a report against a player, please open a ticket in the Nexus Overwatch Discord server.
➢ If staff receive a report about cheating or misconduct, a full investigation on the matter will be conducted. Punishments will be given pending review.
➢ For cases where a player is found cheating:
○ The player will be banned from competing in Nexus Tournaments.
○ The player will be banned from the Nexus Overwatch Discord.
○ Any games with the cheater will have the maps and scores reversed.

- ➢ If teams are found to be knowingly harboring cheater(s) in order to give themselves an advantage in tournament play, additional action may be taken against the team or the captains/coaches running the team.
  - ○ The team may forfeit all matches and be disqualified from future tournament play, within the current tournament and in future tournaments.
  - ○ The captain may be banned from running a team for Nexus Overwatch tournaments, within the current tournament and in future tournaments.

3.5 Tardy Policy
- ➢ OPL requires teams to check in before their matches. Check-in opens 15 minutes before the match and closes 15 minutes after. Teams must make every effort to check-in on time.
- ➢ Teams may use their 15 minutes of pause time (see 4.3 for more information) to delay their match if they are going to be late.
  - ○ If a team exceeds 15 minutes, the waiting team receives an automatic 2-0 Win By Default (WBD).
- ➢ The team that is waiting MUST have at least 5 eligible players present to receive a WBD.
  - ○ If neither team has enough players to play the match at the scheduled time, refer to 3.6 for further steps.

3.6 No-Show Policy
- ➢ If both teams do not have enough players to start the match, captains can opt for the game to be rescheduled to a later time, one team can forfeit, or captains can wait on their players to show up.
  - ○ Both captains must agree to take one of these actions.
    - ■ If an agreement cannot be found, Nexus moderators should be called in to assist in finding a compromise. All communication should be held in the teams' assigned match chat.
  - ○ Matches may not be rescheduled to the following week. If teams are playing their match on Sunday, rescheduling is not an option.

➢ If a team is unable to make their league match, they will be required to reschedule or forfeit. (If the game has already been rescheduled and a team doesn't show up, the waiting team will be awarded the WBD).
  ○ Three forfeits results in a team being disqualified from the tournament.
  ○ Refer back to 2.2 for more information regarding match rescheduling.

Lobby Hosting

4.1 Lobby Code: 5EQ8V
➢ All official matches should be played using this lobby code.
➢ Official matches use competitive settings, no skins, and default map lighting.
  ○ In the event that a game is created with ineligible heroes, weapons, settings, etc. the lobby should be remade and any scores from maps played on these settings are void.
➢ All players, coaches, captains, and team managers should have permission to spectate only their team.
  ○ Third-party casters may have spectate-all permissions, under these circumstances:
    ■ Caster is previously established with Nexus moderators
    ■ The caster is not a signed player, they are on the bench
    ■ Cast is linked in the designated Discord match chat
    ■ Caster has placed their stream on a 5+ minute delay
  ○ Third-party casters do not need to be unbiased but they must display good sportsmanship at all times. Moderators will review content streamed by third-parties and teams may lose streaming privileges if these rules are not followed. Refer to 3.1 for more specifics.
➢ Lobby servers should be set to North America for NA and Europe for EU.

- In the event that one region does not have enough teams to play a full region-specific bracket (see 2.1), the servers must be changed every map.
    - If it is an EU team playing an NA team in an NA bracket, the lobby will start on North American servers, switch to European for second map, go back to North American for third, and so on.
        - For NA playing an EU team in an EU bracket, vice versa.
- In mixed region lobbies, latency should be set to a maximum of 200 ms, regardless of host or bracket region. Moderators can assist in finding and updating these settings before the match if necessary.
- In the event that a new or reworked hero is patched into the game during the season, that hero will not be allowed in official matches for two weeks. This is to allow for time for potential hot fixes/glitches to be ironed out.
- In the event that a new or reworked map is patched into the game during the season, the map will be added to the map pool immediately and official matches will be played as normal.

4.3 Pauses and Disconnections
- Each roster gets a maximum of 15 minutes of pause time. If a roster exceeds their allotted pause time they may forfeit the current map, at the discretion of a moderator.
    - For example, if a roster pauses and is able to resume play within 1 minute, they have 14 minutes of pause time left to use throughout the game.
- Both rosters must agree to resume the game before it is unpaused.
- If a player disconnects, their team may choose to use their pause time to wait for them or may decide to play the rest of the map as a 4v5. This decision should be communicated in writing in the designated match chat for the game so that moderators can take note.
    - If a team chooses to 4v5, once the map is over, the team must put in a 5th rostered player within the allotted break (see bullet point below) and their remaining pause time, or forfeit the rest of the maps in the series.

➢ Teams may choose to take a break between maps of up to 5 minutes. This break time does not factor into pause time and is a right afforded to both teams.
  ○ If a team takes longer than 5 minutes, this begins to take away from their pause time.
    ■ If both teams are not ready to resume after 5 minutes, no pause time is taken, but teams should resume play as soon as possible.

