AOE Leagues 2v2: Season 4

Hosted by Mr. Beaver

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Welcome to season four of the AOE Leagues 2v2 tournament![1] This tournament is open to players of all skill levels. In this iteration, each team is guaranteed to play through at least four rounds of an opening group stage. Four teams will advance from the group stage to a single-elimination playoff to determine the winner of each division.

I'll cast as many games as possible on MY YOUTUBE CHANNEL. All games are open casting, and POV streaming is highly encouraged. (I only ask that you put "AOE Leagues 2v2" in the stream title.) Please MESSAGE ME if you would be willing to serve as a dedicated caster or moderator for one of the divisions!

And please don't hesitate to MESSAGE ME or post in the Q-AND-A SUBCHANNEL of the AOE Leagues 2v2 Discord with any questions or concerns.

1   Registration

Teams that are committed to competing for an AOE Leagues title should register HERE. The registration deadline is February 24. Battle begins February 28.

When you register, please mirror the following example:

Team Name: The Bad News Bears
Captain Profile: Daddy Bear, https://aoe2.net/profile-123
Player2 Profile: Mommy Bear, https://aoe2.net/profile-456
Captain Elo: 1420 (current), 1480 (highest) = 1450 (average)
Player2 Elo: 1340 (current), 1360 (highest) = 1350 (average)
Entry Rating: 1400

A team's "entry rating" is a measure of the average skill of the team's two strongest players. It is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{P_1\text{'s highest Elo} + P_1\text{'s current Elo} + P_2\text{'s highest Elo} + P_2\text{'s current Elo}}{4}$$

A team's entry rating will determine the division they are placed in. Teams will only play other teams in their same division.

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[1] AOE Leagues is a family of AOEII and AOEIV tournaments, started by the majestic Farm_Man_Official. Check him out on TWITCH and YOUTUBE!

2 Group Stage

We want the most fair system possible. We want each team to be able to play at least a few sets. And we want to accommodate divisions of uneven sizes. The ideal system to accommodate these goals would be a "round robin" system. A round robin has worked for the 1v1 league, but we've found it too hard to pull off with the scheduling demands of team tournaments. A somewhat shorter tournament is better. This is why we will be using a "Swiss" tournament system this season. It is fairer and more gracious than an elimination system, but not as long as a round robin system.

The Swiss system is the standard system used in chess tournaments throughout the world, and was recently used in Red Bull Wololo V. Under this system, teams will compete in a series of rounds in which points are earned for winning sets, and in which teams are paired against other teams with similar point totals in each round. By the end of the group stage rounds, the cream will have risen to the top, and the four teams with the most points will advance to the playoff stage. (That's the basic idea. For more details see the appendix.)

Each set in the group stage will be a best of three, and will be preceded by a map draft and civ draft.

The first game in every set will be played on Arabia. The map for game two will be the map drafted by the loser of game one. The map for game three (if game three is necessary) will be the map drafted by the winner of game one.

Each team will draft their "home" map before the civ draft. The team that is higher in the standings at the time of the draft will pick their home map first. The team that is lower in the standings will pick second, and may not pick a map that has already been chosen.

The map pool for the tournament:

Open	Closed	Nomadic	Water	Misc.
Acropolis	Arena	Nomad	Team Islands	Socotra
Four Lakes	Hideout	African Clearing	Baltic	Megarandom
Gold Pit	Fortress	Steppe	Migration	Scandinavia

After announcing their home maps, the teams will draft their civs using the GROUP STAGE PRESET.

3 Playoff Stage

The playoffs will use a single-elimination system. In the semi-finals, the team that finished 1st in the group stage will play the team that finished 4th, and the team that finished 2nd will play the team that finished 3rd. The winners will meet in the finals.

All playoff rounds will be best of five. The first game will be played on Arabia. The map for every subsequent game will be chosen by the loser of the preceding game from the pool of maps they drafted before the set.

The playoff map draft will proceed as follows: Ban, Ban, Pick, Pick, Pick, Pick, (where the higher-seeded team is blue and the lower-seeded team is red). The map pool is identical to the group-stage map pool. A team may not select two maps from the same category. So, for example, a team may not select both Acropolis and Gold Pit. But it is okay if one team selects Acropolis and the other team selects Gold Pit.

After the map draft, the teams will draft their civs using the PLAYOFF STAGE PRESET.

4 Schedule

- Registration: Before Feb. 24
- Group Stage:
    - Round one: February 28 - March 6
    - Round two: March 7 - March 13
    - Round three: March 14 - March 20
    - Round four: March 21 - March 27.
- Playoffs:
    - Semi-Finals: March 28 - April 3
    - Finals: April 4 - April 10.

5 Rules

1. Admins reserve the right to make final decisions with regards to the application of the rules. This handbook is subject to change.

2. No smurfing. The 1v1 Elo reported during registration should be an accurate representation of that person's skill level, and account sharing is prohibited.

