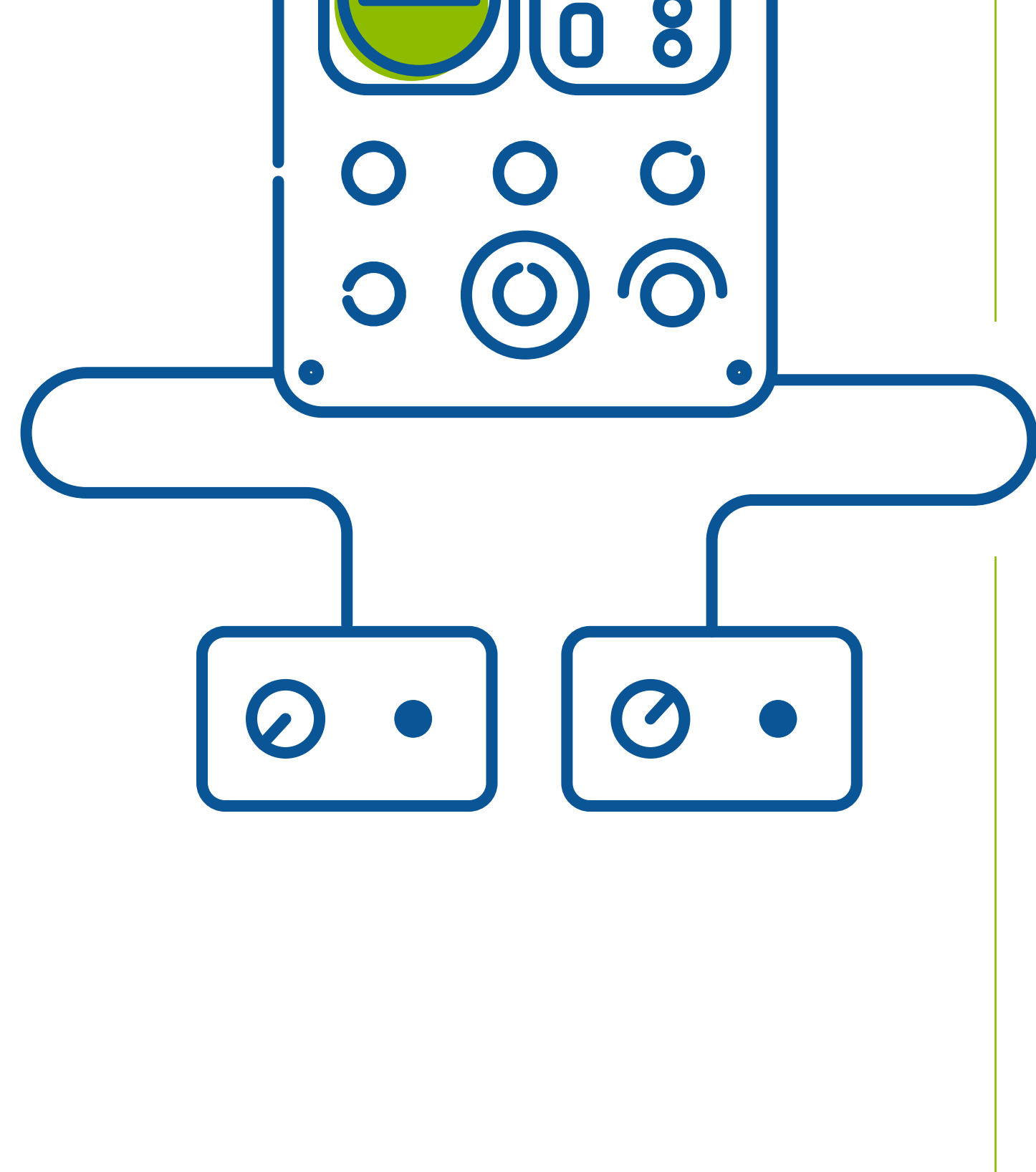




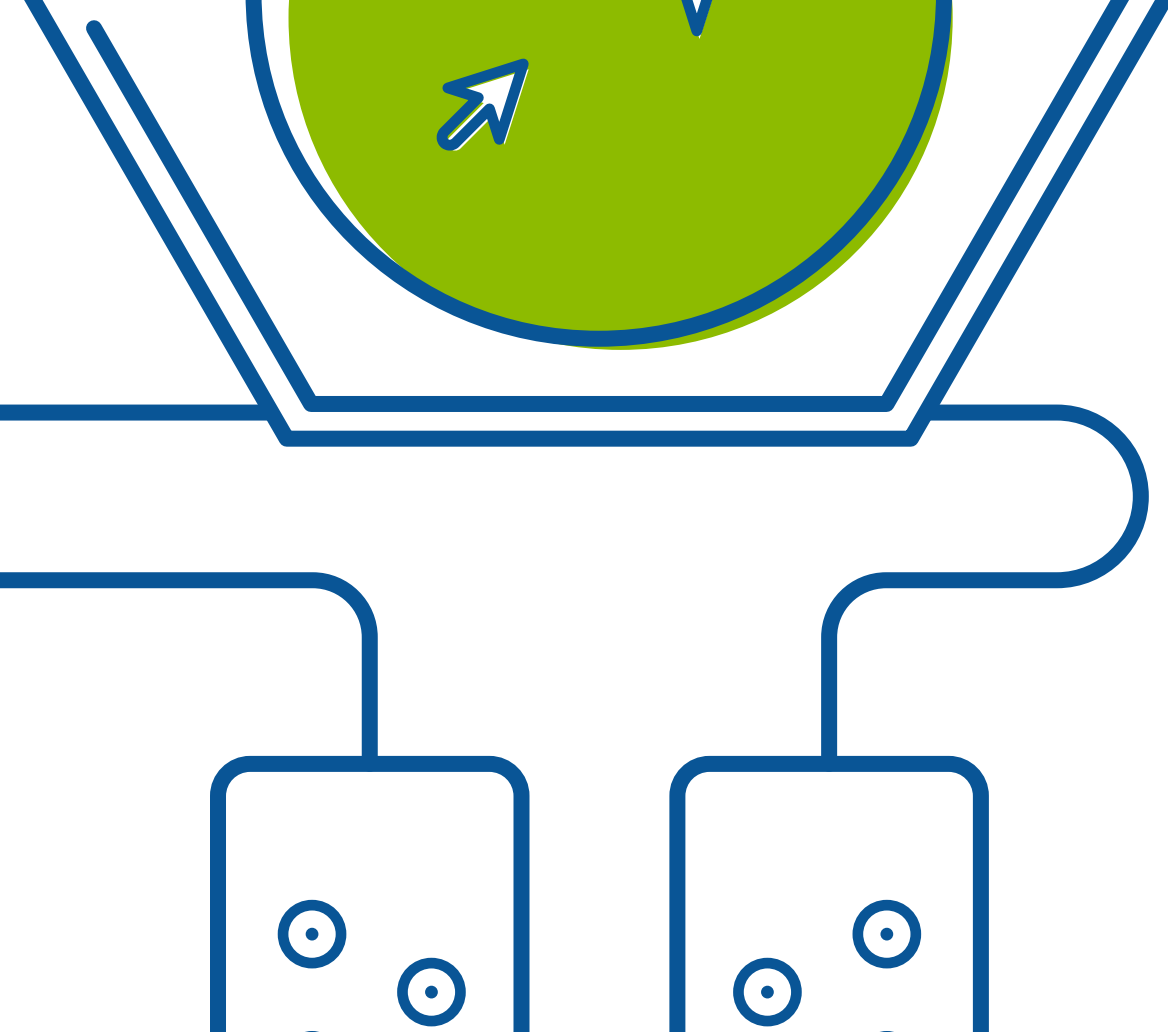
# The Evolution of Esports

Over the last 70 years, eSports has established itself in many countries around the world. From the development of the world's first video game, we take a look at