

Magic: The Gathering is getting a pro league with \$10 million in prizes

One of the world's most enduring game is getting a high-level professional league for its top players. At the Game Awards this evening, Wizards of the Coast revealed a new e-sports initiative that covers both the physical version of *Magic: The Gathering*, as well as the PC iteration, *Arena*. The competitions will include a combined \$10 million in prizes.

At the core of this new venture is the Magic Pro League, which will include 32 of the world's best players, competing in a series of weekly match-ups as well as major tournaments, called Mythic Championships. Each MPL player will receive a \$75,000 contract in addition to the opportunity to earn prize money. The first major MPL tournament will take place at PAX East in Boston next year, and will feature a \$1 million prize purse.



The *Clash Royale* League World Championship in Tokyo.

Photo courtesy Supercell.

High-level *Magic* competition has existed for some time, of course, but this new initiative represents a more concerted effort as WOTC looks to break into the increasingly lucrative

e-sports space. "We built our system to invite and support pro e-sports team involvement," Elaine Chase, Magic's VP of e-sports, tells *The Verge*. For those looking to join the MPL, WOTC says it will be revealing details on how players can join the league early next year.

"We have major aspirations for this new venture."

Competitive card games are steadily becoming a much bigger part of competitive gaming. Last month Blizzard revealed that it had paid out \$2.8 million in prizes to *Hearthstone* players, with \$4 million earmarked for 2019. *Clash Royale*, meanwhile, recently wrapped up the global finals of its ambitious professional league with a big match in Tokyo. And there will likely be a new player in the space as well, as *Dota 2* developer Valve just released its own digital card game *Artifact*.

As for Magic, while the new league is slated for this year, the developer says it has long-term ambitions. "We have the 2019 year planned out now and will adjust and learn as we move forward," Chase explains. "We have major aspirations for this new venture and you can expect the excitement to continue throughout 2019 and well into the future."

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/12/6/18128822/magic-mtg-gathering-esports-pro-league-prizes-game-awards-2018>