4.4 Score Reporting
➢ At the end of the match, the winning captain should report the scores of the match to the teams' designated match chat, accompanied by a replay screenshot.
  ○ Replay screenshots should display each map name, each map score, and the replay code for map review.
  ○ Ex.
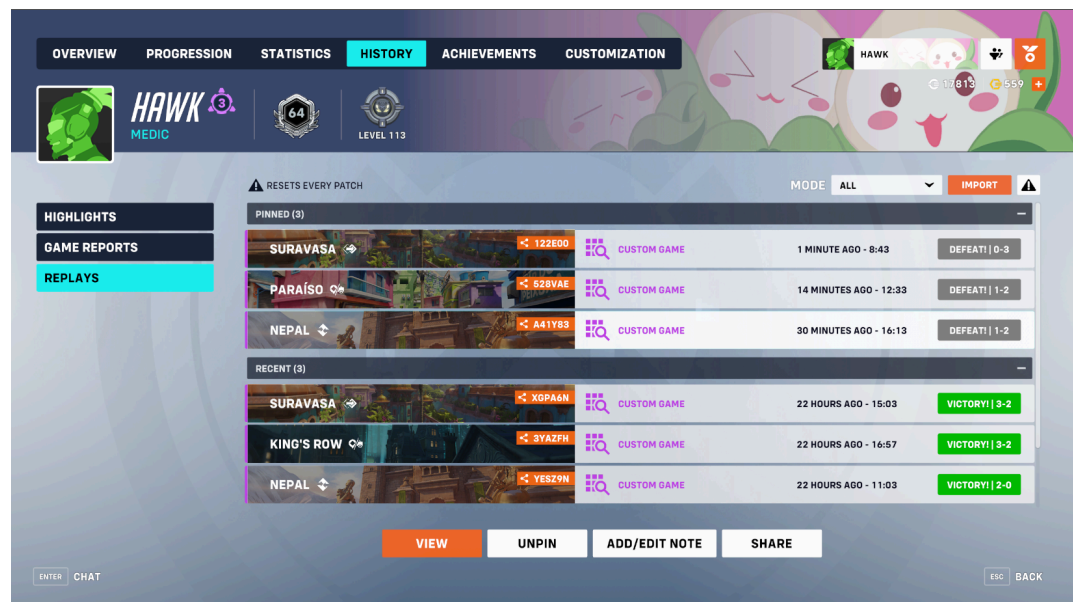
4.5 Caster Clause
➢ If casters are in the lobby, rosters should be arranged in tank/dps/dps/support/support order from top to bottom. This creates a cleaner look on the HUD in the stream.
➢ Casters must always have spectate all permissions

- ○ Casters, Nexus or third-party, are the only people in the lobby who are allowed this permission.
- ➢ One caster should be given ownership of the lobby after it is made and will orchestrate all pauses, map/side swaps, etc. throughout the match.

Teams/Team Management

5.1 Roster Size
- ➢ Rosters may consist of a maximum of 10 players, including the captain.
- ➢ Team managers are not players, and do not count toward this roster size limit.
- ➢ Ringers are prohibited.

5.2 Team Names and Logos
- ➢ Team names and logos should be appropriate for the general public; PG-13 is advisable. Nexus moderators have a right to deny a team name or logo if it goes against community guidelines or if it is otherwise inappropriate.
- ➢ Teams should submit a PNG file of their logo upon entering the season, for use in Nexus social media promotional posts and streams.

5.3 Signing and Dropping Players
- ➢ Teams may not sign a player less than 24 hours before their match.
- ➢ Teams may sign players throughout the main season.
- ➢ Team rosters lock for playoffs, meaning that teams may not sign or drop players during playoffs.
- ➢ To sign or drop a player, captains or team managers should post a message in the #signs-and-drops Discord channel in the following format:

```
@team signs/drops @player
[battle.net ID]
[console tag, if applicable]
[career profile rank screenshot]
```

➢ Approved signings/drops will receive a "thumbs up" reaction from a moderator. As soon as the signing/drop is approved, the player is cleared for tournament play/officially dropped from the team.
➢ Dropped players may not be signed to a new team for 24 hours after they have been dropped.
➢ This signing/dropping process is the same process that Captains/Managers should follow to sign/drop a coach.

5.4 Captain/Team Manager Code of Conduct
➢ As a Team Captain/Manager, it is your responsibility to make sure the players on your team are organized and **fully understand** this rulebook.
  ○ You should act as a direct line of communication between Nexus Staff and your players.
  ○ Captains and Managers must be cooperative with Nexus staff should a situation arise with their team. Failure to cooperate could result in a penalty.
➢ As a Captain/Manager, you are responsible for all signings and drops onto your roster.

5.5 Coach Code of Conduct
➢ Limit to 4 coaches per team, and coaches must be officially signed/dropped by Team Captains/Managers in the same way that players are.
➢ If you are a coach, you are allowed to coach as many teams as you'd like within the league. But, you can only coach one team per division at a time.
  ○ You are allowed to coach two teams in the same division but different regions, as long as they exist in different brackets.

➢ Coaches are allowed to spectate during league matches, but must not communicate any information or coaching to their players during active play (Callouts, ult tracking, etc). **Active play includes in between rounds when the team is in the spawn room.**
  ○ Coaches can be in the discord call with their team but must stay muted.
    ■ Nexus Moderators may drop by team voice channels at any time to monitor coach interactions.
  ○ No text chat usage during play is allowed.
➢ Coaches are not allowed to officially sign/drop players.