ENGLISH · 18 OCTOBER 2026

# Sponsor rules & cosmetic control

Named tournament sponsors, dated Valve licence rules and enforcement of cosmetic exclusivity. Major skin data links to PhishDestroy's original investigation.

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|---|---|
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A dated reading edition of the published article. Original evidence, reported claims and editorial interpretation retain the distinctions and limits stated in the text.

READING MAP / 05 SECTIONS

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The entries are clickable. The PDF bookmarks provide another route through the document. External source links open the referenced publication or retained file.

SPONSORSHIP / COSMETIC CONTROLDATED RULES · NAMED AGREEMENTS FOLLOW THE BOUNDARY VALVE ENFORCES.

# Gambling sponsors. *Selective boundaries.*

Which businesses were permitted, which were prohibited, and from what date?

INVESTIGATION BY **AGENT LENA**
This chapter follows the sponsor agreements, Valve's published licence and its protection of cosmetic exclusivity. Seven Majors supply the measured record: 948,232 of 960,770 weapon-inspect records (98.70%) show a non-default skin, and 557 of 559 player–Major records include at least one skinned inspect — two default-only records across seven events. [E50] [E51] The complete dataset, player files and the data explorer remain in PhishDestroy's original investigation.

Inspect the sponsor record ↓Read our original Major investigation ↗
Original 11 October edition · complete text →Preserved original wording, alongside the current sections →

THE ORIGINAL PHISHDESTROY INVESTIGATION**Their stage. Their skins. Their economy.**Seven Majors, inspect records, player files, video examples and the data explorer.Open the complete original analysis ↗

01
VALVE'S OWN FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

## Item sales support the competition.

In September 2013, Valve announced a $250,000 DreamHack prize pool supported by a portion of in-game item sales. Its own announcement links appearance purchases to the competition, and the seven-Major record shows the professionals on that stage inspecting non-default skins in 98.70% of 960,770 recorded inspect inputs. The relevant economic question is what users pay to obtain that appearance, including paid random outcomes and resale; the New York complaint expressly addresses items with no gameplay effect. Cosmetic describes the function of the reward; it does not settle the commercial or legal question raised by the transaction. [E52] [E50] [E38] Read the original research ↗

▼ **THE SEVEN-MAJOR MEASURED RECORD**
The event record keeps both denominators: skinned inspect records over all recorded inspect inputs, per Major. An inspect input — commonly the F key — turns the weapon into an object to look at; the totals below measure that act across 491 maps and 280 series, with a total

recorded inspect duration of 733,185.415 seconds ≈ 203.66 player-hours. [E49]

Skinned versus total weapon-inspect records per Major, with the player–Major record count

| Major | Skinned / total inspect records | Share |
|---|---|---|
| **Stockholm** | 101,221 / 102,683 | 98.58% |
| **Antwerp** | 105,494 / 106,006 | 99.52% |
| **Rio** | 134,474 / 136,221 | 98.72% |
| **Paris** | 104,496 / 106,224 | 98.37% |
| **Copenhagen** | 154,139 / 155,740 | 98.97% |
| **Shanghai** | 155,810 / 160,544 | 97.05% |
| **Austin** | 192,598 / 193,352 | 99.61% |
| **Seven-Major total** | 948,232 / 960,770 | 98.70% |
| **Player–Major records** | 557 / 559 | two default-only (0.36%) |

557 of 559 player–Major records include at least one skinned inspect. Event totals independently summed from the author's published CSVs; CS:GO and CS2 duration encodings differ. [E50] [E51]

The complete dataset, player files and the data explorer remain in PhishDestroy's original investigation. Open the original Major investigation ↗

02
THE PUBLIC CLAIM AGAINST THE LICENSE

# Which gambling business? Forbidden from when?

Valve's March 2026 response presents a broad prohibition on gambling-related tournament participation and sponsorship. The publicly available licence contains a more specific boundary. Before the 08 DEC 2025 §2.4(e) obligation, the same licence permitted betting operators conditionally under §2.4(d) — the question "what was before the ban" has a documented answer in Valve's own licence history. [E14]

§2.4(d) / BETTING ADVERTISING

## Conditional permission.

Betting sponsorship messages are acceptable with a licence valid for the targeted territories, or a foreign licence explicitly permitted there. Official-language feeds without geoblocking also determine targeting.