all the events that have lead eSports to become a billion-dollar market.



## 1958

**TENNIS FOR TWO**  
World's first video game designed by American physicist William Higinbotham.



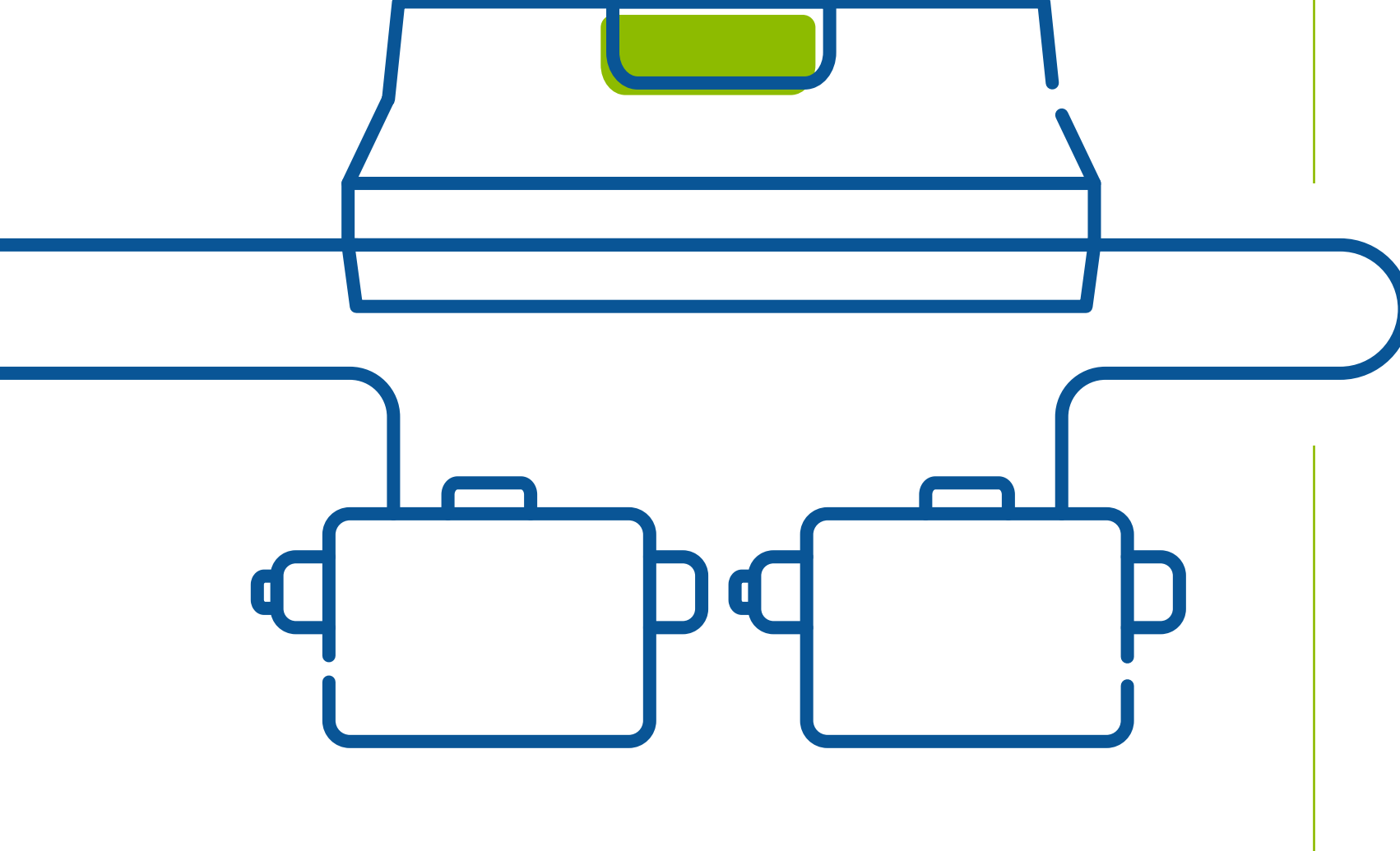
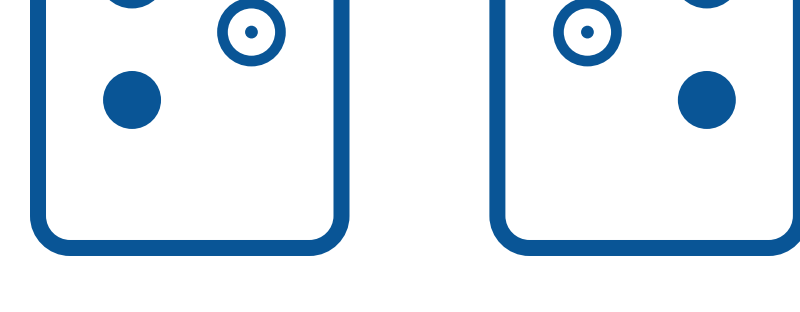
## 1972

