



2014-2015 Halo Championship Series (HCS) Season 2 Handbook

343
INDUSTRIES™

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General Information

Description

The Halo Championship Series (“HCS”) is the official Halo eSports league established by 343 Industries (“343”) to create the best environment and platform for competitive Halo gameplay. 343 is responsible for the coordination of partner management, direction, and government of the HCS.

The official Halo game of the 2014-2015 year is Halo 2: Anniversary. Teams will compete in a mix of online and in-person LAN tournaments of varying tournament formats, prize pools, and “HCS Points” values.

Turtle Entertainment / Electronic Sports League (“ESL”) is the official tournament organizer. Twitch Interactive, Inc. (“Twitch”) is the official HCS broadcast partner.

Player Eligibility

HCS is open to participants who meet the following requirements: Players must be 16 years of age, must have permission from a parent or guardian if under 18 years of age, and must meet the eligibility requirements of the tournament organizer(s) **and** applicable law. All players must be registered on the ESL website (www.esl.gg/haloesports). For online tournaments: participants must reside in or compete from the United States, Canada, or Mexico, have a copy of Halo: The Master Chief Collection, have an Xbox LIVE Gold membership in good standing, and must meet the eligibility requirements of the tournament organizer(s) **and** applicable law.

Participants may not be employees of 343, Microsoft or any HCS partner company including but not limited to Twitch and ESL.

Handbook Notes

The rules within this document apply to all HCS teams, players, coaches, managers, and staff, as well as all tournament staff, sponsors, event attendees, and those associated with the HCS.

The Halo Championship Series handbook is considered a living document and may be updated and modified at any time, for any reason, by 343 only.

Definitions

Halo Championship Series (HCS): The official Halo eSports league created by 343.

HCS Points: Each official and sanctioned HCS tournament awards points based on team placing. Points are awarded to teams rather than individual players. Seeding at all sanctioned LAN tournaments will be determined by a team's points at the first day of competition. Additional seeding tools, such as tournament-organizer sanctioned FFA tournaments may also be used. Should additional tiebreakers be required, the higher seed will be issued at random. At the culmination of Season 2, the top teams will be invited to the season finals, as determined by total HCS points accumulated in that season and the final ranking as posted on the official HCS website (www.HaloWaypoint.com/HCS). Points reset for all teams after each Season Finals.

Tournament Organizer (TO): Organization responsible for running tournaments.

Online Tournaments/Cups: Online tournaments (also referred to as "cups") are scheduled to run once a week through ESL. Official HCS online tournaments will award HCS Points, as outlined in the "HCS Points" section. These tournaments are free to enter, and require an Xbox Live Gold account in good standing in order to compete.

LAN Tournaments: LAN Tournaments are in-person competitions that award HCS Points and monetary prizing.

League Format

The Halo Championship Series is comprised of both online and LAN tournaments.

All official or sanctioned Halo Championship Series tournaments (both online and LAN) will award points based on a team's placing in a tournament. At the end of the season, the top teams with the most points will be invited to the Season Finals.

Online Tournaments: As listed above, online tournaments (also referred to as "cups") are scheduled to run once a week through ESL. Official HCS online tournaments will award HCS Points (outlined in the "HCS Points" section), as well as any associated prize money.

As of Season 2, LAN tournaments are no longer broken down into categories. All LAN events will offer the same amount of HCS Points.

