

PLAYVS ANNOUNCES \$30.5M SERIES B LED BY ELYSIAN PARK VENTURES, INVESTMENT ARM OF THE LA DODGERS, ADDITIONAL GAME TITLES AND STATE EXPANSIONS FOR INAUGURAL SEASON FEBRUARY 2019

High school esports market leader introduces Rocket League and SMITE to game lineup adds associations within Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas to sanctioned states for Season One and closes a historic round of funding from Diddy, Adidas, Samsung and others

EMBARGOED FOR NOVEMBER 20TH AT 10AM EST / 7AM PST

LOS ANGELES, CA - November 20th - [PlayVS](#) – the startup building the infrastructure and official platform for high school esports - today announced its **Series B funding of \$30.5 million led by Elysian Park Ventures, the private investment arm of the Los Angeles Dodgers ownership group**, with five existing investors doubling down, **New Enterprise Associates, Science Inc., Crosscut Ventures, Coatue Management and WndrCo**, and new groups **Adidas** (marking the company's first esports investment), **Samsung NEXT, Plexo Capital**, along with angels **Sean "Diddy" Combs, David Drummond** (early employee at Google and now SVP Corp Dev at Alphabet), **Rahul Mehta** (Partner at DST Global), **Rich Dennis** (Founder of Shea Moisture), **Michael Dubin** (Founder and CEO of Dollar Shave Club), **Nat Turner** (Founder and CEO of Flatiron Health) and **Johnny Hou** (Founder and CEO of NZXT). This milestone round comes just five months after PlayVS' historic \$15M Series A funding.

"We strive to be at the forefront of innovation in sports, and have been carefully searching for the right investment in esports," said **Tucker Kain, CFO of the LA Dodgers and Managing Partner of Elysian Park Ventures**. "With PlayVS, we have found a model that works, built on a powerful platform that delivers an unparalleled player experience and will have a profound impact on the future of youth sports across the country."

PlayVS has also announced new game partnerships with **Psyonix and Hi-Rez Studios**, publishers of **Rocket League and SMITE** respectively, joining *League of Legends* by Riot for PlayVS' Inaugural Season that starts in February 2019. PlayVS continues to focus on enhancing students' experiences by adding popular game titles and more state associations in order to grow high school esports' audience and attract players interested in other game genres. Through these partnerships, students will have unprecedented access to these games as part of their PlayVS league participation fee – for example, with free-to-play games, students will receive in-game perks like Champion Unlocked for *League of Legends* and for paid games, publishers will provide copies of their game to every school competing in their league on the PlayVS platform. This gives students a level playing field as they sharpen their skills throughout the season.

Rocket League, published by San Diego-based game studio, **Psyonix**, is a sports-action game that combines soccer with driving and is available on all major gaming platforms. Students participating in the PlayVS League will be competing in the 3v3 mode on PC, where teams of three players compete to score as many goals as they can in a five-minute match. Since the game's initial launch in 2015, it has amassed a community of over 51 million players.

SMITE, published by the Georgia-based game developer **Hi-Rez Studios**, is a multiplayer online battle arena where players pilot mythological characters and fight for control of a three-lane map. Teams of five players must work together to level up their characters and secure map objectives on a mission to siege the enemy's base and defeat the opposing Titan. *SMITE* offers a third-person perspective, which is unique in the multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) genre. *SMITE* quickly established itself as one of the top three MOBA games with over 25 million players across around the world since its launch in March of 2014.

"PlayVS is in a position to truly transform the high school esports landscape, and we're excited they have selected *SMITE* to be included in its inaugural competitive season", said **Hi-Rez Studios Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer Todd Harris**. "Hi-Rez aspires to build a sustainable, community-driven

ecosystem from structured youth play through professional leagues, and this PlayVS partnership is a key part of realizing that vision for *SMITE*.”

“We’re honored to have the support of the LA Dodgers, which has one of the best ownership groups in major league sports and are one of the earliest investors in esports. They collectively share our vision for what the future athlete looks like,” added **PlayVS Founder and CEO, Delane Parnell**. “One of the reasons we’re most excited about esports is accessibility. With this new round of funding and the addition of Rocket League and SMITE, we’re able to take another huge step forward as we open the pathway for more students to compete and be recognized in the burgeoning esports industry.”

PlayVS is also expanding its markets past the five early-access states (Connecticut (CIAC), Georgia (GHSA and GISA), Kentucky (KHSAA), Massachusetts (MIAA) and Rhode Island (RIIL) to high schools within Alabama (AHSAA), Mississippi (MISSHSAA), and parts of Texas (TCSAAL).

“We have an opportunity to engage students in the life of the school with an activity that they might already be participating in on their own,” said **Dr. Karissa Niehoff, NFHS executive director**. “Now, we bring that interest and activity together to combine it with all of the elements of sport that are so special: teamwork, camaraderie, collaboration, storylines, excitement and connection to a group.”

Additionally, in response to outreach efforts from students and coaches throughout the country, PlayVS launches new Club Leagues in five states including **Florida, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas**. Each Club League will have full access to the robust PlayVS platform and will be able to compete on behalf of their school within their respective states. Each Club League will have full access to the robust PlayVS platform, compete in a similar season structure, with the only difference being that the final event will be played online.

