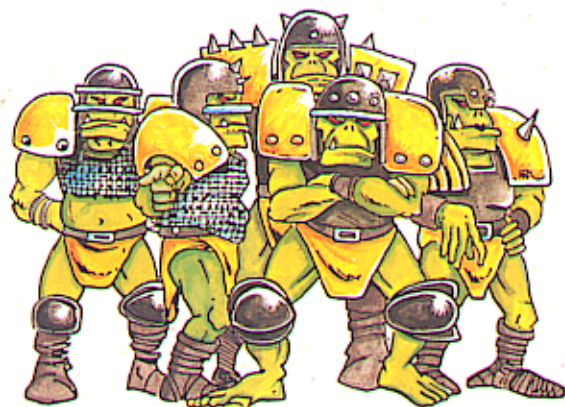
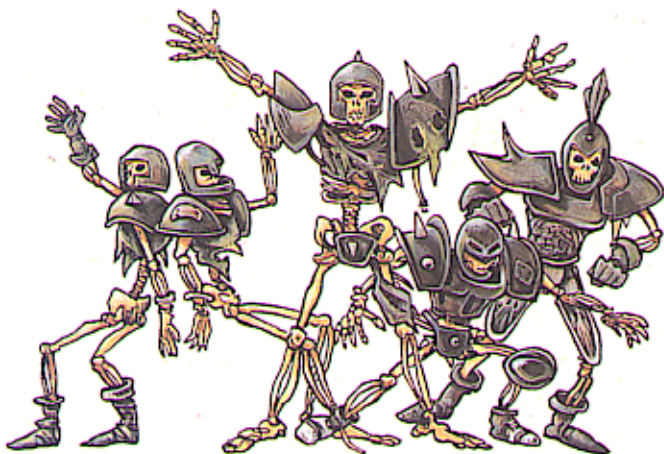


CHAMPIONS OF DEATH

Under the exacting leadership of Head Coach Tomolandry the Undying, the Champions of Death continue to be one of the best teams in their Division - despite having players who are individually older than the combined ages of any team they play against!



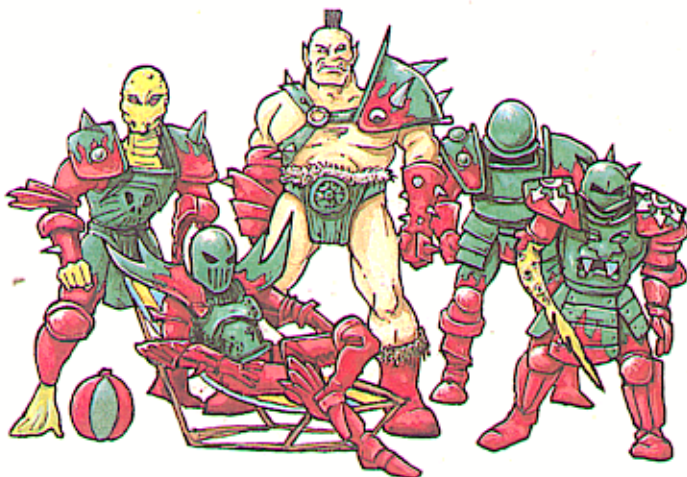
ORCLAND RAIDERS

The NFC's top Orc team started out as the Severed Heads, but changed their name only last year following a relocation to Orcland after financial trouble. Under the fierce coaching of Ogre extortioner Cruel-Eye, they are now looking for their second Blood Bowl title in 5 years.



CHAOS ALL-STARS

The Chaos All-Stars are a very odd team, but a very successful one too. Owned by thrice-damned Prince Dorian, the team is a haven for many renegades and outcasts, as well as a great number of Chaos creatures like Ogres and Trolls.



HAND BOOK

THE ORIGINS OF BLOOD BOWL

It all began long, long ago, in the ancient land of Amoriga. This blighted continent had been prey for centuries to battles between warring factions, for reasons long forgotten even then. Most of the nations and tribes of the New World had been involved on one side or another. Finally, they were all drawn together in a massive battle. The result was a grim bloodbath, and both sides slumped beneath the circling vultures on the reeking, gore-soaked battlefield, fickle Madame Victory remaining firmly out of reach of everybody. Mutual exhaustion led to a truce being called, whereupon the leaders of both sides attempted to parley.