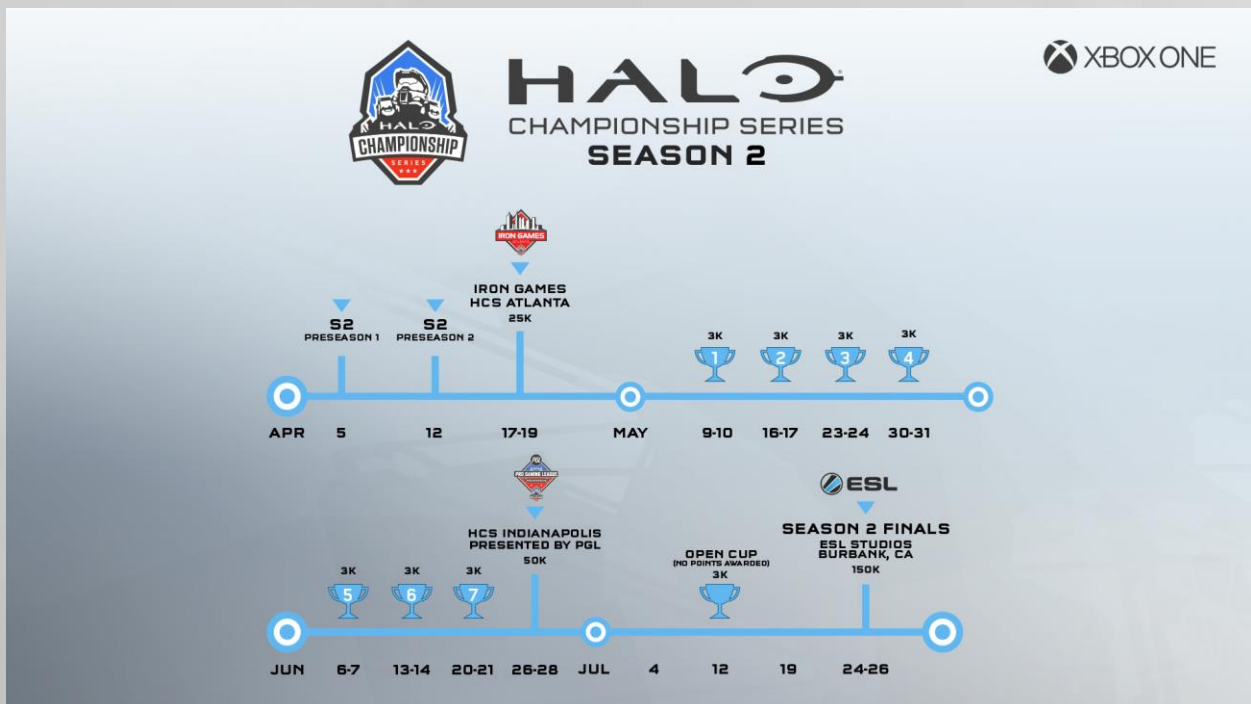
Season Finals: The Season Finals will determine the season champion. Entry and seeding into this tournament is determined by the teams with the top points after the

final LAN or online tournament, as well as potential Wild Card tournaments. For example, if two wild card events are held, the top 6 teams based off of points will be invited to the Season Finals, for a total of 8 teams.

Wild Card Tournaments: Throughout the season, “wild card” events may be announced as part of the season structure. More details will be provided at the time of these announcements.

Schedule

As of April 14, 2015, the schedule for Season 2 is as follows:



How to Participate

To register for competition in the Halo Championship Series, head to www.esl.gg/HaloeSports.

Teams that have registered for the HCS and are in good standing are eligible to participate in any official Halo Championship Series tournaments. Registration for LAN tournaments will be coordinated by tournament organizers, but players and teams must compete under their official, registered HCS team names and gamertags. If teams compete under a different name or gamertags, they risk not being awarded the proper points from the event.

For tournament registration for LAN tournaments, see "LAN Tournaments."

Online Tournament Format

Official online tournaments are run by ESL. Eligible players may only compete in the Halo Championship Series with one team. To ensure a fair standard of play, online tournaments are currently only open to competitors within the United States, Canada, and Mexico. For additional details on team registration and roster guidelines, see the ESL Rule Set at <http://esl.gg/hcsrules2>.

Official HCS online tournaments (also known as "cups") will take place on the following weekends:

1. 5.9.15
2. 5.16.15
3. 5.23.15
4. 5.30.15
5. 6.6.15
6. 6.13.15
7. 6.20.15

On 7.12.15, an open online cup will occur, but only prize money will be awarded, as Season 2 HCS Point tournaments will have ended on 6.28.15.

The Season 2 Finals live event will take place on July 24-26, 2015 in Burbank, CA, at the ESL Studios.

Online Player Conduct

The [Xbox Live Code of Conduct](#) outlines the rules that all players must follow when competing online.

For details on match disputes, disconnects, and ties, please refer to the ESL Rule Set at <http://esl.gg/hcsrules2>.

LAN Tournaments

LAN tournaments are tournaments held in a physical location rather than over Xbox

Live.

At LAN tournaments, each individual tournament organizer shall provide Xbox One consoles and monitors to competitors. All tournament organizers must allow players to use their own controllers and headphones / headsets, but hold the right to ban any controllers or headsets at their discretion. If technical problems are suspected during a tournament, the tournament organizer is obligated to review the situation and resolve any issues.

Tournament organizers are required to ensure that competitors cannot hear shoutcasters during gameplay, as this has the potential to compromise tournament legitimacy and fair play. If a tournament organizer offers soundproof headphones, players are required to use them.

