



FOR THE EIGHT WHO RUN IT

TEAM OWNER HANDBOOK

Everything it means to own a HALO franchise — the model, the money, the draft, the season, and the standard. The rulebook governs. This is how it works.

FIRST EDITION · EVERGREEN

FREE TO PLAY · FAMILY OWNED · EDMONTON, AB

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Two documents run this league. The **HALO Rulebook** is the law — it governs eligibility, competition, conduct, and economics, and where the two ever differ, the rulebook wins. This handbook is the operating manual: what the rules mean for you, in practice, as an owner.

It is written to be evergreen. You will find no dates in these pages — the season is described by its shape (Draft Day, Week 1 through Week 7, Championship Day) so the handbook holds from season to season. Confirmed dates, venues, and deadlines arrive each season in the league calendar.

The front section is the **Quick Reference** — the numbers, the calendar shape, and your obligations on four pages. Read it before your first season. Keep it after your fifth.

CONTENTS

QR	Quick Reference — the season shape, the numbers, the one rule, your checklist
01	A letter from the founder
02	Why own a HALO team — the model
03	Your franchise — name, colors, identity
04	The money — cap, procurement, offset, surplus
05	The Draft
06	Roster management — the Player Market
07	Season operations
08	Coaching and bench staff
09	Conduct, safety, and working with minors
10	Sponsorship — what the league sells, what you can sell
11	Awards, season close, and next year

THE SEASON, IN SHAPE

No calendar needed. Every HALO season runs the same arc.

- **REGISTRATION WINDOW**
Players enter the draft pool with a free expression of interest. No fee, ever — a roster spot is earned in the draft, never bought.
- **DRAFT DAY**
Thirteen rounds, snake order, live. Eight owners build eight rosters — the night the season becomes real.
- **WEEKS 1–7 · THE ROUND-ROBIN**
Seven game nights, four games a night on one court. Every team plays every team once. Zero byes — every family, every week.
- **AFTER WEEK 4 · THE PLAYER MARKET OPENS**
Voluntary opt-in. Two players out, two in, worst-to-first claim priority. No money changes hands — ever.
- **WEEK 8 · CHAMPIONSHIP DAY**
All eight teams. Seeded single-elimination — quarterfinals, semifinals, bronze, and the Final on the show court.
- **SEASON CLOSE**
League scorecard published, awards presented, reserve held, surplus distributed equally to all eight owners.

THE NUMBERS THAT RUN THE LEAGUE

\$0

PLAYER COST — NO
REGISTRATION FEE,
EVER

8

FAMILY-OWNED
FRANCHISE TEAMS

13

PLAYERS PER ROSTER,
DRAFTED

104

PLAYERS IN THE
LEAGUE, U17 CO-ED

\$8,000

HARD SPENDING CAP
PER TEAM

\$5,000

LEAGUE RESERVE,
HELD BEFORE PAYOUT

7 + 1

GAME NIGHTS PLUS
CHAMPIONSHIP DAY

= 8

SURPLUS SPLIT
EQUALLY, ALL
OWNERS

THE ONE RULE TO REMEMBER

EVERY TEAM PLAYS WITH THE SAME \$8,000.

Sponsorship decides who writes the cheque — never how big it is. All spending runs through league procurement. There is no side door, for anyone. That's the promise of parity.

YOUR OBLIGATIONS AS AN OWNER

The full detail lives in the sections that follow. This is the checklist.

BEFORE THE SEASON

- Name and brand your franchise** within league identity rules, and have it approved before Draft Day. (§3)
- Fund your franchise** — the \$8,000 cap, net of any approved sponsorship offset. (§4)
- Appoint your coach and bench staff** and confirm league screening requirements are complete. (§8, §9)
- Scout the board** — review every player profile before Draft Day and arrive with a plan for all thirteen rounds. (§5)

DURING THE SEASON

- Field a full roster every game night** — seven nights, zero byes, every family counting on it. (§7)
- Route every purchase through league procurement.** No direct team spending, no exceptions. (§4)
- Submit any team sponsorship for league approval** before signing — category protection applies. (§10)
- Uphold the conduct standard** for yourself, your bench, and your sideline. Owners answer for their franchise. (§9)

AT SEASON CLOSE

- Deliver your team through Championship Day** — all eight teams play, no early exits from the event. (§7)
- Return league property and close your procurement account** for reconciliation. (§11)
- Complete the owner debrief** — what worked, what didn't, what next season should fix. (§11)

