



CULTSCALE PRESENTS

FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

DRY BONES

Created by Maroun Najm

mar 2026

A person wearing a headset is seen from behind, sitting at a desk in a dimly lit room. There are several computer monitors in front of them, displaying various colorful images. The room is dark, with some light coming from the monitors and vertical light strips on the walls.

What does it cost to keep trying
when everyone around you
has stopped believing?

THE INTERNATIONAL

The Dota 2 World Championship

The biggest annual stage in Dota 2, and the horizon this film is chasing.

THE EVENT

20

TEAMS

12

DAYS

1

AEGIS

Held annually. Next edition: [Aug 2026](#).



WATCH THE OPENING

TI 2025 Opening Ceremony

The fastest way to feel the scale and spectacle this film is chasing.

[WATCH ON YOUTUBE](#) ↗

THE SCALE

63M

HOURS WATCHED

1.78M

PEAK CONCURRENT

1ST

GULF WINNER

Team Falcons became the first Gulf team to lift the Aegis. Regional interest is already moving.

DRYBONES

Five Players. For the game. Through it all. **Still here.**



BBB

SOFT SUPPORT · 26 · LEBANON

Eleven years pro. Outlasted three hero reworks and two TI format changes. Good game.

Juggling work and life. Still giving others the chances he never had.



NIGHTALICIOUS

HARD SUPPORT · 30 · LEBANON

Farmed EU servers alongside GH, who won TI twice with OG. Most players close the lobby. He re-queued.

Once a prodigy. Now racing against time.



UNNAMED

MID · 17 · LEBANON

Seventeen years old. Mid player. His only gap is experience. At 17, that is technically the plan.

Raw talent, untamed and untested. Standing at the edge of possibility.



WUITER

OFFLANE · 28 · TURKEY

295th on the EU leaderboard. Top 0.003% of active players worldwide. Turkey's best-kept secret in competitive Dota.

A Turkish exile, hunted by past setbacks.



YONKO

CARRY · 21 · LEBANON

Four players build the whole game around one carry. DryBones gave that role to a 21-year-old from Lebanon. The other four seem **unbothered.**

A quiet fire. Pouring everything into this one shot at greatness.

THE FILM

A final qualifying run toward the world stage before life pulls them in different directions.

A feature documentary following DryBones through one last attempt to reach The International 2026. From the first days of boot camp to the matches that decide everything, the camera stays with them from day one.

The film lives inside the qualifier run itself, where ambition, sacrifice, and pressure are felt in real time. It carries the propulsion of an adventure, with each stage changing the horizon and the possibility of the main event waiting on the far side.

NOW · 2026
Pre-Production

SPRING 2026
Boot Camp

JUN 9-28, 2026
Qualifiers

AUG 2026
If they qualify, TI opens

THE STORY

A three-act run.

- I **ACT I: THE DECISION** Five players commit to one last run before life can pull them in different directions. There is no institutional backing to hide behind. Preparation begins, the team takes shape, and the possibility becomes real enough to reorganize everything around it.
- II **ACT II: THE QUALIFIERS** Boot camp hardens into a pressure cooker. Online rounds, on-site finals, exhaustion, silence, arguments, and small recoveries compress the team into the real shape of the run. This is the film's dramatic core.
- III **ACT III: THE UPSIDE** If they qualify, the run opens onto The International and the main event. The scale changes at once. A regional grind becomes a global stage, and the ending lands in what the chase has changed, not only in the finish.

A group of people, likely athletes, are seen from behind, huddled together in a celebratory embrace. They are surrounded by a shower of colorful confetti (red, yellow, and white) falling from above. The scene is dimly lit, with a dark blue background, suggesting an indoor arena or stadium at night. The overall mood is one of triumph and joy.

Is it reckless to keep trying,
or is stopping what actually breaks you?

CREATIVE DIRECTION

We frame DryBones as an adventure.

The key creative decision is to treat DryBones not as specialist esports coverage, but as an adventure carried by competitive play. The qualifier run supplies the motion, but the real arcs come from the five players: what each is carrying, what each risks, and what it takes to keep moving together.

So the structure is both external and internal: each round opens a new threshold in the run, while work, exile, expectation, inexperience, time, and fear test the players. The King's Avatar is useful here as a creative case study because it keeps competitive play legible as character drama: clear enough for core fans, open enough for viewers beyond the scene.



CASE STUDY

The King's Avatar

[Netflix ↗](#)[Series trailer ↗](#)[Film trailer ↗](#)

A strong creative case study because the action never floats free of drama: personal pressure, team role clarity, and competitive scale remain readable at once.

WHAT THE PLAY CARRIES

Each player needs a pressure outside the game, and the release has to be collective. If that lands, the match reads as character, not only competition.

HOW THE WORLD OPENS

Each qualifier phase should feel like a threshold, widening the world and raising what the team can reach. New rivals make the world feel larger, without turning the film into a genre exercise.

COMPARABLES

Four comps that prove the market case.



FREE TO PLAY ↗

CORE ACTIVATION

A native Dota story that the community watched, shared, and carried on its own.

