

Tournament Bracket Builder Guide

Usage Guide for Admins and Content Page Integration

Prepared for eMS tournament management, public bracket displays, and multi-show tournament workflows.

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1. Feature Overview

The Tournament Bracket Builder allows administrators to create, manage, update, and display tournament brackets inside eFed Management Suite. Tournaments can be used for title tournaments, contender tournaments, special event tournaments, yearly cups, one-night tournaments, or multi-show tournaments.

A tournament can be run entirely on one show or spread across multiple events. Each match can have its own participants, BYE spots, winner, event/show assignment, notes, and result summary.

What the Tournament Bracket Builder Does

- Create tournament brackets from the admin panel.
- Choose bracket sizes such as 4, 8, 16, or 32 entrants, depending on the install configuration.
- Add competitors manually or from the character roster.
- Add BYE spots.
- Assign matches to specific shows or events.
- Add match notes and result summaries.
- Choose winners as the tournament progresses.
- Automatically move winners into the next round after saving.
- Display the bracket on a public content page.
- Add custom content above and below the bracket.
- Add an optional tournament image, such as a title belt, trophy, logo, or tournament graphic.

2. Accessing the Tournament Manager

To access the Tournament Manager:

1. Log into the eMS admin dashboard.
2. Open the admin navigation menu.
3. Click Tournament Manager.

Depending on your installation, this may be located under Competition Tools, Event Manager, or another configured admin section.

Tournament Manager Actions

- Create a new tournament.
- Edit tournament settings.
- Manage the bracket.
- View tournament status.
- Search or filter tournaments.

3. Creating a New Tournament

From the Tournament Manager page, click Create Tournament. This opens the tournament creation form.

Tournament Name

Enter the full name of the tournament. Examples:

```
UTA Championship Tournament 2026  
King of the Mountain Tournament
```

```
World Tour Grand Prix  
Women's Championship Contender Tournament
```

This name will be displayed on the public bracket if the display function is configured to show the title.

Slug

The slug is used to identify the tournament when displaying it on a content page.

```
uta-championship-tournament-2026
```

This slug is used in the display function:

```
<?php display_tournament_bracket('uta-championship-tournament-2026'); ?>
```

The slug should be lowercase, with words separated by hyphens. Avoid spaces, special characters, or punctuation.

Content Above Bracket

The Content Above Bracket field allows you to add an introduction or explanation before the bracket appears.

```
The road to the UTA Championship begins here.  
Eight competitors will battle across the World Tour, with the finals taking place at WrestleUTA.
```

This section is optional and supports editor formatting.

Content Below Bracket

The Content Below Bracket field allows you to add closing information after the bracket.

```
The winner of this tournament will receive a future championship opportunity.  
Tournament matches will be updated after each show airs.
```

4. Tournament Settings Explained

Bracket Size

Choose the size of the tournament bracket. Common bracket sizes include:

```
4 entrants  
8 entrants  
16 entrants  
32 entrants
```

Once the tournament is created, the bracket size is locked. This prevents existing rounds and matches from being damaged after the bracket has already been generated.

Bracket Type

Currently, the Tournament Bracket Builder supports Single Elimination. Single elimination means that when a competitor loses, they are eliminated from the tournament.

Status

- Draft: Use this while creating or preparing the bracket.
- Active: Use this when the tournament is ongoing.
- Completed: Use this when the tournament has finished.
- Archived: Use this for older tournaments that should remain stored but are no longer active.

Tournament Image

The Tournament Image is optional. It is not necessarily a winner image. It can be used for any tournament-related display graphic.

- Championship belt image
- Tournament trophy
- Tournament logo
- Event logo
- Sponsor graphic
- Cup graphic
- Custom tournament artwork

To add an image, click Choose File under Tournament Image, select the image from your computer, and save the tournament.

Display Options

- Show tournament image block: Displays the tournament image on the public bracket page.
- Show event/show labels: Displays linked show or event labels on match cards.
- Show match notes: Allows match notes to appear with the public bracket.

5. Managing the Bracket

To manage a tournament bracket:

4. Go to Tournament Manager.
5. Find the tournament.
6. Click Manage Bracket.

The bracket editor is organized by round. Each round can be expanded or collapsed to keep the page easier to manage.

Editing Matches

Each match row includes the main fields needed to update the bracket:

- Competitor 1
- Competitor 2
- Winner
- Show/Event
- Additional match details

Note: After making changes, click Save All Bracket Changes. The bracket editor saves all match changes at once.

6. Competitors, Manual Names, and BYEs

Adding Competitors

Each competitor slot supports two ways of entering a competitor:

- Select an existing character from the character dropdown.
- Type a manual name.

Using an Existing Character

7. Open the character dropdown for Competitor 1 or Competitor 2.
8. Choose the character.
9. Save the bracket.

Using a character dropdown is recommended when the competitor exists in the eMS roster because the public bracket can link to the character profile.