**INTERGALACTIC SPACEWAR! OLYMPICS**

Spacewar! was developed by computer scientist Steve Russell and some colleagues like Martin Graetz and Wayne Wiatanen of the Tech Model Railroad Club at MIT in 1962. It is considered the world's first digital computer game and was named one of the ten most important computer games of all time by the New York Times in 2007.

On October 19, 1972, the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory at Stanford University hosted the world's first eSports tournament where 14 players met to compete in Spacewar!

The circle of people playing the early games was still limited to universities and similar institutions since they had technical facilities.

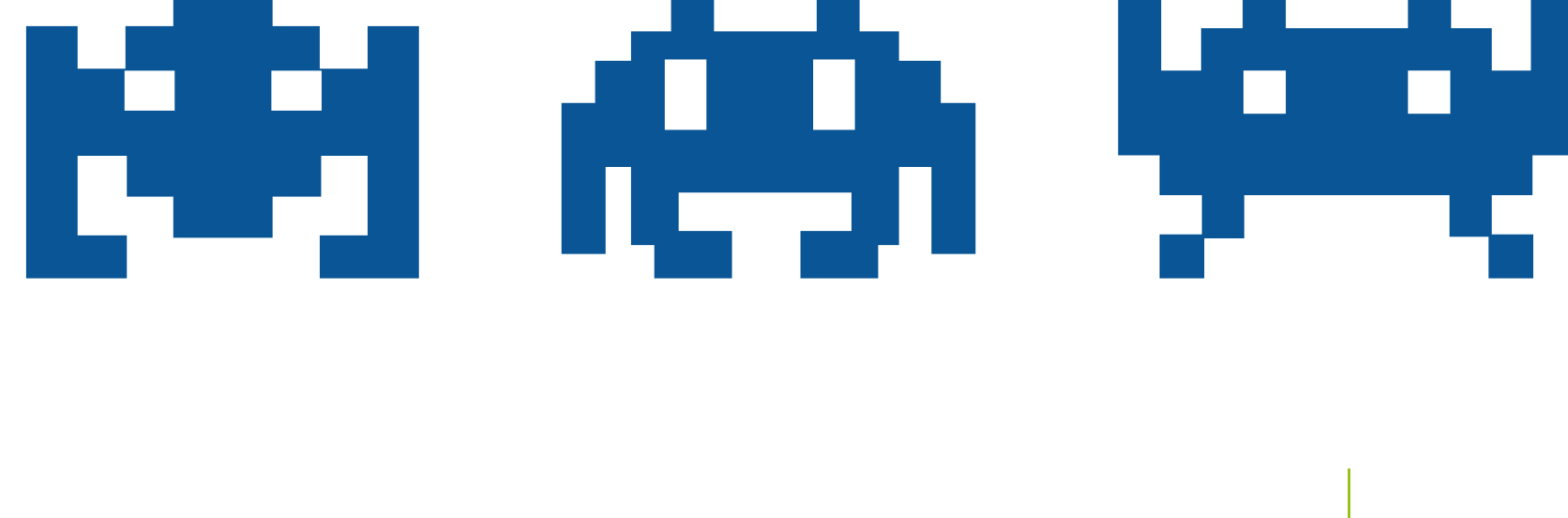
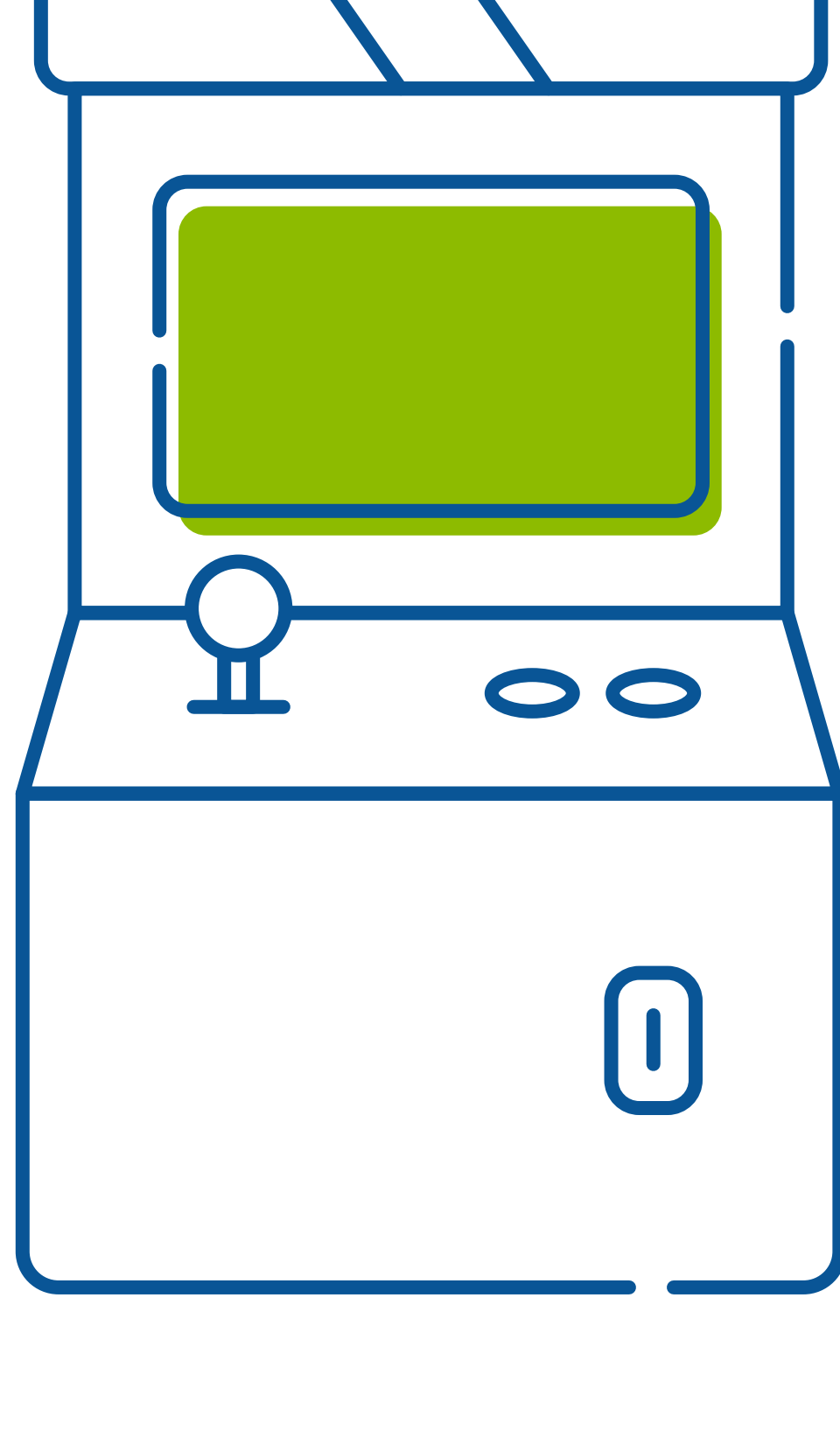


**MAGNAVOX ODYSSEY**  
First gaming console that could be connected to a TV. The console made digital gaming suitable for the masses.

## 1979

**HIGH SCORE LISTS**

In arcades, Asteroids and Starfire enabled a high score list for games for the first time. Players are given the ability to immortalize themselves with a personal name code. Given that only a few machines offered the possibility to play against each other, these lists became a measure of the player's skill.



