



2018/2019 HCT CHALLENGERS
OFFICIAL COMPETITION RULES

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1. INTRODUCTION

These 2018/2019 HCT Challengers Official Competition Rules (“Official Rules”) govern qualification for and competitive play of Tavern Hero Qualifiers, Challenger Cups, and Challenger Finals (“Tournament(s)”).

These Official Rules, in conjunction with the 2018/2019 Hearthstone Tournament Player Handbook (the “Handbook”), establish the rules of tournament play, including rules governing player eligibility, tournament structure, point structures, prize awards, sponsorships, player conduct, etc.

You must accept these Official Rules and register your acknowledgement of the Handbook in order to participate in the Tour, as well as abiding by these Official Rules and adhere to the terms of the Handbook in order to remain eligible to play in the Tour and receive prizes. Official Rules are explained below. The Handbook can be found here: blizz.ly/HSrules

2. HEARTHSTONE CHAMPIONSHIP TOUR CHALLENGERS

2.1. Acceptance of the Official Rules.

- (a) You indicate your acceptance to these Official Rules if you enter and participate in any game or match that is part of the Tournament. Organizers indicate acceptance to these Official Rules, where applicable, if they submit an event application to host either a Tavern Hero Qualifier or Challenger Cup.
- (b) If you are under the age of majority (as described in the Hearthstone Tournament Handbook), your parent or legal guardian may accept these Official Rules on your behalf.
- (c) If you (or your parent or legal guardian) do not accept these Official Rules or you do not meet the player eligibility requirements in Section 3 below, you may not participate in the Tournament.

2.2. Applicability of the Official Rules.

- (a) These Official Rules govern play in the Tournament. These rules apply to competitions taking place in the Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Europe regions.
- (b) If you violate these Official Rules, Hearthstone Tournament Handbook or the Website Terms,

you may be subject to game forfeitures, prize forfeitures, disciplinary action and legal claims, as explained below and in the Hearthstone Tournament Handbook.

3. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.1. Regional Eligibility.

- (a) For portions of the Tournament that limit participation to residents of that region (“Region Limited Tournament”), you may participate in those portions of the Tournament only if you are a resident of that region. For portions of the Tournament that are international, you may participate in those portions of the Tournament if you are a resident of any of the three regions (Americas, Asia-Pacific, or Europe). The section below explains what countries are a part of each region.
- (b) You may participate in the Americas portion of the Tournament if, as of January 1, 2018 you are a legal resident of one of the following counties: United States, Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela.
- (c) You may participate in the Asia-Pacific portion of the Tournament if, as of January 1, 2018, you are a legal resident of one of the following counties: Australia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, New Zealand, The Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- (d) You may participate in the Europe portion of the Tournament if, as of January 1, 2018, you are a legal resident of one of the following counties: Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, State of Qatar, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.
- (e) Eligibility, residency requirements, minimum age requirements and ineligible players are further described in the Hearthstone Tournament Handbook document.

4. TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

4.1 Tournament Rules

- (a) Hearthstone HCT tournaments are governed by these Official Rules and the terms contained in the Handbook.
- (b) For all Tour matches, each player will use Hearthstone card decks that he/she has created (using cards he/she has collected) in the region's servers where the tournament is held.

4.2 HCT Challengers Generally

- (a) Eligibility and qualification details for the HCT Challengers can be found in section 4.6 in the 2018/2019 Hearthstone Championship Tour Official Competition Rules located at blizz.ly/HSrules.
- (b) Players that have won or earned a sufficient placement in a Tavern Hero Qualifier or Challenger Cup will earn an invitation into the online Challenger Finals for that season and the region which their Battle.net account is registered. No more than 256 Tavern Hero Qualifiers and 256 Challenger Cups will be held in a region per season.
- (c) Players are ineligible to compete in a Tavern Hero Qualifier or Challenger Cup or if they have:
 - i. Won a Challenger Finals Tournament in 2018.
 - ii. Qualified for the Challenger Finals in the current Season.
 - iii. Qualified for the Seasonal Regional Playoff Tournament for the last three consecutive seasons including the current Season.
- (d) Ineligible players that compete in a Tavern Hero Qualifier or Challenger Cup will immediately forfeit their invitation to that season's Challenger Finals, if applicable. If the ineligible player has not earned an invitation to that season's Regional Playoff, they will receive a warning instead, but will also forfeit their invitation to that season's Regional Playoff with any subsequent violations.