§2.4(e) / GAME ECONOMY

## A separate prohibition.

The licence excludes sponsorship dependent on Valve's game economies or violating its agreements, including case-opening, skin-trading and inventory-related businesses.

These clauses cannot be described as a single ban on all betting businesses. Read the two provisions together ↗

08 DEC 2025 · 23:03:20 UTC

## A dated rule change—not a retroactive explanation.

Valve's Git commit 8594dc0 records the addition of an express §2.4(e) obligation for ranked and unranked tournament operators. This is a dated change to the Tournament Operation Requirements. The underlying licence version and each event's application deadline belong beside it. [E54]

The applicable TOR version is tied to each event's Additional Information deadline. Valve and each organiser hold the dated licence, the event deadline and any exception granted; Valve should publish them so its March 2026 broad-prohibition claim can be tested against the contracts it actually approved. [E70]

ANNOUNCED SPONSORS / DATED RULESRead both lanes together
20212022202320242025 2026
ANNOUNCED COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

**GG.BET**StockholmPGL Major
**GG.BET**AntwerpPGL Major
**Unikrn**ParisBLAST Major
**1xBet / GG.BET**Copenhagen Major / BLAST Premier
**PGL × 1xBet**Announced term: 2025–2026A two-year betting partnership
DOCUMENTED POLICY RECORDS

08 DEC 2025
TOR adds the §2.4(e) obligation.

MAR 2026
Valve states a broad gambling-sponsorship prohibition.

The announced betting partnership spans the rule-change period. The legal question is which sponsor category each rule covers and when that rule applies—not whether every betting business was prohibited. [E53][E54][E55][E56][E57][E58][E59]

## The organisers sold the integrations publicly.

The table records the announced sponsor relationship and its surface. A team booth, an event contract and a series partnership are separate arrangements.

2021Sweden

## Stockholm Major

**GG.BET**
Exclusive betting partnership, confirmed retrospectively in PGL's 4 April 2022 announcement. [E55]

04 APR 2022Belgium

## Antwerp Major

**GG.BET**
PGL announces broadcast support, live odds and bookmaker offers; also covers the Bucharest RMR. [E55]

29 MAR 2023France

## Paris Major

**Unikrn**
BLAST announces a global partnership including the Major, with broadcast integration and event branding. [E56]

02 MAY 2023France · team relationship

## G2 / Paris Major activation

**CSGORoll**
Operator announces jersey branding and a slot-machine-themed activation at G2's Major booth. [E29]

22 JAN 2024Includes London & Copenhagen

## BLAST Premier season

**GG.BET**
Broadcast betting odds, predictions and physical/digital branding. This series deal is distinct from a Major contract. [E58]

01 FEB 2024Denmark

## Copenhagen Major

**1xBet**
PGL names its betting partner for the first CS2 Major and describes media and financial support. [E57]

12 FEB 2025First event: Cluj-Napoca, Romania

### PGL / 2025–2026 partnership

**1xBet**
PGL announces a two-year global betting partnership, advertising placements and broadcast rights. [E59]

▼ **What the European venues must disclose**
For Stockholm, Antwerp, Paris and Copenhagen, Valve, PGL and BLAST hold the sponsor's contracting entity, the dated event licence, each broadcast language and target territory, and the applicable national advertising permissions. They should publish those records together with the licence versions Valve enforced. The dated announcements are themselves the primary record of each sponsorship; the licence conditions behind them are held by Valve and the organisers, not by this page. Whether related brands share contracting entities or beneficial owners is a record PGL, BLAST and the bookmakers hold; they should disclose it with each announced partnership.

The announcements establish commercial integration around the tournaments. They do not disclose Valve's approval of each agreement. That approval and supervision trail is exactly the record this investigation calls for.