Using a Manual Name

Manual names are useful for tag teams, mystery opponents, non-roster names, imported historical tournaments, and placeholder entries.

```
The Empire  
Mystery Opponent  
Winner of Match 4  
El Fantasma
```

Using BYE Spots

A BYE is used when a competitor automatically advances because there is no opponent in that bracket spot.

```
Gunnar Van Patton vs BYE
```

To create a BYE:

10. Find the match.
11. Check the BYE box for the empty competitor slot.
12. Save the bracket.

If one competitor is marked as BYE and the other is not, the non-BYE competitor can be selected as the winner. You can also use Auto-Advance BYEs.

7. Winners and Auto-Advancement

To select a winner:

13. Open the round containing the match.
14. Find the match row.
15. Use the Winner dropdown.
16. Select Competitor 1, Competitor 2, Draw / No Contest, or No Winner Yet.
17. Click Save All Bracket Changes.

When a winner is selected and saved, eMS automatically moves that winner into the next round if the bracket has a mapped next match slot.

```
Match 1 winner → Match 5 Competitor 1
Match 2 winner → Match 5 Competitor 2
```

Note: Winners marked as No Winner Yet or Draw / No Contest will not auto-advance.

Auto-Advancing BYEs

The Auto-Advance BYEs button scans the tournament for matches where one competitor is marked as BYE and the other competitor is valid. When clicked, eMS automatically selects the non-BYE competitor as the winner and moves that competitor into the next round.

8. Assigning Matches to Shows or Events

Each tournament match can be linked to an existing event booking.

18. Find the match in the bracket editor.
19. Use the Show / Event dropdown.
20. Select the correct event.
21. Save the bracket.

This is useful for tournaments spread across multiple shows.

```
Quarterfinal Match 1 – World Tour: Mexico '26
Quarterfinal Match 2 – World Tour: Dallas '26
Semifinal Match 1 – World Tour: Chicago '26
Finals – WrestleUTA
```

Manual Event Labels

If a tournament match is not connected to an existing event booking, use a manual event label.

22. Expand Additional match details for the match.
23. Enter a label into Manual Event Label.
24. Save the bracket.

```
Night One
Finals at WrestleUTA
Special Presentation
To Be Announced
```

9. Additional Match Details

Each match has an expandable section called Additional match details. This section includes:

- Manual Event Label
- Match Title
- Match Notes
- Match Result
- Advance Mapping

Match Title

```
Quarterfinal Match  
Semifinal Match  
Tournament Final  
UTA Championship Tournament Final
```

Match Notes

```
Winner advances to the finals.  
This match took place after a backstage confrontation earlier in the night.  
Special guest referee assigned.
```

Match Result

```
Jarvis Valentine defeated Brick Bronson by pinfall.  
Bianca Page advanced after Valentina Blaze was counted out.  
The match ended in a no contest after outside interference.
```

Advance Mapping

The Advance Mapping area tells you where the winner of that match is expected to go. This is informational only and helps admins understand how the bracket will advance.

10. One-Night and Multi-Show Workflows

Running a One-Night Tournament

25. Create the tournament.
26. Add all first-round competitors.
27. Assign each match to the same event/show.
28. Save the bracket.
29. As results happen, select winners and save.
30. Continue updating each round until the final winner is selected.
31. Change the tournament status to Completed when finished.

Running a Multi-Show Tournament

32. Create the tournament.
33. Add first-round competitors.
34. Assign each first-round match to its scheduled event.
35. Save the bracket.
36. After each show airs, update the winners.
37. Winners will auto-populate into the next round.
38. Assign future-round matches to later events as they become known.
39. Continue until the tournament is completed.

11. Showing Brackets on Content Pages

Tournament brackets can be displayed on public content pages using the display function.

Basic Usage

```
<?php display_tournament_bracket('tournament-slug'); ?>
```

Replace tournament-slug with the slug from the tournament settings page.

```
<?php display_tournament_bracket('uta-championship-tournament-2026'); ?>
```

Displaying a Bracket by ID

```
<?php display_tournament_bracket(3); ?>
```

Using the slug is usually better because it is easier to read and remember.

Where to Place the Display Function

You can place the function inside a content page, custom page, or template file where PHP is allowed.

```
<div class="page-content">  
  <?php display_tournament_bracket('uta-championship-tournament-2026'); ?>  
</div>
```

Required Function File

The display function must be loaded before it can be used. If the tournament functions were added directly to your existing custom functions file, no extra include is needed.