4.3 Tavern Hero Qualifiers

- (a) Tavern Hero Qualifiers must be free to enter and open to all eligible participants as described in the Hearthstone Tournament Handbook document. The event description must clearly state the free entry and format.
- (b) Competing players must play all games of the Tavern Hero Qualifier in-person at the approved location of the Fireside Gathering hosting the Tournament. Details can be found on an event's Tournament page.
- (c) When hosting a Tavern Hero Qualifier, organizers:
 - i. Must use a Tournament platform that is approved by Blizzard to ensure a fair and

positive Tournament experience for all players to track results. Approved platforms typically contain features such as class pick and ban functionality, check-in systems, the ability to export Tournament results in specific file formats, various Tournament formats, waitlist features, and the ability to flag and resolve disputes. The approved platforms are:

- Battlefy
- ESGA
- ESL Play
- StriveWire

- ii. Must not compete in Tournaments hosted by themselves or their tavern.
- iii. Must submit results of the event within 7 days of the event's conclusion. Details about submission will be provided directly to approved organizers.
- iv. Tavern Hero Qualifiers may require a player to check-in at a specified time for the Tournament or each match. Failure to check-in may result in being dropped from the Tournament. Details can be found on an event's Tournament page.

(d) Tavern Hero Qualifier Requirements

- i. Tavern Hero Qualifiers are in-person Tournaments approved by Blizzard Entertainment to specific Tournament organizers who applied to host a qualifying event by applying on firesidegatherings.com and selecting the Tavern Hero Qualifier campaign option.
- ii. At least 16 participants must check in and play in the Tournament for the winner of the event to be awarded an invitation to the Seasonal Challenger Finals.
- iii. Only Innkeepers who have established a Tavern are eligible to host a Tavern Hero Qualifier event. [Click here](#) to learn more about Taverns and how you can start one.
- iv. Applications must be sent at least ten (10) days in advance.
- v. Innkeepers must select the Tavern Hero Qualifier campaign on the Fireside Gatherings webpage when creating the event—events not using the campaign feature will not be considered official Tavern Hero Qualifiers.
- vi. Innkeepers may host a maximum of 5 Tavern Hero Qualifiers each season.
 - Previous events must be reported with Tournament results before new events will be approved.

(e) Approved Formats

- i. Tavern Hero Qualifiers must use a format of Standard Best of 3 Conquest format with one ban. Each player in the Tournament will bring three (3) unique decks of

different classes.

- ii. Organizers of Tavern Hero Qualifiers must either use a double-elimination format or a Swiss pairings format with a single-elimination playoff. These formats are described in the Hearthstone Tournament Handbook document.

4.4 Challenger Cups

- (a) Challenger Cups must be free to enter and open to all eligible participants as described in the Hearthstone Tournament Handbook document. The event description must clearly state the free entry and format.
- (b) Challenger Cup, organizers:
 - i. Must use a Tournament platform that is approved by Blizzard to ensure a fair and positive Tournament experience for all players to track results. Approved platforms typically contain features such as class pick and ban functionality, check-in systems, the ability to export Tournament results in specific file formats, various Tournament formats, waitlist features, and the ability to flag and resolve disputes. The approved platforms are:
 - Battlefy
 - ESGA
 - ESL Play
 - StriveWire
 - ii. Must not compete in Tournaments hosted by their organization. Staff (volunteer or paid) of an approved organization may not compete in Tournaments held by their own organization.
 - iii. Must submit results of the event within 7 days of the event's conclusion. Details about submission will be provided directly to approved organizers.
 - iv. Challenger Cups may require a player to check-in at a specified time for the Tournament or each match. Failure to check-in may result in being dropped from the Tournament. Details can be found on an event's Tournament page.
- (c) Challenger Cup Requirements
 - i. Challenger Cups are online Tournaments approved by Blizzard Entertainment to specific Tournament organizers who applied to host Challenger Cups. Interested organizers may inquire about hosting events by emailing HearthstoneAdmin@blizzard.com with a brief description of their organization and event experience.