PGL's historical press URLs currently redirect to its news index. The cited releases and dates were retrieved from indexed copies of PGL's own announcements on 10 October 2026. BLAST's 2024 page separately corroborates GG.BET's Stockholm and Antwerp partnerships.

THE QUESTION FOR VALVE
**Publish the boundary you actually enforced.** Which sponsorships were permitted, refused or ended; who reviewed them; under which dated clause; in which territories? The account-ban total answers none of these questions.

03
THE ENFORCEMENT OF APPEARANCE

# Optional to purchase. Actively protected from substitution.

JUL 2015 → JAN 2016

### Valve's own rule reaches private-only appearance.

Its server guidelines prohibit simulated unowned items, expressly including appearances visible only to the player. Valve records permanent GSLT restrictions in January 2016 for noncompliant server operators. [E60]

> “Yes. Regardless of who can see the items, mods should not generate/simulate items that are not owned by a player.”

Valve’s answer to question 2 about visibility in server mods.

01 SEP 2026 / LETTER DATE

## A legal demand names the skins themselves.

The published, redacted letter bears Melling, Voitishkin & Partners’ name and says it represents Valve. It asserts rights in software, trademarks and the appearance of weapons, knives and gloves, demanding cessation and warning of compensation claims and referral to law enforcement. [E62]

Touch Skins’ own website states that it received a demand from Valve’s representatives in Russia and decided to close its site and software. The redacted letter hides the addressee; the project’s statement separately establishes the closure. [E61]

The record consists of the published pre-litigation demand and the recipient project’s account of closing its site and software. Together, they document the legal pressure used to protect control over cosmetic appearance.