Teams must compete under their registered HCS team name. Players must use the same gamertag throughout the entire tournament. It is the obligation of tournament organizer to verify that teams compete with their registered HCS rosters and gamertags to be eligible for HCS points.

LAN Tournament Format

All HCS tournaments must use HCS-approved game types. (See "Official Tournament Map Pool & Game Types"). No other game types may be played in tournament matches. 343 reserves the right to add, remove, or change game types at any time.

Tournament organizers may determine the bracket and format for each event at their discretion subject to 343 approval.

Restart Rules

During LAN tournaments, the official restart rules will be used:

- For Capture the Flag matches and Assault matches, the exact score will be taken from the time of the interruption. For example, if a team is leading a match 4-0 and there is a match interruption, the match will be replayed with an aggregate or "understood" score of 4-0, rather than a full 0-0 restart.
- For Team Slayer matches, the exact score will be taken from the time of the interruption. For example, if a team is leading a match 35-30 and there is a match interruption, the match will be replayed with an aggregate or "understood" score of 35-30, rather than a full 0-0 restart.

- For Oddball and King of the Hill, the match will be replayed with both team scores rounding down to the nearest 5 point increment. For example, if a team is leading 118-63 at the time of interruption, the match will be replayed with an aggregate or “understood” score of 115-60.

HCS officials and tournament referees will make all final decisions regarding match restarts. In all matches and scenarios, players should continue playing unless told otherwise from a station referee, tournament director, or HCS official. Each scenario, interruption, or occurrence will be judged on a case-by-case basis. For example: In any game type, should any number of points not be awarded immediately due to any circumstances, this will not result in an automatic match restart. Film and replay will be reviewed by referees and officials to arrive at a final decision.

LAN Event Player Conduct

Players must not use obscene gestures, language, or offensive comments during tournament activity. These include:

- Profane words or phrases
- Hate speech
- Illegal drugs or controlled substances
- Illegal activities
- Controversial religious topics
- Any “sound-alike” or “lookalike” words, or phrases, that reference these topics
- Any other type of conduct deemed inappropriate at the discretion of the tournament organizer or 343

Drugs and Alcohol

Players that are under the influence of drugs or alcohol during tournament hours may be removed from the tournament at the discretion of the tournament organizer.

Cheating

No forms of cheating will be tolerated. This includes software modification, hardware modification, match fixing, or any other behavior as determined by the tournament organizer.

Gambling

No individuals involved in the HCS may take part in any betting or gambling on HCS tournament results.

Players engaging in any of the above or similar behavior may be removed from the tournament at the discretion of the tournament organizer. If a player exhibits behavior similar to the above offenses, they may be suspended or banned from the Halo Championship Series. Final decisions regarding player behavior, violations, and suspensions will be determined by 343.

General Tournament Information

Prizing

Tournament organizers must pay all tournament prize money within forty-five (45) days from when correct prize release paperwork has been received.

Non-HCS Tournaments

Teams are free to compete in any tournaments outside of the Halo Championship Series.

Sponsorships

Halo Championship Series players and teams are allowed to represent their personal and team sponsors at HCS tournaments, and tournament organizers are encouraged to collaborate to promote said sponsors, with the exception of any conflicts with the tournament organizer's sponsors.

343 has the right to restrict any sponsors from participating in HCS tournaments.