3. We understand that some players rarely play ranked 1v1 matches. Where it is clear that "entry rating" is a very poor measure of a team's skill, the admins will use their best judgment to place the team in the appropriate division. (It helps if a team brings it to our attention if their 1v1 Elo vastly undersells their 2v2 skill level.)

4. Teams may register a third, backup player with their team. (But remember that entry rating is calculated using the Elos of the two strongest players on a team.) Substitutions are permitted between games in a set.

5. All participants, broadcasters, and administrators are expected to behave respectfully and with sportsmanship. All participants are expected to be cooperative in scheduling, drafting, hosting, and playing.

6. Once teams have agreed on a time to play, they must report this agreement in the 'schedule-games' channel in Discord. Sets are not officially scheduled until the time has been reported in this channel.

7. A team captain's must respond to initial scheduling requests within 72 hours of the first message. Follow-up messages should be replied to within 24 hours. Please check Discord regularly!

8. Provide opposing captains with *multiple*, available times to play. Failure to be sufficiently cooperative in scheduling is grounds for an admin win (at the admin's discretion). But remember to be flexible and gracious! It often takes a lot of negotiation to nail down a time that works for four people from all over the world who may live very different lives. Be sure to start scheduling matches early.

9. The failure to show up within 15 minutes of the agreed-upon start time is grounds for an admin win (at the admin's discretion).

10. One restart permitted per team, per set. All restarts must be called within five minutes of game start.

11. All forms of laming are allowed.

12. No vil fighting is permitted on Nomadic maps before your TC is constructed or before five minutes of in-game time, whichever comes first. (Walling in villagers is fair game, however!)

13. Players enjoy the right of "first occupancy" on Nomadic maps: starting town centers may not be built within the range of an enemy's starting town center.

14. POV streaming is permitted.

15. No stream sniping. Stream sniping will result in disqualification from the tournament, and a ban from future tournaments.

16. Communicating with people during a game — other than your in-game teammate, opponent, or tournament administrators — is strictly forbidden.

17. Respect other teams' pauses, but do not abuse the pause feature. If a pause lasts longer than five minutes without explanation, their opponent is permitted to give a thirty second warning before un-pausing the game themselves.

18. Please keep the time between games to no more than ten minutes, absent technical difficulties.

19. In the event of a disconnect, every effort must be made to save the game and load the saved game (players may not explore the map after a disconnect). If a restore is not possible and the disconnecting team was losing at the time of disconnect, then a Win goes to the team that did not disconnect. If a restore is not possible and the disconnecting team was winning at the time of disconnect, then the game should be replayed.

20. Slinging is not permitted until the sending player reaches Castle Age.

21. No in-game spectating without permission from a moderator.

22. Players are allowed to use a modification only if it is publicly available in the official mod workshop.

23. Teams should agree before game 1 of their set which team will use "even" colors and which team will use "odd" colors. Please use the same colors throughout the entirety of the set.

24. Teams should agree on who will upload the game recs and report the results before the map draft begins. Recs and results should be posted in the 'recs-and-results' channel within 24 hours of match. Please label recordings as "Game 1", "Game 2", etc. And please put a spoiler tag on the results (e.g., "Team X ||2-1|| Team Y").

25. 'Hide civilizations' must be selected when creating a lobby, and a server should be selected that does not advantage one team over the other. If a balanced server cannot be found, servers should be alternated between each game. The lobby should also have a 2 minute spec delay.

26. The game settings should look as follows:

6   Appendix: Swiss System

The Swiss System is more fair than most other systems, but also more complicated. Here's how it works.

The number of rounds will be determined by the number of teams in the group, and announced in advance of the first round. (Four rounds is most likely.)

Before each round, the teams are rank ordered. Before the first round, the ordering will be determined on the basis of a team's entry rating. The higher a team's entry rating, the higher their rank in the initial ordering.

For the first round, the division's rank ordering will be broken into an upper half and lower half, and the two halves will be paired together. So, for example, if the division consist of eight teams, seed 1 will be paired with seed 5, seed 2 with seed 6, seed 3 with seed 7, and seed 4 with seed 8.

After each round, teams will be re-ordered, not on the basis of their entry rating, but *on the basis of the points they have accumulated in previous rounds.* A team is awarded 1 point for winning each BO3 set.

This rank ordering will determine the pairings for the next round. Teams will be paired against teams with similar scores in such a way as to ensure *there are never any rematches* (CHALLONGE.COM has their own procedure for doing this, which is the service the admins will use to display tournament results).

If the division consists of an even number of teams, every team will play in every round. If the division consists of an odd number of teams, the team with the lowest ranking at each round will get a bye that round and be awarded 1 point (the same as if they had won that round), provided that team has not already enjoyed a bye week.

At the conclusion of the final round, the teams will be ranked according to their point totals. Ties will be broken on the basis of head-to-head results, then opponent strength (using the "Median-Buchholz System"), then game win/set percentage. The top four teams will advance to the playoff stage.

We will use CHALLONGE.COM to handle all of these moving parts, and to allow you a birds-eye view of the tournament. All you need to do as a player is to post your recs and results on Discord.

Good luck and have fun!