

Scump retires: his legacy on Call of Duty and beyond.

Long live the King.



Credit: Scump

We were witnessing the final chapter being written in the greatest Call of Duty career. Little did we know, he had already closed his book.

On January 18, in what would've been Seth "Scump" Abner's last year in the Call of Duty League, the 27-year-old OpTic Texas star shocked the gaming world by announcing his retirement from

competitive play – after just one event into the new season.



The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter post from the verified account 'OpTic Scump' (@scump). The post features a video thumbnail with a play button icon and a 'Watch on Twitter' button. The video shows a man in a blue patterned hoodie and glasses, identified as Scump, being embraced by a woman with long blonde hair. The text of the tweet reads 'THANKS FOR EVERYTHING'. Below the video, the timestamp is '2:51 AM · Jan 18, 2023'. The engagement metrics show 247.1K likes, with options to 'Reply' and 'Share'. A button at the bottom of the tweet says 'Read 11.4K replies'.

In a five-minute long video on Twitter, he left loved ones, teammates, and closest aides, teary-eyed. Apologising to his supporters, Scump admitted that he had already been “on the fence” with his participation at the turn of the year, and that he had “underestimated his energy”.

A household name in the CoD scene, he became a fan-favourite over the years when he started live-streaming and posting content on YouTube, showing off his impeccable aim and game sense, with an infectious personality to boot. It was no surprise to see an outpour of gratitude and support, congratulating Scump on the conclusion of his storied career.

Real recognise real



Insane career and forever the face of cod. thanks for being an inspiration to the scene, good luck with what's next brotha!



3:16 AM · Jan 18, 2023



 **6.1K**  **Reply**  **Share**

Current competitors like Simp, Huke, Scrappy, were among those that witnessed Scump's skill first-hand on the servers. Instead of relishing at the fact that they didn't have to face his wrath anymore online – many were quick to send in their respect and well wishes.

Beyond gaming, athletes were sad to see Scump go, including the National Basketball Association's (NBA) all-star Karl Anthony Towns, and Sacramento Kings point-guard De'Aaron Fox.



Putting more eggs in the content creation basket, he was also welcomed with opened arms by some of the biggest gaming live-streamers, such as Dr. Disrespect, and TimTheTatMan.



3:05 AM · Jan 18, 2023

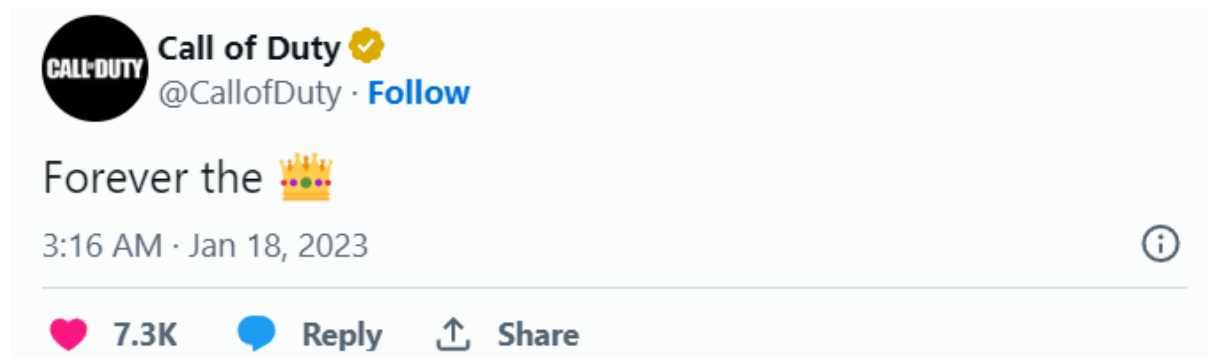


 **8.6K**  **Reply**  **Share**

Despite being a thorn in many rival organisations and teams' success, 100 Thieves, New York Subliners, L.A. Guerrillas, amongst others, put competition aside. They thanked Scump for what he did for the game, elevating esports to levels unheard of. Even OpTic's greatest rival FaZe Clan, had to get in on the action.



A cherry atop the cake, the Call of Duty official Twitter account might've single-handedly ended the G.O.A.T. debate, with a certain emoji for the outgoing legend.



Stats don't lie



Credit: Activision, Call of Duty League

Since his first win back in 2011, Scump has won 30 championships throughout his 12-year competitive career, falling shy of first place behind Ian “Crimsix” Porter’s 37 rings. What’s even more impressive is the consistent nature of his excellence – he won across different iterations of CoD, every year from Black Ops 1 up until Modern Warfare II (2022), excluding World War 2 and Cold War. Even if he’s not coming out top gun, he had an average placement of fourth (4.08) across 95 events and 13 different games, including a 1.20 in Modern Warfare 3. Rounding up his long list of accolades, he reached the pinnacle of competitive CoD, becoming a world champion back in 2017, bagging two X Games gold medals along the way.