WHEN SOMETHING COMES UP

THE SITUATION	WHERE TO LOOK
A family asks what the league costs them	Nothing — ever. §2, and say it proudly.
You want to buy something for the team	§4 — it goes through league procurement
A local business wants to sponsor your team	§10 — check protected categories, submit for approval
A sponsor offers more than your remaining cap	§4 — the overflow lifts the whole league
A player wants to change teams mid-season	§6 — the Player Market, after Week 4 only
A conduct issue on your sideline	§9 — and the Rulebook governs
Questions about a player's safety or wellbeing	§9 — act first, report to the league same day
Draft strategy, keeper questions	§5
Anything this handbook doesn't answer	The Rulebook first, then the league office

THE ORDER OF AUTHORITY

HALORulebook → this handbook → the seasonal league calendar. Where documents differ, the higher one governs. Where none of them answer, the league office decides — and the answer gets written into the next edition so no owner faces the question cold again.

A LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

You now own a sports franchise.

Not a sponsorship of one. Not a donation to one. A franchise — with a name you chose, colors your players will pull on, a draft board you will agonize over, and thirteen young athletes who will spend a season finding out what they're capable of because you decided to build something in this city.

I have spent my career inside professional sport, and I can tell you the secret: the machinery of the pros — the draft, the cap, the market, the championship — was never really about money. It was about fairness and drama. It exists to make sure any team can win, and that every game means something. HALO takes that machinery and hands it to families. Eight owners, one hard cap, one draft, one champion. The same rules for everyone, enforced by structure instead of trust.

And one rule above all of them: **every player plays free**. No registration fee, ever. Roster spots in this league are earned in the draft — never bought. When a family asks you what the catch is, enjoy telling them there isn't one.

What I ask of you is what the league is built to reward: judgment over wallet, community over ego, and a season's worth of showing up. The cap makes you equal. What you do inside it makes you different.

Welcome to the eight.

Victor Cui

Founder, HALO Volleyball League

WHY OWN A HALO TEAM

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · LEAGUE STRUCTURE & THE FAMILY-OWNED MODEL

HALO is Edmonton's first family-owned, franchise-model youth volleyball league. Every structural choice serves one idea: a real league, run the way the pros run theirs, that costs families nothing to join.

FREE TO PLAY IS THE FOUNDATION

Youth sport has quietly priced out the families it was built for. HALO refuses the premise. There is no registration fee — not reduced, not subsidized, not waived case-by-case. Zero, for everyone, always. The league is funded by its owners and its partners, and every player's spot is earned on the draft board. This is the league's structural differentiator, and as an owner you carry it: it leads every conversation you have about HALO, because it is the answer to the first question every family asks.

THE FRANCHISE MODEL IS THE ENGINE

Eight teams, each owned by a family. Thirteen players each — 104 athletes, U17, girls and boys on the same rosters. A single hard cap keeps the field level. Centralized procurement keeps the cap honest. A shared reserve keeps the league durable, and whatever the season earns beyond it is split equally among the eight owners. You are not a customer of this league. You are a partner in it.

THE PRO-SPORT ARC IS THE EXPERIENCE

A live draft where owners pick their squads. A round-robin where every night counts. A mid-season market with real stakes and no money. A Championship Day where all eight teams take the court and one leaves with the title. Players don't just play a season — they live inside a story, and you are one of its authors.

IF YOU ARE READING THIS AS A PROSPECTIVE OWNER

This handbook is the pitch. Not adjectives — architecture. Read the cap rules, the procurement system, the market mechanics, and judge for yourself whether this league is run like a real franchise system. Then imagine draft night, when thirteen kids find out they're playing for you.

YOUR FRANCHISE

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · LEAGUE STRUCTURE

The name, the colors, the identity — the part of ownership your players will remember longest.

NAMING YOUR TEAM

Your franchise name is yours to choose and the league's to approve. The bar is simple: appropriate for a youth league, distinct from the other seven, and free of commercial names — a team is named for its identity, not its sponsor. Submit your name and identity for approval before Draft Day; once approved, it holds season to season unless you request a change.

COLORS AND IDENTITY

Each franchise carries its own colors inside the league's shared identity system, so eight distinct teams still read as one league — on the schedule, on the broadcast board, on the co-branded player cards. The league supplies your identity templates through procurement; your job is to make the colors mean something by Week 7.