## 1980

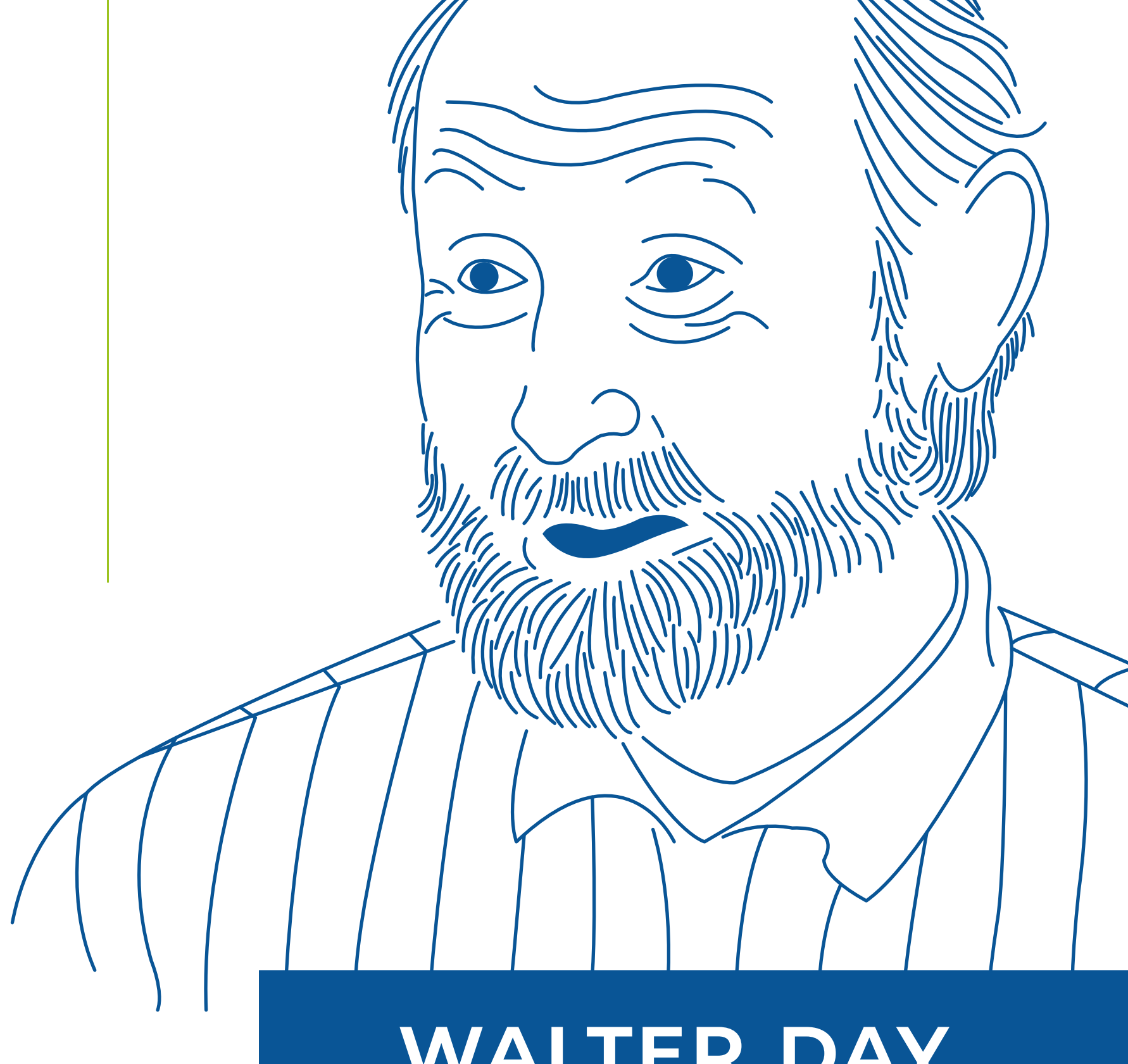
**SPACE INVADERS CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Space Invaders laid the foundation for the world's first major eSports tournament in 1978. It was played by 10,000 gamers at the 1980 Space Invaders Championship.

## 1982

**TWIN GALAXIES NATIONAL SCOREBOARD**

The Twin Galaxies National Scoreboard was the first referee service for video games, founded by arcade operator Walter Day. In addition, "Twin Galaxies' Official Video Game & Pinball Book of World Records" was soon designed as a universal set of rules to prevent possible cheating.