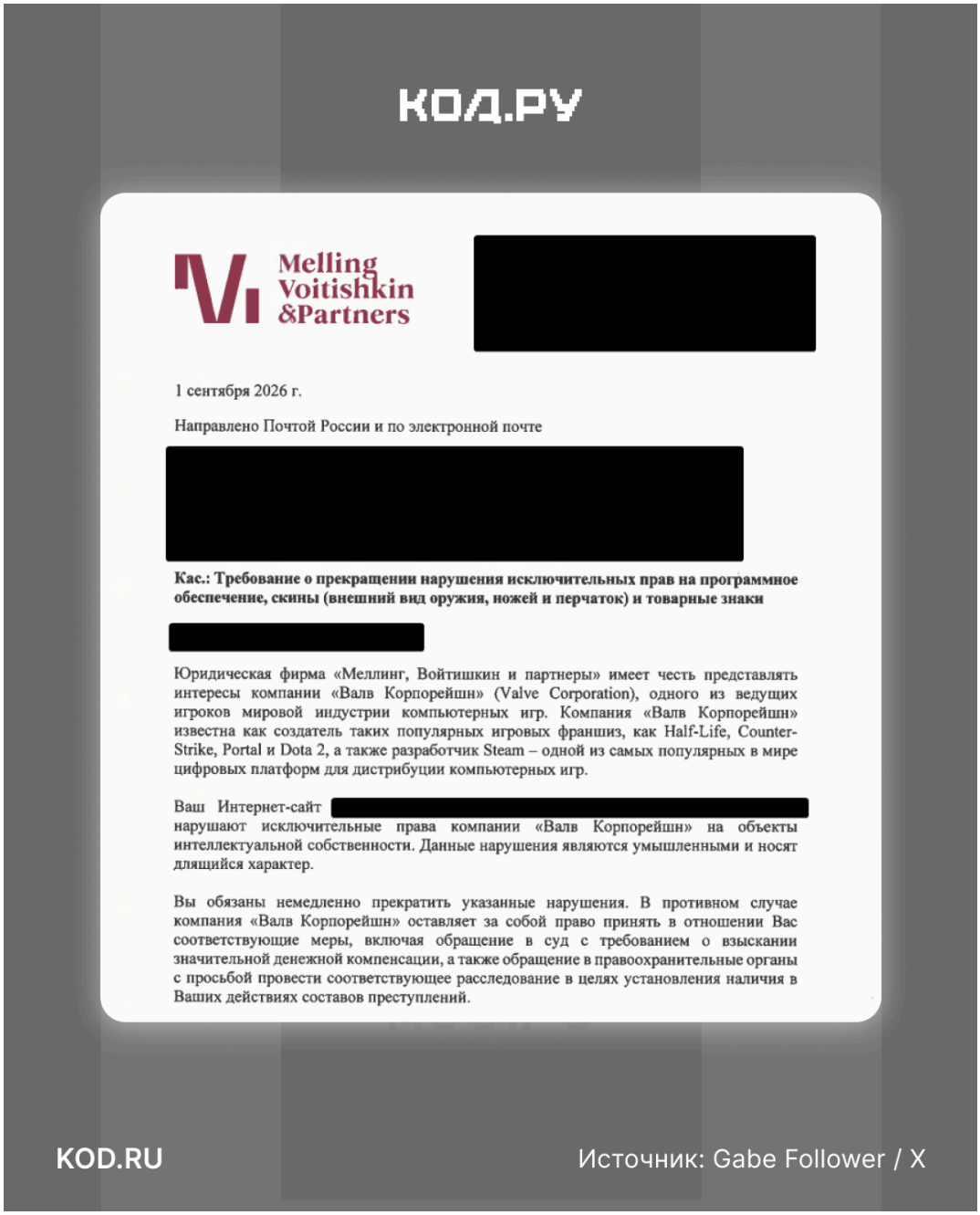
THE ECONOMIC CHOICE

**Valve treats access to appearance as something worth enforcing.** That choice belongs beside its claim that cosmetic items impose no gameplay disadvantage. A person unable to afford a coveted look can still face the boundary protecting its exclusivity.

THE DISTINCTION

**Touch Skins is one documented case, not the whole record.** A server-side cosmetic substitution (a mod showing an unowned skin to one player) and a client intervention changing what the game itself renders are different acts with different legal weight — Valve answers the first with a GSLT ban and the second with a lawyer’s letter. Publish every demand letter sent to skinchanger services, every closure, and the distinction Valve itself applies between the two.

RETURN TO THE ENFORCEMENT CASE**Commercial for the platform. A violation for the user.**Account restrictions, opaque reasons and the right to a review ↗




THE LETTER / 1 SEPTEMBER 2026**Appearance is valuable enough to enforce.**
The archived image names weapons, knives and gloves in the demand. It threatens compensation proceedings and referral to law enforcement. Valve's representatives assert commercial control over the appearance that its public defence calls cosmetic.

Published redacted image credited by KOD.RU to Gabe Follower / X. Original image restored from the supplied archive, unchanged.

Open the original letter at full size ↗

05
THE PUBLIC RECORD

# Inspect the evidence.

18 RECORDS
Sources cited in this article appear first. Select “All records” to inspect the complete 107-record register shared by the investigation; the dedicated evidence files retain their own detailed registers.

▼ **Research method and source status**
Reviewed 10 October 2026. Major percentages are recalculated from the author’s published CSVs, with both event and player denominators retained. Sponsor entries identify the announcing organisation and date. Legal correspondence is attributed to the published copy and the project’s separate statement.

Measured inspect use, commercial interpretation, announced sponsorship and enforcement outcomes are distinguished at the point of each finding. The complete twelve-case series and the original seven-Major investigation remain available through the navigation.

▼ **Read the original 11 October wording**
Preserved verbatim from the supplied 11 October 2026 edition. “Today” and “currently” refer to that edition; its original estimates and formulations remain available alongside the dated text above.

Measured inspect use, commercial interpretation, announced sponsorship and enforcement outcomes are distinguished at the point of each finding. The original seven-page investigation and its evidence files remain available through the navigation.