WHAT OWNING IT MEANS

You hold the franchise for the season and its renewal each year, subject to good standing under the Rulebook. You appoint the coach. You set the tone. You answer for the sideline. And at the draft, the market, and Championship Day, the decisions are yours. It is a real seat, with real weight — that is the point.

THE MONEY

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · FRANCHISE ECONOMICS

ONE CAP. EIGHT TEAMS. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Every HALO franchise operates on the same number: **\$8,000**. Not a target. Not a guideline. A hard cap, enforced by structure rather than trust — all team spending runs through league procurement, so there is no side door. You never police yourself against temptation, because the system does it for you.

HOW PROCUREMENT WORKS, DAY TO DAY

You don't hand out cash and keep receipts. You submit requests — kit, equipment, team needs — and the league purchases against your cap, tracking your balance in real time. You always know where you stand; so does the league; so does every other owner, because the same statement format goes to all eight. One system, one ledger, no ambiguity.

SPONSORSHIP CHANGES WHO PAYS. NEVER HOW MUCH YOU SPEND.

You are free to bring team-level sponsors to your franchise, within the league's protected categories (§10). Every dollar you raise **offsets** your \$8,000 — it does not add to it. Raise \$3,000 and you field the same team as everyone else, \$5,000 out of pocket. Raise the full \$8,000 and you own a fully sponsored franchise. The best leagues in the world run this way: revenue varies wildly across NFL markets, and the cap does not. That is why any team can win in any year — and why the same is true here.

RAISE MORE THAN YOUR CAP? THE WHOLE LEAGUE RISES.

Sponsorship above your \$8,000 offset flows into the league surplus — the pool that already pays out equally to all eight owners at season end. Land a \$20,000 partner and you've covered your franchise and lifted the other seven. That is not a loophole closed; it is the model working. HALO recognizes it, too: the owner who contributes most beyond their cap earns **Builder of the Year** — an honor, deliberately not a payment, because the recognition must never undo the parity it celebrates.

THE RESERVE AND THE SURPLUS

At season close, the league holds a **\$5,000 reserve** first — the buffer that lets HALO absorb a surprise and open next season without leaning on anyone. Whatever remains after the reserve is distributed **equally among the eight owners**. Not by standings, not by revenue raised — equally. The league wins together or it doesn't.

WHY IT'S BUILT THIS WAY

Without the offset rule, this league becomes a fundraising contest, and the family without a corporate network fields a worse-equipped team of fifteen-year-olds. Nobody signed up for that. The cap is the promise that owning a HALO team is a contest of coaching, community, and judgment — never of wallets. It protects every owner. Including you.

THE DRAFT

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · THE DRAFT

The emotional centerpiece of the league — and the single highest-leverage night of your season as an owner.

THE MECHANICS

Thirteen rounds, snake order, live. The order reverses every round — pick eighth in round one, first in round two — so no draft slot is a sentence. In the league's inaugural season the order is set by lottery; in every season after, the **keeper rule** applies as set out in the Rulebook, letting franchises carry continuity forward while the draft keeps the field fresh.

SCOUTING THE BOARD

Every player in the pool enters through a free expression of interest: positions, experience, club résumé, availability. That is your scouting file. Owners who treat the weeks before the draft as a scouting season — reading every profile, ranking by position, planning all thirteen rounds — win draft night. Owners who wing it discover round nine is a long way from round one.

HOW TO THINK ABOUT THIRTEEN PICKS

- **Draft a roster, not a wishlist.** Setters run offenses and liberos save seasons. Cover positions before you stockpile hitters.
- **Availability is talent.** A committed player who makes all seven nights outplays a star who makes four. The round-robin has zero byes; your roster needs to show up.
- **Draft the room, not just the athlete.** Thirteen teenagers share your bench for a season. Character compounds.
- **The market is not a mulligan.** Two out, two in, once, after Week 4 — it can fix a hole, not a draft. Get it right the first time.

DRAFT NIGHT ITSELF

It is live, it is public, and for the players it is the moment the league becomes real — the night they find out whose colors they wear. Bring your board, bring your family, and remember that every name you call is a kid hearing it. Call it like it matters. It does.

ROSTER MANAGEMENT — THE PLAYER MARKET

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · THE PLAYER MARKET

Mid-season movement, run like the pros — with one professional feature deliberately deleted: money.