Because of this, Scump is one of the few that has amassed more than US\$1 million (US\$1,186,505.35) across his career, putting him near the top on the list of highest earners in Call of Duty history. And that’s not counting his endorsements and salary, which has been rumoured to be more than US\$500,000 a year in the twilight years of his competitive career.

Saving the best for last, if I had to pick a standout from his extensive highlight reel, no one will forget [his hardpoint hold on Yemen in Black Ops II against EnVyUs](#) – a moment for the ages (it might be a good idea to turn down your headphones before playing the clip).

What's next for Call of Duty Esports?



Credit: OpTic Texas

It has been a turbulent few weeks for OpTic Texas. Riddled with roster drama, it failed to pry stars like Alex “Arcitys” Sanderson and Amer “Pred” Zulbeari from their respective organisations to try to round out its four. A silver lining: Scump’s retirement has seemed to put an end to the chaos, paving the way for Brandon “Dashy” Otell to pull a 180, and complete a line-up that the Green Wall finally backs.

Without the face of the CDL fragging out for the years ahead, it leaves the game in a bit of a stump. There’s a huge void that can’t be filled, and with CoD viewership dwindling and the emergence of other popular shooters like Valorant and Overwatch 2, it’s an open invitation, almost a desperate plea, for the rest of the game’s biggest upcoming players to ascend to the throne and keep CoD alive. With one less SMG player in his way, I expect Atlanta Faze’s Chris “Simp” Lehr to take over and shut down games more often – giving him more room to play at the level he’s expected to. Knowing the importance of a good SMG, I think he’ll be on top of the MVP conversation for this year.

For the next generation of CoD pros that he’s inspired, the door has been semtex’ed wide open. Rookies of the CDL like Thomas “Scrappy” Ernst and Javier “Vikul” Milagro could make their mark as the new kids on the block – going no holds barred and lighting up servers with reckless abandon, much like what Scump did the past decade.

It’ll be a volatile season of CDL, but one that has been made less predictable and more interesting with Scump’s departure, and I’m looking forward to what the 12 teams have in store.

The end of an era



Credit: Activision, Call of Duty League

He may not be console gaming's most winningest or decorated player. He may not even be the one with the best game sense or mechanical gifts. Heck, there might even be some kid off the block in the future that's more likeable and infatuating than him. But for me, he's bigger than that.

Scump represents my entire adolescent years. Over the previous decade, when esports wasn't even a thing, Scump paved the way, regardless of if you're a casual fan, or someone who's been closely following his rise to the top since he made his debut on Team Quantic. Leverage back in 2011.

Most importantly, during the formative time where it wasn't yet laden with money and pressure, Scump showed us the true potential esports had. It gave the scene its perennial all-star, its Lionel Messi, its Roger Federer, its Kobe. The perfect combination of talent, personality, he burst onto the stage at the right time, trailblazing the way for what it is today.

But all good things must come to an end, and this is one especially hard goodbye. Besides leaving behind one of the greatest legacies in esports, it's one more reason for me to admit that I'm no

longer that child playing Call of Duty all morning during my school holidays, trying my best to imitate Scump's dropshot technique, making sure that I caught it on my Elgato game capture.



Credit: MLG

Instead of new maps and rotations to study, and pesky players to deal with – Scump now faces a new challenge. Revealing that he retired to focus on making content full-time, he dives head-first into an inferno saturated with popular creators and ex-pros, all vying to rack in views via ever-changing forms of media. Adding fuel to the fire, it seems like viewers just aren't as interested in Call of Duty as they were before.

But, as [ex-teammate and close friend Matthew “Nadeshot” Haag said during a podcast](#), he thinks that Scump is the “greatest in terms of raw skill”, and he'll have no problem dominating in any other shooter like Valorant or Halo Infinite. He's already shown his versatility in the battle-royale genre – [winning the US\\$100,000 Solo YOLO World Series of Warzone event in 2021](#). More recently, Scump hosted a watch party on Twitch to cheer on OpTic Texas from the bleachers in their first game without him in the roster. His own channel's viewership peaked at about 95,000 live viewers, while the entire league's stream only mustered a high of 63,000 during the match.

There will never be another Scump, and it'll take some time for esports to recover from the uneasiness of not seeing his distinct orange salamander hair orchestrating beautiful plays in the CDL. But be warned, the beast has now been unchained – and he's coming to a lobby near you.