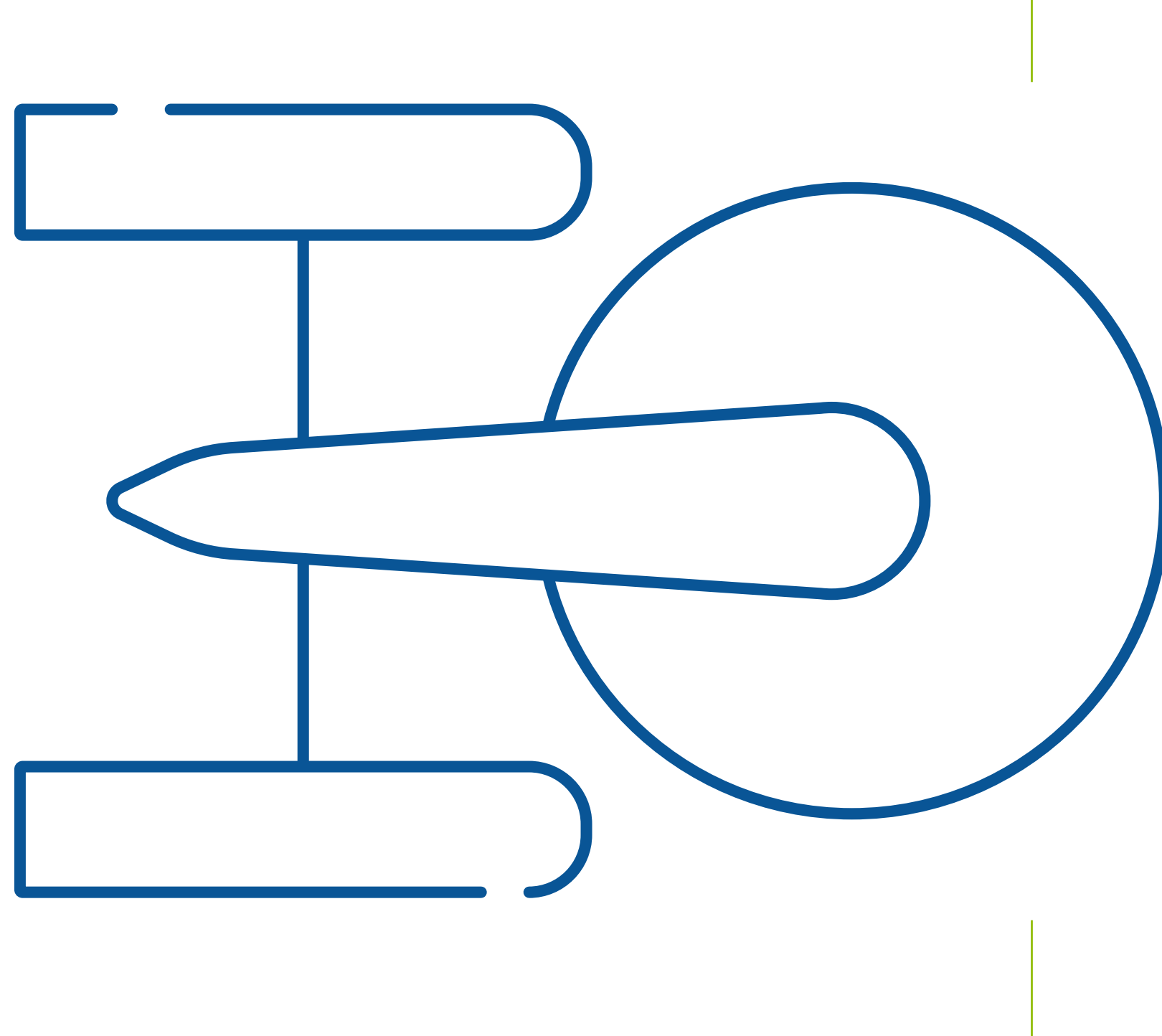


**WALTER DAY**

## 1983

**FIRST PROFESSIONAL GAMING TEAM**

Walter Day founded the U.S. National Video Team, the world's first professional gaming team. The North American Video Game Challenge was also the first video game masters tournament in the U.S.



## 1988

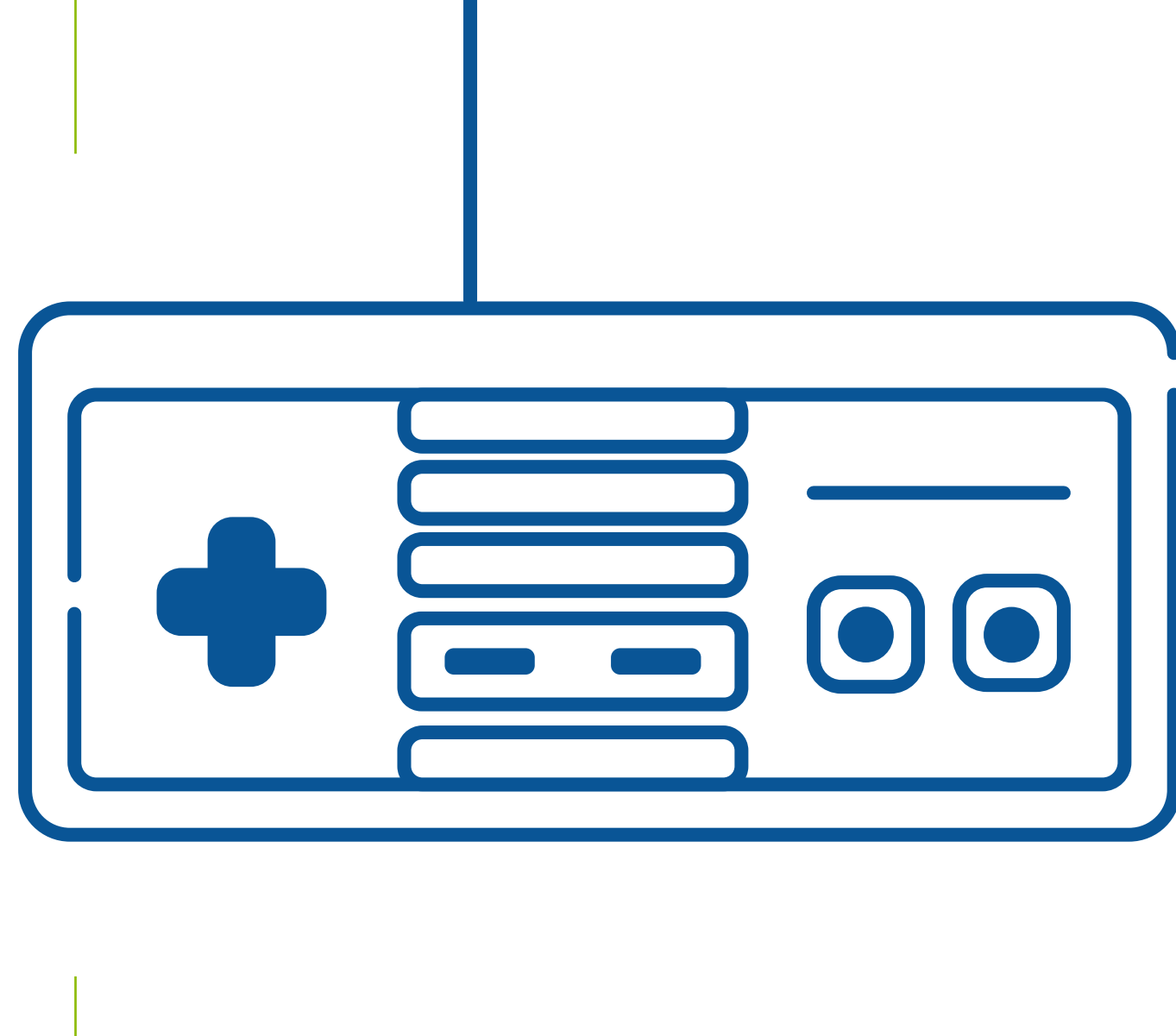
**NETREK**

Netrek—a Star Trek-themed game—was released. It is the first multiplayer computer game that allows up to 16 players to play against each other over the Internet. It is also one of the oldest computer games in the multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) genre that's still being played today.

