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From the Houston Business Journal:

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Major Houston esports team reveals dates, venue for first-ever home matches in 2020

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The Houston Outlaws, a major esports franchise in Blizzard Entertainment Inc.'s Overwatch League, will play its first local matches in downtown Houston in 2020.

Chris DeAppolonio, who was hired as president of the Houston Outlaws earlier in August, told the Houston Business Journal that the franchise will host two weekends of competitive play in 2020 at the Revention Music Center, at 520 Texas Ave. in downtown Houston's Theater District. DeAppolonio said that tickets for the Outlaws' first home matches will go on sale Aug. 28.

The first weekend of matches in Houston begin on Feb. 29, 2020 — Leap Day 2020 — in which the Outlaws will take on the London Spitfire.

Overwatch League franchises representing Florida, Atlanta, New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Paris will also play matches in Houston that weekend, according to a recently released league schedule. The Outlaws will play the Toronto Defiant March 1.

The second weekend of matches in Houston will take place Aug. 1-2, 2020. That weekend, the Outlaws will host their divisional rivals from Florida, Atlanta and Philadelphia. The Outlaws take on the Philadelphia Fusion on Aug. 1 and the Atlanta Reign on Aug. 2.

"We're quite excited to announce that for the first time ever, the Houston Outlaws will be able to compete at home in front of our fans and our crowd," DeAppolonio told the HBJ. "Our fans have done a great job of traveling to support the team — whether that was in Dallas earlier this year, or going out to California to see them at the Overwatch League arena in Burbank (California)."

Having its esports teams travel like a more traditional sports league is a notable development for the Overwatch League, which is in the midst of its second season. Under the current league format, most Overwatch League matches are held at the Blizzard Arena Los Angeles in Burbank, California. But the league has experimented with two "homestand" weekends so far this season. John Spiher, director of partnerships for the Houston Outlaws, told the HBJ in July that the homestand weekend in Allen, Texas, in April sold out.



COURTESY

The Houston Outlaws, part of the Overwatch League, will play their first home matches in Houston in 2020.

The Houston Outlaws might soon be owned by local real estate investor Lee Zieben, president of the Zieben Group. The local investor reportedly plans to purchase the Outlaws in a \$40 million deal that could close in late August.

The Revention Music Center is owned by California-based events promoter and venue operator Live Nation Entertainment Inc. (NYSE: LYV). Blizzard Entertainment Inc. is a division of California-based Activision Blizzard Inc. (Nasdaq: ATVI).

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