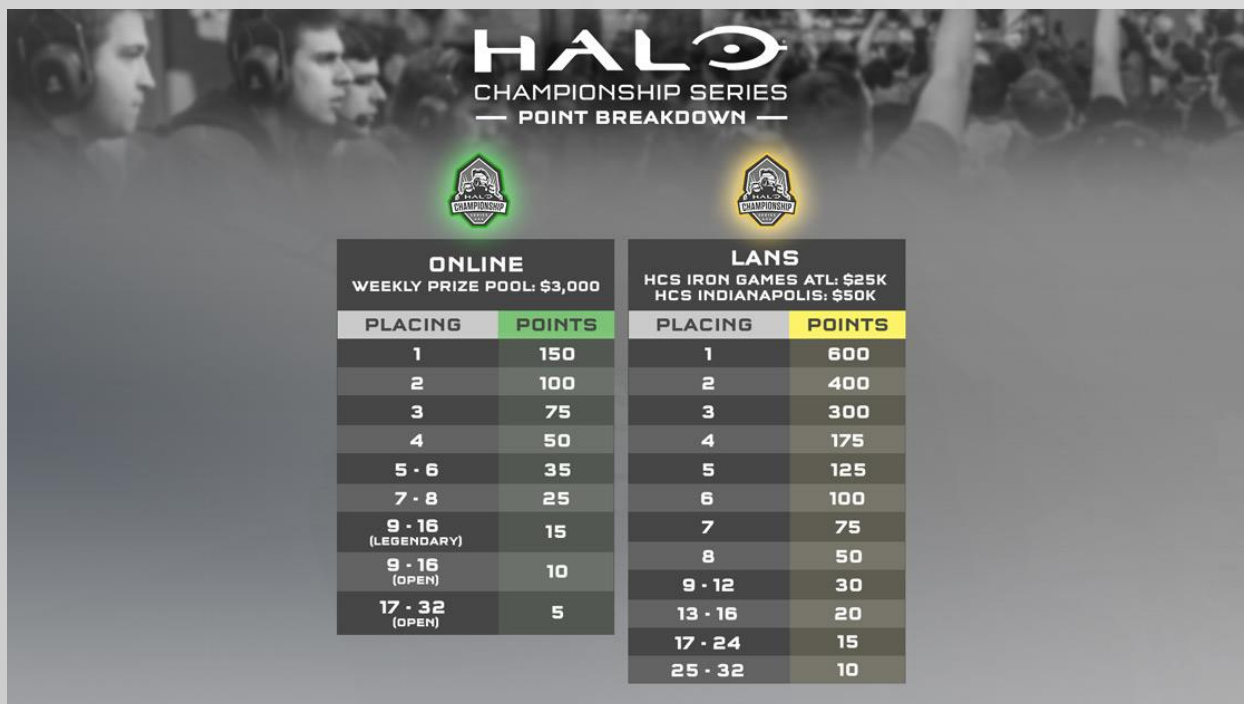
Player Stations and Stages

Players and teams have the right to a competitive environment. Tournament organizers are required to ensure that competition spaces provide an environment for fair play.

HCS Points

Halo Championship Series Points (HCS Points) are awarded at all official Halo Championship Series tournaments, both online and LAN. Points from officially sanctioned HCS tournaments will be awarded following the conclusion of the tournament.

The HCS Points Breakdown is as follows:



The graphic features the Halo Championship Series logo at the top center, with the text 'POINT BREAKDOWN' below it. Two Halo Championship Series icons are positioned above the two tables. The background shows a blurred image of esports players wearing headsets.

ONLINE WEEKLY PRIZE POOL: \$3,000		LANs HCS IRON GAMES ATL: \$25K HCS INDIANAPOLIS: \$50K	
PLACING	POINTS	PLACING	POINTS
1	150	1	600
2	100	2	400
3	75	3	300
4	50	4	175
5 - 6	35	5	125
7 - 8	25	6	100
9 - 16 (LEGENDARY)	15	7	75
9 - 16 (OPEN)	10	8	50
17 - 32 (OPEN)	5	9 - 12	30
		13 - 16	20
		17 - 24	15
		25 - 32	10

Note: At both online and LAN events, teams must win at least one round (advance into the next stage of the bracket) to be eligible to receive HCS points for that event.

In an effort to support the global Halo eSports ecosystem, LAN tournament organizers may apply to become a sanctioned HCS partner. See "Halo Championship Series Tournament Application" for more information.

Team Structure and Player Trading

An HCS team is made up of up to five players who have registered at www.esl.gg/HaloeSports. Additionally, teams may have one coach (to be used at LAN events).

Coaches

At LAN tournaments, teams may use a coach. This coach may change throughout HCS Season 2, but may not change during a live event. Coaches may not join teams mid-way through an event, and must be registered with the tournament organizer prior to the start of the first match. Coaches are held to the same code of conduct and eligibility guidelines as players, team managers, and team staff.

Team HCS Points

Teams will be awarded HCS points, which determine seeding at official LAN tournaments. Players do not individually earn nor hold HCS points.

There will be no roster change restrictions between Preseason Cup #1 and Preseason Cup #2. Teams that wish to be seeded at Iron Games HCS Atlanta based on their Preseason points will not be permitted to make any roster changes between Preseason Cup #2 and Iron Games HCS Atlanta.

Replacements

At no time, can a team have more than 5 members total. Once a member appears on the team's roster on the ESL website, he/she is eligible to play for that team (unless deterred by penalty points or bans).

Teams without Points

Teams that do not currently hold HCS points are allowed to make any changes at any time up until the start of a cup (see Roster Lock).

Teams with Points

Teams that do currently hold HCS points are subject to the Roster Lock and Transfer Rules. Breaking the Roster Lock or Transfer Rules at any time will result in a forfeiture of all current HCS points.

