# Panasonic CONNECT

# FACEIT and Panasonic ensure it's game on

**Client: FACEIT**
Location: Twickenham Stadium, London

Product(s) supplied:  **AW-UE150**   **AW-RP150GJ**

## Challenge

To safely produce gaming coverage of a $1m prize money international esports event during the pandemic.

## Solution

Six Panasonic AW-UE150 PTZ cameras, an AW-RP150 controller, and a Tuning rail system with an elevated column.

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**Andrew Lane**
Director of Broadcast & Production at FACEIT.



When the pandemic prevented the FACEIT production team travelling to the United States to stage its Flashpoint Season 2 tournament for Counter-Strike:Global Offensive, the company decided to switch the production venue to Twickenham Stadium in the UK and use Panasonic's PTZ camera and robotics solutions.

FACEIT is the leading independent competitive gaming platform for online multiplayer PvP gamers with more than 20 million users, and a total of 40 million hours spent on the platform each month. In addition, the organisation has its own TV and Media production unit that provides professional gaming coverage of some of the largest esports events in the world.

For Flashpoint 2, the team had originally planned to have all the players for its $1m prize money tournament on-site and produce the show from its studio in LA but as things changed it meant that players, talent and crew were struggling to travel.

"We had worked with Twickenham in the past, and as a venue it is suitably secure and locked down," said Andrew Lane, Director of Broadcast & Production at FACEIT. "We felt that it was the most appropriate place because it has an adjoining hotel, so that all our staff could be part of the same bubble whilst staying within the complex. Twickenham also has plenty of open space to allow for everyone within the bubble to get fresh air, or go for a walk or a run. That played out really well for us, giving us the space and resources we needed."

FACEIT decided to go ahead with the event but with all the players competing remotely and creating a studio at Twickenham. The organisers drew up plans to reduce all virus transmission risks within a studio space. This included reducing the amount of people coming into contact with the show's presenter talent.

"We wanted to give the talent space and the option to not have to wear a facemask, allowing them to be on camera and do their jobs properly," explained Andrew. "Having operated cameras wasn't really an option because our footprint in the studio would have significantly increased – especially when you add a jib or a Steadicam."

As a result, the team used a PTZ camera-based system featuring the Panasonic AW-UE150 camera, for three purposes. The first was to reduce the number of people located in the studio. The second was to have high quality, programmable preset and recall movements that could be rehearsed and used throughout the show. The third was to enable the system to be controlled over a network, so that the team could operate in isolation, from their hotel rooms, in the worst-case scenario.
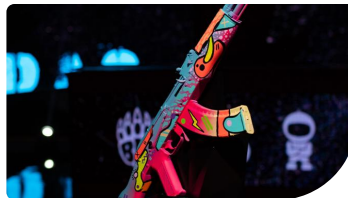
Image credit - Andrew Lane

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"The fallback plan for us was always that in the event that a member of the bubble fell ill, they could go to their room and complete their job from there," said Andrew. "We had access to the full hotel network, and had patched this to make it our own. This meant that everyone from the bubble had wired network to their room from day one. This was great for a bunch of gamers because they all enjoyed having high-speed internet and gaming machines in their hotel rooms! For the majority of people, it was a very practical way of working. Even our lighting guy had his desk working in his room! From that side of things, it was a real accomplishment."

The production team's system included six Panasonic UE150 cameras, an [AW-RP150 controller](#), and a [Tuning rail system](#) with an elevated column – all supplied via [ES Broadcast](#). The Panasonic UE150 cameras and Tuning system fitted perfectly in the environment because they didn't require proprietary cables, and could be controlled from a simple IP network.

The wider production system was very Blackmagic-based and included an ATEM Constellation mixer and RIEDEL comms. The team also used an infinity green screen and Augmented Reality effects on the live show and behind the scenes, in use with the Panasonic UE150 cameras, thanks to their compatibility with the FreeD protocol.

The Panasonic UE150 camera is the flagship model in Panasonic's professional PTZ camera line-up. Featuring a 1-type MOS largesensor, the PTZ camera supports high-quality 4K 50p video with simultaneous 4K/HD operation. It is equipped with a 75.1 degree viewing angle, 20x optical zoom and versatile outputs, including 12G-SDI, HDMI, optical fibre and IP.

FACEIT decided to purchase the Panasonic cameras and Tuning system for the Flashpoint 2 tournament. They can then be used in the London studio or easily transported in flight cases to other locations around the world. "At the time of Flashpoint 2, the UE150s were in high rental demand due the pandemic, so it made sense for us to buy them,' explained Andrew. "We also made the investment based around scalability, meaning that we can largely support up to a mid-sized show with kit we own. If we have a big show then we'll take everything, and work alongside a number of our key broadcast partners in the UK to scale up accordingly."

That scalability and flexibility is an important part of the investment decision for FACEIT due to the variety of production scenarios that can be required for esports.

"Within esports, it really comes down to an understanding of the game. Every game is different. It's therefore important to understand those aspects, and incorporate them into both the live broadcast and the way in which the game is presented," said Andrew. "We've got a very good formula that we've developed over time where we consider what the game actually is. We look at how we can produce a really good show for it, and how we can do something that hasn't been done before. In doing so, we look to create unique types of entertainment for all titles."