HOW THE MARKET WORKS

- **It opens after Week 4** — the midpoint, when every team has seen every kind of night.
- **Opt-in is voluntary.** A player enters the market only by their own choice, with their family's consent. No owner places a player on the market. Ever.
- **Two out, two in.** Each team may release up to two market spots and claim up to two players. The roster returns to thirteen.
- **Worst-to-first claim priority.** The standings decide who chooses first — the league's built-in second chance for the teams that need one.
- **No money, no trades of consideration, no side arrangements.** The market moves players, not value.

WHAT THE MARKET ASKS OF YOU AS AN OWNER

Handle it like an adult, because a teenager is watching how you do. A player entering the market is not a rejection of your team, and a player leaving yours deserves a proper send-off. The market exists so a kid whose season isn't working gets a second one — protect that purpose, and it stays one of the best things about this league.

Strategically: know your two holes before the window opens, know the claim order, and remember the market cannot rebuild a roster. It sharpens one.

SEASON OPERATIONS

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · COMPETITION FORMAT, STANDINGS & CHAMPIONSHIP DAY

GAME NIGHTS

Seven nights, four games a night, one court. A full single round-robin — every team plays every team once, with zero byes. The design is deliberate: one venue, one crowd, every franchise present every week. Your job on game night is simple and absolute — **field a full roster, on time, ready**. A hundred and four families build their week around these nights.

COMPETITION STANDARD

Matches run under Volleyball Canada rules as adopted in the Rulebook. Officials' decisions stand; disputes go through the league after the night, never across the net during it. Owners set that example before anyone else has to.

STANDINGS

Every night counts toward the table, and the table decides two things that matter: **seeding for Championship Day** and **claim priority in the Player Market**. There are no meaningless games in a seven-night season.

CHAMPIONSHIP DAY

Week 8. All eight teams take the court — nobody's season ends on a schedule page. Seeded single-elimination: quarterfinals, semifinals, the bronze match, and the Final on the show court. For owners it is the league's biggest operational lift and its best day; expect duties beyond your bench — the league will assign event roles in the seasonal calendar. Win or lose, every franchise is part of the show. That is the covenant of the day.

COACHING AND BENCH STAFF

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · COACHING

You appoint the coach. The league sets the standard. The players get the benefit of both.

APPOINTING YOUR COACH

The head coach is your single most important hire — likely your only one. Choose for teaching over trophies: this is a development league of thirteen mixed-ability teenagers, and the coach who makes player nine better is worth more than the one who over-plays player one. Coaches and any bench staff must complete league screening requirements (§9) before their first contact with the team, without exception.

THE BENCH STANDARD

Coaches run the games; owners run the franchise. On game night the bench belongs to the coach — your influence happens in the appointment, the standard you set, and the support you provide, not in live substitutions from the stands. Every player on a thirteen-deep roster is there to play; the Rulebook's expectations on fair participation are the floor, and good coaches build well above it.

IF IT ISN'T WORKING

A mid-season coaching change is yours to make, but it runs through the league first — screening, continuity, and communication to families all have to hold. Handled properly, it is a franchise decision. Handled badly, it is thirteen kids' season. The league will help you do it properly.

CONDUCT, SAFETY, AND WORKING WITH MINORS

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · SAFETY, DATA CONSENT & DISCIPLINE — THE RULEBOOK CONTROLS IN FULL

Everything else in this handbook is how we run a league. This section is why we get to run one at all. Nothing here is negotiable, and nothing here is summarized as a substitute for the Rulebook — read those sections in full before your first season.

THE OWNER'S DUTY

You answer for your franchise: your bench, your volunteers, your sideline, and your own conduct. Every adult in a team role completes the league's screening requirements before contact with players — appointing an unscreened adult, even briefly, even a family friend, is a standing violation. The two-adult principle applies throughout: no adult alone with a player who is not their own child, in person or in private communication.

WHEN SOMETHING IS WRONG

If you see or suspect a risk to a player's safety or wellbeing, act first and report to the league the same day. You do not investigate, you do not adjudicate, and you never sit on it to protect a season, a coach, or the league's reputation. The Rulebook sets out the reporting path; your job is to use it fast.

PLAYERS' INFORMATION

Families trust the league with their children's information under specific, recorded consents — participation, media, and communications, each given separately. As an owner you use player information for league purposes only: never shared outside your team operations, never passed to a sponsor, never used commercially. Media consent is per-player; before your franchise posts a photo or a name, confirm the consent exists. The league can tell you in one message. Ask.