Teams with points are allowed to make roster changes and keep their points so long as they comply with the Roster Transfer Periods and the "Majority Rule." The "Majority Rule" states that teams must maintain three players of their current roster in order to retain their points. Teams with points may lose a player for any reason and at any time and retain their points so long as three of the current members of the roster remain intact. "Current roster" is defined as the roster at the start of a transfer period.

Teams with points may not add a player outside of a roster transfer period.

Season 2 Has Three Transfer Periods

- Transfer Period 1: starts after IG Atlanta (4/20/2015) and ends before Cup #1 (5/9/2015) at 12:00 PM Eastern
- Transfer Period 2: starts after Cup #2 (5/17/2015) and ends before Cup #3 (5/23/2015) at 12:00 PM Eastern

- Transfer Period 3: starts after Cup #5 (6/7/2015) and ends before Cup #6 (6/13/2015) at 12:00 PM Eastern

Teams that currently hold HCS points and wish to make changes must submit a team change request to an ESL Admin in order to have their team unlocked for team changes via a support ticket. Admins will then unlock the team and the teams can make the changes. This request must be submitted 48 hours before the end of a transfer period. All team changes must be finalized at 12:00PM EDT when the transfer period ends, at which point teams will be locked again.

Teams with points that wish to make roster changes outside of transfer periods can do so, but may forfeit their current HCS points. These team changes must be completed 2 hours prior to the start of the current cup.

Roster Lock

If your team has earned HCS points, your roster will become "locked" and will be subject to the replacement rules above. Additionally, teams that do not currently have points will be locked immediately following the start of a cup to prevent roster changes during the competition.

The roster lock for HCS Cup #6 will also initiate a "Season Finals Roster Lock" and the lock will stay in effect for the remainder of the season. Teams will still be allowed to remove players, but no additional players may be added to a roster beyond this point if the team wishes to maintain points.

Maintaining Seeds and Points

In order to maintain HCS Points (and the corresponding seed), teams must adhere to the aforementioned team change rules. If a team makes roster changes that violate these rules, the team will lose the HCS points and seed that were associated with that team. In this event, the team may still operate under the same name and logo.

The open cup is exempt from these rules.

Official Tournament Map Pool & Game Types

As of April 14, 2015 the official HCS Season 2 Halo 2: Anniversary game types are as follows. 343 and ESL reserve the right to introduce new maps and game types throughout the season. In order for a map or game type to be added, 343 and ESL must allow for one online cup to pass before the additions can be introduced.

Team Slayer	Neutral Bomb	3 Flag CTF	5 Flag CTF	King of the Hill	Oddball
Shrine	Shrine	Shrine	Warlord	Lockdown	Lockdown
Lockdown	Warlord			Warlord	Warlord
Warlord					

Global gametype settings:

- Primary Weapon: Battle Rifle
- Secondary Weapon: None
- Motion sensor: Off
- Death Cam: Off
- Map loadouts: Off
- Weapons on Map: Default
- Suicide Penalty: None
- Betrayal Penalty: None

Team Slayer settings:

- Time limit: 15 minutes
- Score to win: 50

3 Flag CTF settings:

- Score to win: 3
- Time limit: 30 minutes
- Flag at home to score: Off
- Flag return: Off
- Flag reset time: 15 seconds

5 Flag CTF settings:

- Score to win: 5
- Time limit: 30 minutes
- Flag at home to score: On
- Flag return: On touch
- Flag reset time: 15 seconds

Team King of the Hill settings:

- Score to win: 200 seconds
- Time limit: 12 minutes
- Hill movement: Progressive
- Hill duration: 1 minute

Neutral Bomb Assault Sanctuary settings:

- Score to win: 3
- Time limit: 30 minutes
- Bomb Arm time: 5 seconds
- Bomb diffuse 3 seconds
- Bomb reset: 30 seconds

Neutral Bomb Assault Warlord settings:

- Score to win: 5
- Time limit: 30 minutes
- Bomb Arm time: 5 seconds
- Bomb diffuse 3 seconds
- Bomb reset: 30 seconds

Oddball settings:

- Score to win: 200
- Time limit: 12 minutes
- Respawn time: 10 seconds
- Ball Spawning: Static
- Initial Bomb Physics: Free

343 reserves the right to modify these settings at any time. 343 will make an effort to not change game type settings within seven days of a LAN tournament unless deemed necessary for the competitive integrity of said tournament.

Amendments & Additions

343 may, at any time, make changes to the official HCS handbook in order to ensure the highest level of competition and integrity.

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