Open this passage in the complete original edition →

# Cited source records

### E50 · Seven-Major inspect totals — event CSV

**Publisher:** PhishDestroy / Major demo analysis

**Date:** Retrieved 10 Oct 2026

**Supports:** 491 maps, 280 series, 960,770 inspect records; 948,232 skinned records.

**Scope:** Event totals independently summed. CS:GO and CS2 duration encodings differ.

https://phishdestroy.io/steam_dossier/major_skins_assets/reports/inspect-hours.csv

### E51 · 559 player–Major inspect records — CSV

**Publisher:** PhishDestroy / Major demo analysis

**Date:** Retrieved 10 Oct 2026

**Supports:** 557 records with a skinned inspect, two default-only; grouped by event.

**Scope:** Player nickname within an event, not unique people or complete owned inventories.

https://phishdestroy.io/steam_dossier/major_skins_assets/reports/05_players_all.csv

### E52 · DreamHack 2013 — item sales and Major prize funding

**Publisher:** Valve / Counter-Strike

**Date:** 16 Sep 2013

**Supports:** Valve connects in-game item revenue to the $250,000 tournament prize pool.

**Scope:** Historical Valve announcement connecting item sales to Major prize funding.

https://blog.counter-strike.net/2013/09/7614/

### E38 · People of New York v. Valve Corporation — filed complaint

**Publisher:** New York Attorney General / NYSCEF

**Date:** 25 Feb 2026

**Supports:** Court, filing date, index 450952/2026, allegations, statutory bases and requested remedies.

**Scope:** NYSCEF document 2; 52-page court-stamped complaint. Requested relief appears on PDF pages 50–51.

https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/court-filings/new-york-v-valve-corporation-complaint-2026.pdf

### E49 · The Major showcase — skins, stars & demand

**Publisher:** PhishDestroy

**Date:** 2021–2025 sample · reviewed 10 Oct 2026

**Supports:** Research scope, inspect-input method, separate glove and loadout-price analyses.

**Scope:** The derived calculation uses E50–E51. Inspect activity is not measured broadcast exposure.

https://phishdestroy.io/steam_dossier/major_skins/

### E14 · About the New York Attorney General lawsuit against Valve

**Publisher:** Valve

**Date:** 11 Mar 2026

**Supports:** The public collectibles comparison, optional and cosmetic framing, transferability argument, account-ban total, privacy objections and legislative position.

**Scope:** Corporate public response dated 11 March 2026; linked alongside the filed complaint and the investigation's analysis.

https://help.steampowered.com/en/faqs/view/6300-A6C4-519D-A3F5

### E53 · Limited Game Tournament License — §2.4(d)–(e)

**Publisher:** Valve

**Date:** Current text · reviewed 10 Oct 2026

**Supports:** Conditional betting advertising and separate exclusions for game-economy sponsors.

**Scope:** The live page has no public version date; older contracts need their applicable text.

https://store.steampowered.com/tourney/limited_license

### E54 · Commit 8594dc0 — tournament sponsorship requirement

**Publisher:** ValveSoftware / GitHub

**Date:** 08 Dec 2025 · 23:03:20 UTC

**Supports:** Addition requiring ranked and unranked operators to follow licence §2.4(e).

**Scope:** Dates the TOR change, not the licence clause's first publication. Verified against GitHub commit API.

https://github.com/ValveSoftware/counter-strike_rules_and_regs/commit/8594dc0cc8f8cd9ea9564af46e453fc673246cbd

### E70 · Tournament Operation Requirements — applicable version

**Publisher:** ValveSoftware / GitHub

**Date:** Current text · reviewed 10 Oct 2026

**Supports:** Applicable TOR version is tied to the Additional Information deadline.

**Scope:** Check the dated requirements and licence for each event; a single universal commencement date is not established.

https://github.com/ValveSoftware/counter-strike_rules_and_regs/blob/main/tournament-operation-requirements.md

### E55 · GG.BET / Antwerp 2022 and Stockholm 2021

**Publisher:** PGL

**Date:** 04 Apr 2022

**Supports:** PGL's announced betting partnership and broadcast integrations; retrospective Stockholm confirmation.

**Scope:** Indexed primary release retrieved 10 Oct 2026. Historical URL now redirects to the news index; E58 corroborates both Majors.