THE SIDELINE

Referees are learning their craft the same way the players are. Parents follow the temperature the owner sets. The conduct standard in the Rulebook applies to everyone in your team's orbit — and the discipline process applies to franchises, not just individuals. Set the tone early and this section stays theoretical.

SPONSORSHIP — WHAT THE LEAGUE SELLS, WHAT YOU CAN SELL

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · FRANCHISE ECONOMICS — TEAM-SPONSORSHIP CLAUSES PER CURRENT EDITION

THE LEAGUE'S PARTNERS COME FIRST

HALO sells league-level partnership on two tiers — one **Presenting Partner** and up to four category-exclusive **Founding Partners**. Those partners fund the league that funds your franchise, and their exclusivity is a promise the league has sold. Protecting it is an owner obligation, not a courtesy.

YOU CAN SELL TEAM-LEVEL SPONSORSHIP — INSIDE FIVE RULES

RULE	WHAT IT MEANS
1 • Category protection	No team deal in the Presenting Partner's category or any signed Founding Partner category. The league maintains a live protected-categories list — check it before any conversation gets serious.
2 • League approval	Every team deal is submitted to the league before signing: one page, a defined turnaround set in the seasonal calendar. Approval protects exclusivity, youth-appropriateness, and you.
3 • Prohibited categories	Alcohol, cannabis, gambling, vaping, and energy drinks are closed to team deals at any value. Standard youth-sport exclusions. Non-negotiable.
4 • The offset	Team sponsorship flows through league books and offsets your \$8,000 cap — it never raises it. Above the cap, it flows to the shared surplus (§4).
5 • Brand placement	Team sponsor marks live at team level — banner, warmups, team channels. League signature assets, including the co-branded player card, remain Presenting Partner territory.

WHY A SPONSOR SHOULD STILL SAY YES

Because the structure is the pitch. A team sponsor in HALO funds thirteen named athletes in a free-to-play league, with clean category protection and league-verified placement — a better story than a logo on a jersey in a league nobody governs. And a sponsor whose generosity clears your cap becomes part of the league's favorite statistic: the deal that lifted all eight franchises at once.

AWARDS, SEASON CLOSE, AND NEXT YEAR

GOVERNED BY THE RULEBOOK · AWARDS & FRANCHISE ECONOMICS

AWARDS

The league's awards close the season the way the draft opened it — publicly, and about the players first. Player honors follow the Rulebook's awards framework. Owner recognition is led by **Builder of the Year**, for the owner whose contribution beyond their cap did the most for the league as a whole. An honor, not a payment — by design.

CLOSING THE BOOKS

After Championship Day the league reconciles every procurement account, publishes the season scorecard — the same accountability it promises its partners — holds the \$5,000 reserve, and distributes the surplus equally to the eight owners. You will see the full ledger. Every owner does. That transparency is what makes equal distribution feel equal.

THE OWNER DEBRIEF

Before the season is archived, every owner completes a debrief: what worked, what strained, what next season must fix. The league's rules improve the same way its players do — by honest review. This handbook's next edition is written from those debriefs.

CARRYING INTO NEXT SEASON

Franchises renew season to season in good standing. The keeper rule connects one roster to the next; the draft refreshes everything else; the cap resets for all eight at once. The machinery is built to run for years — which is the quiet ambition of the whole project. Season one proves the model. Every season after compounds it.

See you at the draft.

HANDBOOK GOVERNANCE

ORDER OF AUTHORITY

The HALORulebook governs this league. This handbook explains it, and where the two differ, the Rulebook controls. Season-specific dates, venues, deadlines, and event assignments are published in the seasonal league calendar and are not part of this evergreen document.

AMENDMENTS

This handbook is revised between seasons, informed by owner debriefs and any Rulebook amendments. Owners are bound by the edition in force at the start of the current season. Material mid-season changes, if ever required, are communicated to all eight owners in writing.

RULEBOOK CROSS-REFERENCE

HANDBOOK SECTION	RULEBOOK SUBJECT AREA
§2 · The model	League Structure & the Family-Owned Model; Eligibility
§3 · Your franchise	League Structure
§4 · The money	Franchise Economics
§5 · The Draft	The Draft (snake order, lottery, keeper rule)
§6 · The Player Market	The Player Market
§7 · Season operations	Competition Format; Standings & Championship Day
§8 · Coaching	Coaching
§9 · Conduct & safety	Safety; Data Consent; Discipline
§10 · Sponsorship	Franchise Economics (team-sponsorship clauses)
§11 · Season close	Awards; Franchise Economics