The lineup of games for PlayVS’ Inaugural Season has been curated to offer a variety of multiplayer, real-time strategy and sports game options that appeal to students with diverse interests within esports. Most importantly, all of these games require critical thinking and teamwork, which are valuable skills students can gain through participation in esports. Unlike traditional sports, joining a PlayVS team does not involve tryouts, cuts, or any experience - just the desire to play. The Inaugural Season will begin in February of 2019, and students can sign up on the PlayVS website now.

For more information on PlayVS, please visit: <https://www.playvs.com/>

For company background, assets and more, please check out the [media kit](#)

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How PlayVS Inaugural Season will work:

- Schools in participating states can now sign up to compete in the league by visiting [PlayVS.com/schools](https://www.playvs.com/schools). School officials and teachers located outside of these states are also encouraged to create a PlayVS account and will be notified once additional states are announced for PlayVS’ inaugural season.
- The Inaugural Season will begin the week of February 25th and end in April, with playoffs taking place in May 2019. The last day for schools to register for the Inaugural Season is February 8th.
- Each state will host an end-of-season state live-event championship in May, crowning champions through a postseason single-elimination bracket. States will be divided into multiple conferences, conference champions will then advance to the semi-finals, with the top two competing for the state title.
- Unlike traditional sports, PlayVS teams can be comprised of any students, without tryouts and regardless of experience, gender or age. There will be no limit to how many unique teams each school can have, which creates a "no-cut" environment and allows all students the chance to

compete in esports at the varsity level. (Note: League of Legends and SMITE are played in teams of five, while Rocket League is played in teams of three.)

- The season participation fee for each student is \$64 and can be paid by a parent, school or sponsor. Students will play the majority of matches through PlayVS' online platform which will help schools save money on rising travel costs. Championship games will be played in front of a live spectator audience.
- Additionally, on PlayVS' online platform, players can see leaderboards, read gaming and league news, track season statistics, connect with college recruiters and more.
- Club Leagues will operate on the same schedule as sanctioned sport leagues, with the only difference being that the final event will be played online. Teams will still compete on behalf of their school and will have full access to the PlayVS platform.

ABOUT PLAYVS

PlayVS is building the infrastructure and official platform for high school esports. Through their online platform, integrations with game publishers and exclusive partnership with the NFHS, they are creating the world's first fullstack sports platform. This marks the first time that students will compete in esports on behalf of their high school, with the opportunity to compete and be recognized just like any other youth sport or activity.

ABOUT ELYSIAN PARK VENTURES

Elysian Park is a private investment firm created by the ownership group of the Los Angeles Dodgers to invest and partner with exceptional entrepreneurs operating at the intersection of sports, technology, and entertainment. Based in Los Angeles and New York, Elysian Park invests across stages from seed to growth, and also provides entrepreneurs with strategic, operational, and management resources through the Global Sports Venture Studio. www.elysianpark.ventures

ABOUT ROCKET LEAGUE

Winner or nominee of more than 150 "Game of the Year" awards, **Rocket League** is one of the most critically-acclaimed sports games of our generation. Boasting a community of more than 51 million players, **Rocket League** is a high-powered hybrid of arcade-style soccer and vehicular mayhem with easy-to-understand controls and fluid, physics-driven competition. Available on Nintendo Switch™, PlayStation®4 computer entertainment system, Xbox One, Windows PC, Mac, and SteamOS via Steam, **Rocket League** includes more than 500 trillion possible customization combinations, a fully-featured offline season mode, multiple game types, casual and competitive online matches, and special "Mutators" that let you change the rules entirely. To learn more about **Rocket League**, please visit www.RocketLeague.com, "Like" it on Facebook, and follow it on Twitter [@RocketLeague](https://twitter.com/RocketLeague) for all the latest developer updates and news.

ABOUT PSYONIX™

Based in San Diego, CA, [Psyonix](http://www.Psyonix.com) is a critically-acclaimed independent video game developer and leading experts in Unreal Engine technology. For more than 15 years, the studio has been a driving force behind some of the most successful games in the industry, including *Gears of War*, *Mass Effect 3*, *XCOM: Enemy Unknown*, *Bulletstorm*, *Unreal Tournament III*, *Unreal Tournament 2004*, and the award-winning Sports-Action hit, *Rocket League*®.

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ABOUT SMITE

SMITE is the online Battleground of the Gods, a mythology-themed action game for PC and consoles. Since launching in Europe and North America in March 2014, SMITE quickly established itself as one of the top 3 games in the MOBA genre, with over 25 million players. Themed around gods of mythology and offering a third-person camera and more game modes than any other leading game in its genre, SMITE

provides a unique, action-packed experience that puts the player in the thick of the action. SMITE is free-to-play on PC, Xbox One, and PlayStation 4.

ABOUT HI-REZ STUDIOS

Based in Alpharetta, Georgia Hi-Rez is an industry-leading video game publisher and developer at the forefront of the free-to-play, games-as-a-service industry. Hi-Rez's games have been played by more than 70 million people worldwide, across PC, Xbox One®, PlayStation®4 computer entertainment system, Nintendo Switch™, iOS and Android. With three games regularly among the Top 10 free-to-play games on Steam, Hi-Rez is one of the few Western developers to have successfully launched multiple, multi-platform games as service titles to a large audience. Having won multiple awards and accolades for innovation and technology, Hi-Rez has also been recognized for its company culture, leadership and diversity as an employer. Additional information about Hi-Rez Studios can be found at: www.hirez.com