https://press.pglesports.com/184398-ggbet-is-now-the-exclusive-betting-partner-of-pgl-major-antwerp-2022from-april-4-to-10-ggbet-will-be-offering-10-no-deposit-cashback-to-celebrate-the-announcement-of-this-partnership

### E56 · BLAST announces Unikrn partnership including Paris Major

**Publisher:** BLAST / Cision

**Date:** 29 Mar 2023

**Supports:** Announced event and series integrations, branding and viewer activities.

**Scope:** The tournament organiser's dated sponsorship announcement, naming its own agreement.

https://news.cision.com/blast/r/blast-partners-with-esports-and-video-games-betting-platform-unikrn,c3743069

### E57 · 1xBet / PGL Copenhagen Major 2024

**Publisher:** PGL

**Date:** 01 Feb 2024

**Supports:** PGL names the Major's betting partner and media/financial support.

**Scope:** Indexed primary release retrieved 10 Oct 2026; historical URL now redirects to the news index.

https://press.pglesports.com/289168-1xbet-is-the-official-betting-partner-of-the-pgl-cs2-copenhagen-major-2024

### E58 · GG.BET / BLAST Premier 2024

**Publisher:** BLAST

**Date:** 22 Jan 2024

**Supports:** Live odds, predictions and branding; also confirms prior Stockholm and Antwerp partnerships.

**Scope:** The 2024 agreement is identified by its publisher as a BLAST Premier partnership.

https://blast.tv/article/blast-partners-with-ggbet

### E59 · 1xBet / PGL 2025–2026 partnership

**Publisher:** PGL

**Date:** 12 Feb 2025

**Supports:** Two-year global betting partnership, broadcast rights and advertising placements.

**Scope:** Indexed primary release retrieved 10 Oct 2026; historical URL now redirects to the news index.

https://press.pglesports.com/381187-1xbet-becomes-an-official-partner-of-pgl

### E29 · CSGORoll x G2 — collaboration announcement

**Publisher:** CSGORoll

**Date:** 2 May 2023

**Supports:** The announced esports partnership, jersey branding and a CSGORoll-inspired slot machine at the G2 Major booth.

**Scope:** Historical announcement describing the May 2023 collaboration.

https://www.csgoroll.com/blog/csgoroll-g2-collaboration/

### E60 · Game Server Operation Guidelines — cosmetic simulation

**Publisher:** Valve / Counter-Strike

**Date:** July 2015 request / January 2016 action

**Supports:** FAQ 2 covers player-only visibility; records permanent server-token restrictions.

**Scope:** Valve server-mod guidelines, including simulated unowned appearances visible only to the player.

https://blog.counter-strike.net/server_guidelines/

### E62 · Valve representation — cosmetic and software rights demand

**Publisher:** Melling, Voitishkin & Partners / published redacted copy

**Date:** Letter dated 01 Sep 2026

**Supports:** Visible letter names software, weapon/knife/glove appearances and trademarks; demands cessation and warns of legal action.

**Scope:** Public redacted image reproduced by Kod.ru, credited to Gabe Follower. Addressee hidden; no court ruling established.

https://api.kod.ru/content/images/2026/09/Frame-35117.png

### E61 · Project closure statement

**Publisher:** Touch Skins

**Date:** September 2026 episode · reviewed 10 Oct 2026

**Supports:** Project reports a demand from Valve's Russian representatives and its decision to close.

**Scope:** First-person project statement; the current page does not print a publication date.

https://touchskins.io/

EDITION NOTES / TRACEABLE FILES

# Read the claim. Check its source.

This reading edition was prepared on 18 October 2026 from the current English article. It retains the authored discussion and analytical tables in the source HTML. Navigation and interactive controls are removed. Interactive datasets remain linked rather than expanded into thousands of printed rows.

Selected source images remain linked to their publications or retained copies. The PDF does not independently authenticate the participants in a screenshot, verify every report in a collection, or determine the merits of a legal allegation.

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Source: https://phishdestroy.io/steam_dossier/major-and-sponsors
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