



## Introduction

In the domain of traditional sports, a clutch play can be defined as any performance increment that occurs under pressure circumstances (Otten, 2009). eSports are defined as the competitive play of video games in public settings such as online, or through streaming platforms (Ruvalcaba et al., 2018). There are many similarities that are shared between traditional sports and eSports such as: training sessions, fans, and tournaments. Further, eSports are now played at a professional level. Unlike traditional sports, the aspects in competitive video gaming that might induce a clutch performance have not yet been studied.

### What is clutch in eSports?

For example: any instance where a player is able to "turn the tide" when faced with a disadvantage.

## Objectives

We sought to explore the different aspects of a popular battle royal first-person shooter game (FPS) to create an index of clutch performances in competitive video gaming.

## Approach

Publicly available video clips of clutch performances were gathered by two independent graduate students from online streaming platforms. From this information, consensus was reached on different factors that may influence the occurrence of clutch plays. This information was used to create a scale and define a spectrum of clutch performances, based on observations of the videogame Apex Legends.

**Aspects unique to competitive video games make them conducive for instances of clutch performances typically observed in physical sports.**

## Observations

- Utilizing the gathered video clips, analyses were focused on aspects of gameplay that can be used to categorize different levels of pressure.
- Global factors considered were stakes, time, and teammate status.
- Dynamic factors included loadouts, positioning, and squad numbers.
- This conceptual project is intended to provide a starting point for research in clutch performance in the domain of competitive video games.

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01 Low-Level: no stakes, early game, and unpredictable.

02 Passable: low stakes, early game, teammates present and many opponents present.

03 Okay: low stakes, early game, and teammates alive, but are separated.

04 Decent: decent stakes, mid game, unstable loadouts, missing one teammate.

05 Mid-Level: decent stakes, mid game, and both teammates may be absent.

06 Above Average: decent stakes, mid game, stable loadout and one teammate is away.

07 Competitive: substantial stakes, mid to late game, loadout is semifinal, 2 teammates away, and facing 2 opponents.

08 Wild: substantial stakes, late game, loadout is finalized, both teammates are gone, slower paced thinking and movement.

09 Insane: substantial stakes, end game, no teammates, facing 2 to 3 opponents, thinking is more fast paced, and movements are erratic.

10 Clutch: game winning stakes, end game, no teammates, facing a full team, game sense, and reaction speeds are critical.