Recommended setup:

```
// admin/libs/custom_functions.php  
require_once __DIR__ . '/tournament-functions.php';
```

12. Display Function Options

The display function supports optional settings.

```
<?php  
display_tournament_bracket('uta-championship-tournament-2026', [  
  'show_title' => true,  
  'show_top_content' => true,  
  'show_bottom_content' => true,  
  'show_winner' => true,  
  'show_event_labels' => true,  
  'show_match_notes' => true,  
  'show_match_results' => true,  
  'show_character_links' => true,  
  'show_empty_matches' => true,  
  'compact' => false,  
]);  
?>
```

Available Display Options

Option	Purpose
show_title	Controls whether the tournament name appears above the bracket.
show_top_content	Controls whether the content above the bracket is shown.
show_bottom_content	Controls whether the content below the bracket is shown.
show_winner	Controls whether the tournament image/feature block is shown.

show_event_labels	Controls whether event/show labels appear on match cards.
show_match_notes	Controls whether match notes appear publicly.
show_match_results	Controls whether match result summaries appear publicly.
show_character_links	Controls whether linked roster characters become clickable.
show_empty_matches	Controls whether empty future matches appear.
compact	Displays the bracket in a more compact format.

Common Display Examples

Full Tournament Page

```
<?php
display_tournament_bracket('uta-championship-tournament-2026', [
    'show_title' => true,
    'show_top_content' => true,
    'show_bottom_content' => true,
    'show_winner' => true,
    'show_event_labels' => true,
    'show_match_notes' => true,
    'show_match_results' => true,
    'show_character_links' => true,
]);
?>
```

Simple Bracket Only

```
<?php
display_tournament_bracket('uta-championship-tournament-2026', [
    'show_title' => false,
    'show_top_content' => false,
    'show_bottom_content' => false,
    'show_winner' => false,
]);
?>
```

Compact Bracket

```
<?php
display_tournament_bracket('king-of-the-mountain', [
    'compact' => true,
]);
?>
```

13. Styling the Public Bracket

The bracket display uses CSS classes beginning with `ems-tournament` and `ems-bracket`. These can be styled in your public theme stylesheet.

```
.ems-tournament
.ems-tournament-header
.ems-tournament-content
.ems-tournament-winner-box
.ems-bracket
```

```
.ems-bracket-round  
.ems-bracket-match  
.ems-bracket-competitor  
.ems-bracket-competitor.is-winner  
.ems-bracket-competitor.is-bye  
.ems-bracket-event  
.ems-bracket-notes  
.ems-bracket-result
```

Do not place public bracket styling in admin.css unless the bracket is only being viewed inside the admin area. For public pages, use your front-end stylesheet.

Recommended public CSS locations include frontend.css, style.css, theme.css, or css/tournaments.css.

14. Troubleshooting

The bracket does not show on the content page

Check that the tournament slug is correct and that the tournament functions are loaded.

PHP says the function does not exist

The tournament function file is not being loaded. Include tournament-functions.php from your custom functions file.

Winners are not moving to the next round

Click Save All Bracket Changes and make sure the winner is Competitor 1 or Competitor 2. No Winner Yet and Draw / No Contest will not auto-advance.

BYEs are not advancing

Make sure only one side of the match is marked as BYE, then click Auto-Advance BYEs or manually select the non-BYE competitor as winner.

A character does not appear in the dropdown

The character dropdown only shows characters that are not deleted.

The tournament image does not show

Check that Show tournament image block is enabled and that an image has been uploaded.

Event labels do not show

Check that Show event/show labels is enabled and that the match has a linked show/event or manual event label.

15. Recommended Admin Workflow

40. Create the tournament.
41. Choose bracket size.
42. Add top and bottom content.
43. Upload a tournament image if desired.
44. Save the tournament.
45. Open Manage Bracket.

46. Fill in first-round competitors.
47. Mark BYEs if needed.
48. Click Auto-Advance BYEs if applicable.
49. Assign shows or events to matches.
50. Save all bracket changes.
51. As shows happen, select winners.
52. Save all bracket changes.
53. Repeat until the final is complete.
54. Change tournament status to Completed.
55. Add the bracket to a content page using `display_tournament_bracket()`.

Example: Creating an 8-Person Title Tournament

56. Go to Tournament Manager.
57. Click Create Tournament.
58. Enter UTA Championship Tournament 2026.
59. Use slug `uta-championship-tournament-2026`.
60. Select 8 Entrants.
61. Add top content explaining the tournament.
62. Upload a title belt image if desired.
63. Save the tournament.
64. Open Manage Bracket.
65. Add four first-round matches.
66. Assign each match to the correct event.
67. Save all changes.
68. After each match happens, select the winner.
69. Save all changes.
70. Winners automatically populate into the semifinals.
71. Continue until the final is complete.

Example: Adding the Tournament to a Page

Create a content page called UTA Championship Tournament. In the page content/template, add:

```
<?php display_tournament_bracket('uta-championship-tournament-2026'); ?>
```

Save the page. When visitors open the page, they will see the tournament bracket and any updates made in the admin panel.

Summary

The Tournament Bracket Builder gives eMS a flexible way to manage tournaments of different sizes and formats. Admins can build brackets, add competitors, use BYEs, assign matches to shows, track winners, and display the full tournament on public content pages.

The feature is useful for championship tournaments, number-one contender tournaments, cup tournaments, grand prix tournaments, special event tournaments, multi-show story tournaments, and historical tournament archives.