## 1990

**NINTENDO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Recognizing the phenomenon of competitive gaming, Nintendo organized the Nintendo World Championships, which toured across 29 U.S. cities. The contestants—spanned across three different age categories—played a special Nintendo World Championships cartridge for the Nintendo Entertainment System. It contained three customized minigames based upon Super Mario Bros., Rad Racer, and Tetris.

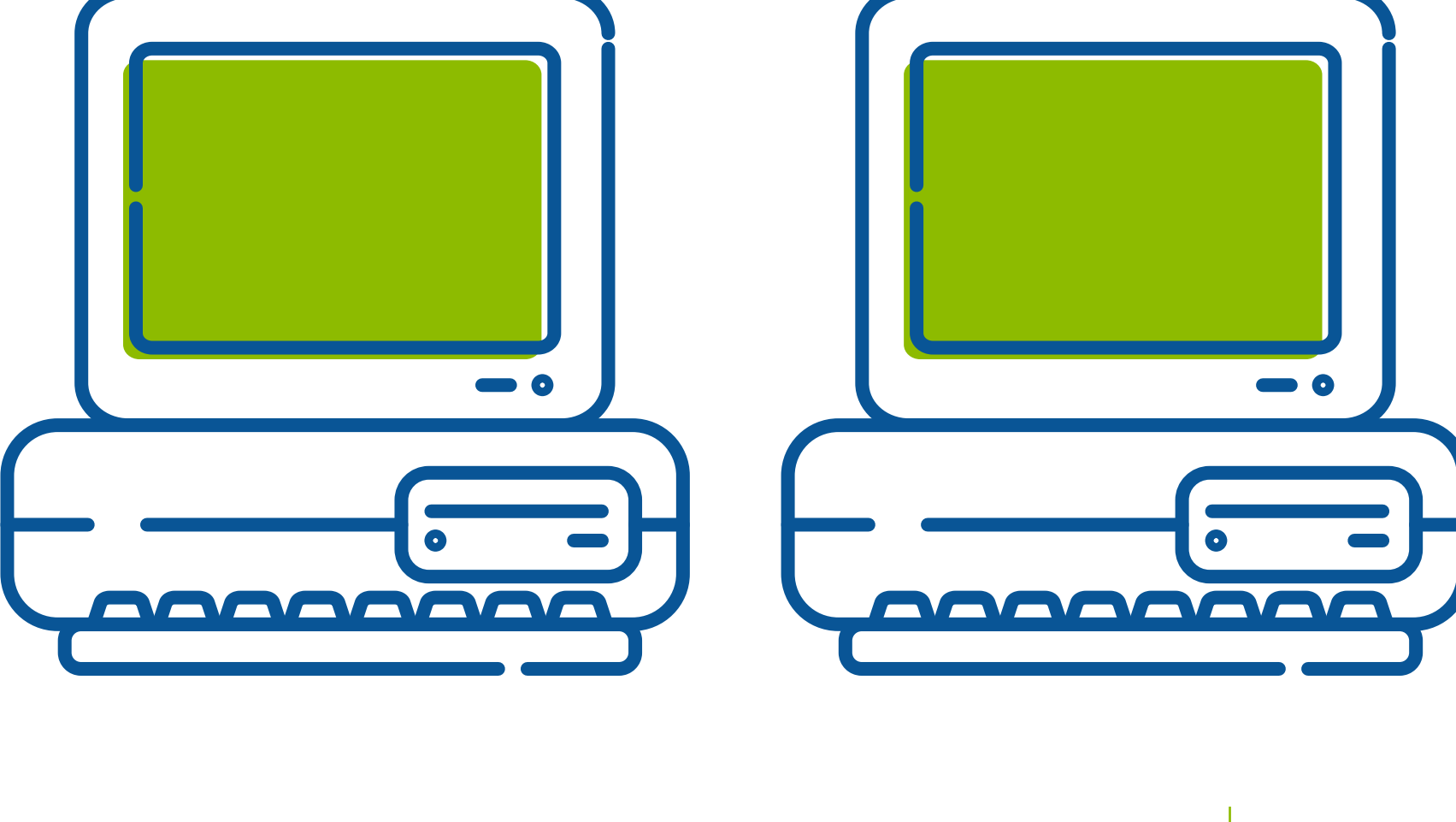


## Mid-90s

**LOCAL AREA NETWORK (LAN)**

As hardware became cheaper and more powerful in the 1990s, PCs became interesting for private households and thus also for the games industry. The first large local area network—or LAN parties started in the middle of the decade, where gamers could compete with each other. Small-scale parties also grew in fascination as more gamers met in small network sessions to play their favorite games.

These meetings would form early groups that would drive professional play. Eventually, these teams competed against each other in larger tournaments. Networking also advanced and private Internet connections became possible, making previous regional restrictions fall away.