- ii. Only approved organizations may host Challenger Cups. Currently, the approved organizations are:
 - Black Claws
 - ESGA
 - ESL Gaming
 - Jarstorneos
 - Kyoto Esports
 - Latin Gaming Arena
 - StriveWire
 - Zotac Cup
 - iii. May be limited to holding a pre-determined number of Challenger Cups on a per-season, monthly, or weekly basis. Details will be shared with approved organizers by email.
 - iv. At least 32 participants must check in and play in the Tournament for the winner of the event to be awarded an invitation to the Seasonal Challenger Finals. A maximum of 128 participants may compete in one Challenger Cup.
 - v. Prizes must not exceed \$2,000 USD cash or equivalent.
 - vi. Applications must be submitted at least ten (10) days in advance.
- (d) Approved Formats
- i. Challenger Cups must use a format of Standard Best of 3 Conquest format with one ban. Each player in the Tournament will bring three (3) unique decks of different classes.
 - ii. Organizers of Challenger Cups must either use a double-elimination format or a Swiss pairings format with a single-elimination playoff. These formats are described in the Hearthstone Tournament Handbook document.

4.5 Challenger Finals

- (a) The Challenger Finals uses a format of Standard Best of 3 Conquest format with one ban. Each player in the Tournament will bring three (3) unique decks of different classes.
- (b) Challenger Finals are online Swiss Tournaments with a single-elimination playoff that are split into multiple brackets based on the number of participants. These brackets may be placed on two separate days based on the number of brackets. Players may choose which day to compete on a first-come, first-serve basis. Afterwards, all players will be distributed randomly among each day's brackets, then seeded randomly within them. Players will receive an email from

HearthstoneAdmin@blizzard.com no later than 3 days prior to the Tournament with registration instructions.

Challenger Finals Format		
Players	Brackets	Winners per Bracket
< 65	1	Top 8
65 to 128	2	Top 4
129 to 256	4 (2 per day)	Top 2
257 to 512	8 (4 per day)	Top 1

- (c) If a player wishes to drop from the Challenger Finals Tournament, they must notify a Tournament administrator before doing so. Being absent for a match can have an unfair impact on tiebreakers for the Swiss format, thus a player must notify an admin so they can be “dropped” from the Tournament to prevent themselves from being paired with a player when the next round begins. Failure to inform a Tournament admin of your departure while the Tournament is in progress may result in future sanctions against the player or their account including, but not limited to, ineligibility for future Hearthstone Esports events.

5. PRIZES

5.1. Prizes.

- (a) The players in these Tournaments will earn the following prizes:
- i. Placing 1st in a Tavern Hero Qualifier or Challenger Cup awards an invitation to the Seasonal Regional Challenger Finals.
 - Additional placements (2nd and below) in Challenger Cups may also provide invitations at the discretion of Blizzard Entertainment.
 - The eligible additional placements for the season will be announced on <https://www.playhearthstone.com/esports> prior to the season beginning.
 - ii. The top 8 players from the Seasonal Regional Challenger Finals will earn an invitation to the Seasonal Regional Playoff Tournament as described in section 5.2 of the 2018/2019 Hearthstone Championship Tour Tournament Rules.

6. PLAYER CONDUCT

6.1. Player Conduct.

- (a) Player conduct, rule infractions, penalties and disciplinary procedures for the 2018 Hearthstone Championship Tour are governed by the terms contained in the Handbook.

7. GENERAL (BUT IMPORTANT) TERMS AND CONDITIONS

7.1 Changes to these Official Rules.

- (a) These Official Rules and the Handbook contain the rules, policies and practices of the Blizzard for the Tournament that are in effect at the time of their publication. All previously issued rules, policies and practices (other than the Website Terms), whether in print or online, relating to the Tournament are superseded.
- (b) Blizzard reserves the right, subject to the approval of the Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux, to revise, modify, change, delete or add to these Official Rules at any time, in its sole discretion, and to suspend, cancel or modify the Tournament or any player's participation in the Tournament should viruses, bugs, unauthorized human intervention, hacks or other causes beyond Blizzard's control affect the administration, security or proper play of the Tournament, or Blizzard otherwise becomes (as determined in its sole discretion) incapable of running the Tournament as planned.
- (c) Due to server capacity and other technical limitations beyond the control of Blizzard, Blizzard reserves the right to limit the number of players in the Tournament.

7.2 Communications.

- (a) We both agree that these Official Rules and the Handbook together constitute a written agreement signed by both you and Blizzard under applicable law.
- (b) To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, these Official Rules, and any other notices, requests and other communications provided for herein, may be provided to you electronically, and you agree to receive all such communications from Blizzard electronic form. Electronic communications will be delivered to you at the email address listed on your Battle.net Account.

- (c) If you have any questions or comments about these Official Rules or the Tournament, please email them to HearthstoneAdmin@blizzard.com or send written questions to: **2018/2019 Hearthstone Championship Tour c/o Blizzard Entertainment Esports, P.O. Box 18979, Irvine, CA 9362**