6.8M views on Valve's official YouTube upload.

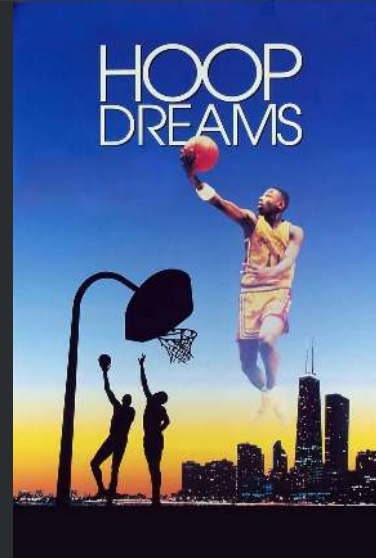


DRIVE TO SURVIVE ↗

BREAKOUT CONVERSION

A specialist competitive world opened into broader streaming behavior through access and character.

Netflix lists 8 seasons on the service in 2026.



HOOP DREAMS ↗

LANDMARK THEATRICAL DOC

Character access and competitive pressure scaled into one of nonfiction's landmark theatrical runs.

\$11.8M worldwide theatrical gross.



FREE SOLO ↗

PREMIUM EVENT DOC

A single high-stakes pursuit sold as a premium event doc with major crossover reach.

\$29.2M worldwide on a \$2M budget, plus the Oscar.

AUDIENCE

Fandom activation and audience flywheel.

THE CORE AUDIENCE

Competitive gamers who follow the road to TI. They know what a qualifier bracket looks like, they understand what BBB and NIGHTALICIOUS are risking, and they have watched enough pro Dota to read every decision the team makes on screen.

They are the first wave. They send the film into scrim channels and team group chats before any algorithm touches it, and that act of sending is the first distribution event. That is the Free to Play logic: the community behaves like a release engine.

THE BRIDGE AUDIENCE

People who have never opened Dota but know what it means to keep going past the point where everyone around them has stopped. The story reads the same to them as it does to any esports viewer, and they arrive through the core.

They turn fan activation into broader reach. That is the Drive to Survive logic: character access converts a specialist world into wider streaming interest.

The community starts the release. Story carries it outward.

PRODUCTION ARCHITECTURE

Istanbul base. Shanghai final act.

The production plan is city-based: Istanbul concentrates the shoot, the team's operating base, and the core spend. Shanghai sits beyond the qualifier run as payoff plus added rights logic.

ISTANBUL

Istanbul is the operating base for boot camp, qualifiers, and most principal photography. It keeps the film inside the team's real campaign while giving the production a practical path through Turkish services, production support, and regional access across MENA and Southeast Europe.

SHANGHAI

Shanghai sits beyond qualifiers as the run's payoff chapter. TI 2026 places that final stretch inside a major games market and strengthens the case for China-facing rights, local platform or distribution talks, and wider East Asia positioning.

Istanbul carries the core production. Shanghai adds payoff and rights upside.

FINANCING PLAN

A \$600K feature built on four lanes.

TURKEY REBATE

SOFT MONEY

Turkey-based spend lowers the cash burden while keeping production where the team already prepares and competes.

PLATFORM ADVANCE

PLATFORM

Advance, minimum guarantee, or pre-buy against a competition documentary with clear crossover reach.

ENDEMIC BRANDS

BRANDS

Selective gaming-hardware and esports integrations already native to the world on screen.

EAST ASIA RIGHTS

RIGHTS

Advance or equity against regional rights value created as the qualifier run carries into a main-event chapter.

MARKET PATH

Audience first. Platform led.

01

CORE LAUNCH

Dota community first: team channels, creators, Twitch, YouTube, Discord, and gaming media.

Free to Play proved the community can behave like a release engine.

02

PLATFORM SCALE

Character access and competitive pressure convert core attention into premium SVOD viewing beyond esports.

Drive to Survive is the breakout template.

03

REGIONAL EXTENSION

A main-event chapter extends the film into an East Asia release lane layered on top of the global platform path.

The platform case is already global. Regional upside extends it.

PROJECT STATUS

Access secured. Calendar fixed.

2026 WINDOW

JUN 9-28

Regional qualifiers

AUG 13-16

TI Group Stage

AUG 20-23

TI Main Event

The calendar is public. The deadline is external. Once greenlit, the film moves straight into execution.

ACCESS AND PACKAGE

Roster access is in place for a Turkey-based 2026 campaign, and the treatment, visual language, and production approach are already built.

Producer, director, and creative producer are attached.

GREENLIGHT CHANGES

Greenlight triggers Turkey shoot, qualifier coverage at full scale, and the ability to carry the story beyond qualifiers.

The remaining step is execution, not conceptual development.

PARTNER MANDATES

Three partner mandates.

TURKEY CO-PRODUCER

Lead Turkish production partner for boot camp through qualifiers.

PLATFORM BUYER

Early buyer for a competition doc with a built-in first audience and breakout upside.

EAST ASIA PARTNER

Regional partner ready to monetize any main-event chapter that grows out of the qualifier run.

STILL HERE.

DRY BONES

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