## 2000s

**GLOBAL NETWORKING DRIVES PROFESSIONAL GAMING**

Developments in South Korea made the first "World Cyber Games" (WCG) in Seoul possible in 2000. In 2003, the first Electronic Sports World Cup (ESWC) was played in Poitiers, France, with the so-called "Grand Final" of the tournament being hosted in Paris that summer. While the initial focus was on PC games, console titles were gradually included in the competition canon including Halo 2, which has played a pioneering role in console gaming since 2004.

## 2005

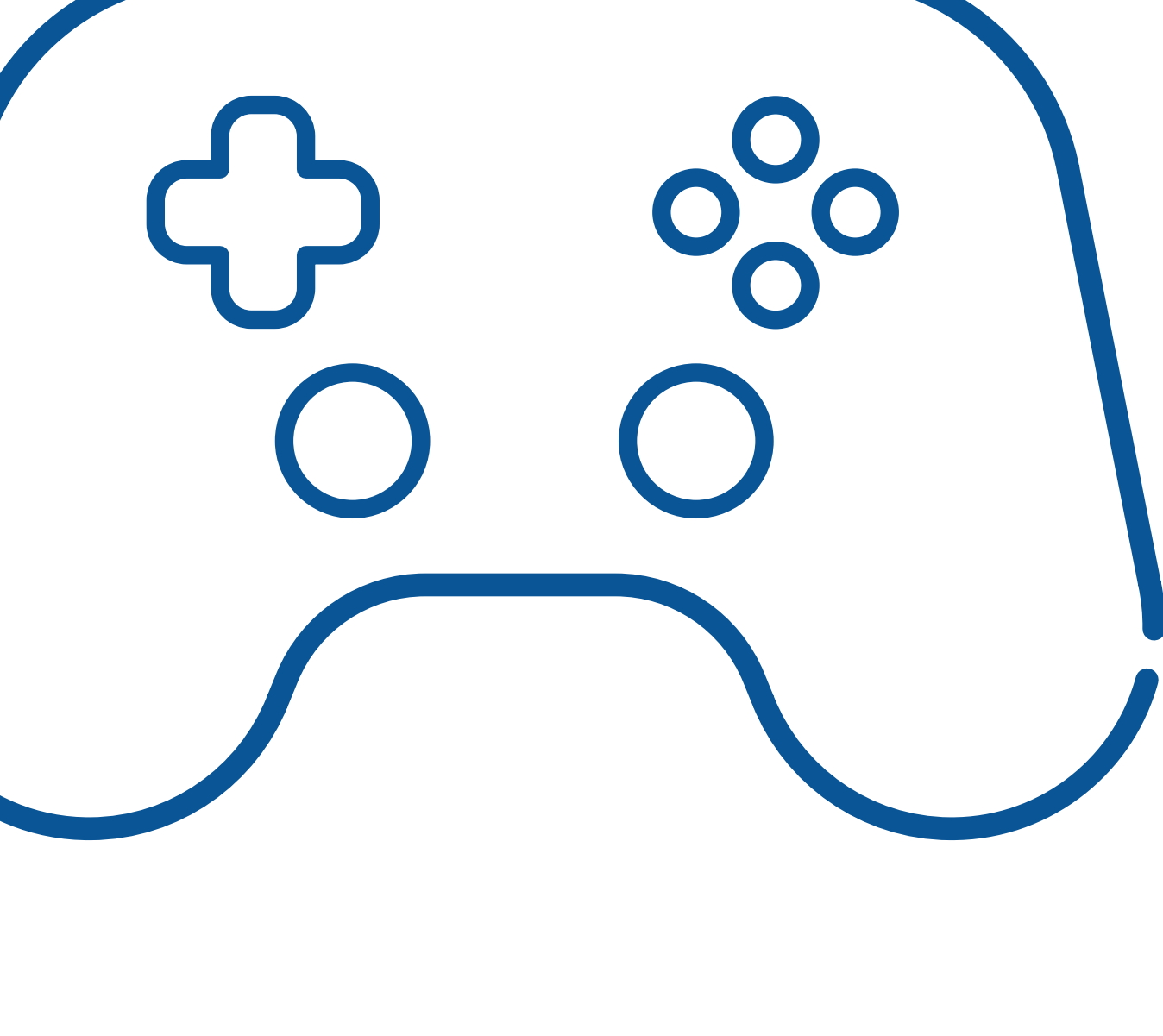
**CPL WORLD TOUR**

The Cyberathlete Professional League (CPL) World Tour was the first eSports event to be endowed with one million dollars. The game played was Painkiller, which was indexed in Germany at the time. The series was held in ten cities around the world, ending with a final in New York, which was broadcasted live by the music channel MTV.

## 2007

**CHAMPIONSHIP GAMING SERIES**

The "Championship Gaming Series" (CGS for short) is the event that caused a sensation. The competition was held for the first time that year with prize money of over one million U.S. dollars. Together with the associated player salaries of around five million U.S. dollars, this resulted in the most expensive eSports tournament of all time.



## 2016

**VARSITY ESPORTS**

The National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE) is a nonprofit membership association formed on July 28, 2016 at the first ever Collegiate Esports Summit held in Kansas City, MO. It is the largest membership association of varsity eSports programs at colleges and universities across the U.S.

Since then, there has been an ever increasing number of schools exploring eSports. As of today, there are 170+ member schools, 5,000+ student athletes, and \$16 million in eSports scholarships and aid.