As the leaders argued, the ordinary troops fell where they stood, thankful for any respite from the slaughter. Mungk, the leader of a small Orcish band, was sitting with his first sergeant, indulging in his favourite sport of bogey-flicking. Having won this absorbing competition with a deft over-under move, Mungk waved his scrawny companion away. The Orc leant back, wondering when this parley nonsense would be over so he could get back to the fun of wholesale slaughter. He gazed out over the battlefield, grinning with fond recollection at the piles of Dwarf corpses. Their last stand had taken place in a bowl-shaped depression. At the southern end of this stood a strange silver dome, undoubtedly another of the many ancient constructions left from a previous, more peaceful time. It was against this dome that Mungk now rested his head.

Bored with simply sucking his teeth and motivated by a thunderous rumbling in his belly, the Orc began scrabbling in the sodden earth in the hope of finding a juicy earthworm or two on which to snack. His battle-blunted claws hit something hard and smooth. He pulled, but to no avail. He scrabbled; nothing happened. Then he pushed. Something went in, something else clicked, and finally a third something let out an almighty hiss. This third something was the side of the ancient building, which slid upwards to let dry, stale air pour from the dark interior.



Mungk, who would have been in serious trouble with the washerwoman had he been wearing any form of underwear, gazed goggle-eyed into the glittering hall now revealed inside the dome. Strange armour adorned the walls, peculiar mosaics lined the floor, and at its centre, on a great bejewelled pedestal, sat an enormous book...



After the parleying leaders of the two great armies had been informed of the Orc's peculiar discovery, they adjourned their so-far-fruitless meeting in favour of this new mystery. Since none of the generals could actually read, however, they were unable to establish much beyond the fact that the building was obviously an ancient temple. Messengers were despatched with utmost speed in an effort to find some literate being who could reveal the secrets the dome held. Eventually, a half-blind Dwarf was led up and introduced as an expert in all languages, both current and arcane. The Book thrust before his warty nose, the Dwarf sat cross-legged on the floor and began poring through its forgotten secrets.

Three days passed, during which time the Dwarf hardly moved from his chosen spot. At last, he was ready to make his report. A podium was hastily erected before the silver temple, and the stunted fellow hoisted up onto it to deliver his findings to the assembled multitude.

"This book," wheezed the ancient seer, blinking his heavy-lidded eyes, "appears to be the religious text of group of warriors dedicated to the lost god Nuffle. The head priest of the various sects of this deity, known as Coaches, led their bands of warriors into great arenas, and attempted to exterminate each other. The object was not, however, violence simply for violence's sake. No! It was in truth of great ritual significance!"

There was a subdued murmur from the crowd as they attempted to absorb this outlandish concept. The Dwarf continued: "A pig's bladder was inflated and carried or thrown from one end of the arena to the other, in an effort to, erm, Score. Carrying the bladder over an opponent's end line gave a sect a number of things called Points. The battle lasted a set time. At the end, the sect who had amassed the most Points was declared the victor. Apparently, you didn't even have to maim all your opponents, although the coaches seem to have encouraged this practice as much as they could. Furthermore, the book also states that Nuffle's sacred number was eleven, and that only eleven warriors from each side could be on the field of battle at one time."

At this there was a great deal of shuffling in the goblinoid ranks as they removed their footwear in a desperate attempt to find out just what the number 'eleven' was. Typically, this degenerated into brawling after a Goblin discovered what a great joke it was to keep his boots on and stamp on all his mates' bare feet with his hobnails. Ignoring the infrequent howls of pain, the Dwarf continued.

"This does not mean that there were only eleven members of a sect, or Team as they were also known. Warriors could go off and come on at will, as long as the sacred number was not exceeded. One could also hit any opponent at any time, as long as one did not use a weapon! Nuffle said that one's body was one's weapon, and - although he allowed armour - all weapons were forbidden from the arena. It is also written that the arena for this conflict was a rectangular field, set within a huge bowl!"

All eyes turned to regard the shape of the battlefield in which they had all gathered, where large squadrons of over-stuffed vultures were making feeble attempts to get airborne again.

"It seems to me," continued the Dwarf in a loud voice to regain their attention, "that Nuffle has seen our dilemma and is trying to resolve it. I suggest that a team is put forward from each side, and that our differences be resolved in this fashion." A murmur of assent rippled through the crowd, soon rising to a roar of agreement; except, that is, for the corner in which the Goblins were camped, since they were all still exploring the intriguing new possibilities of foot-stomping!



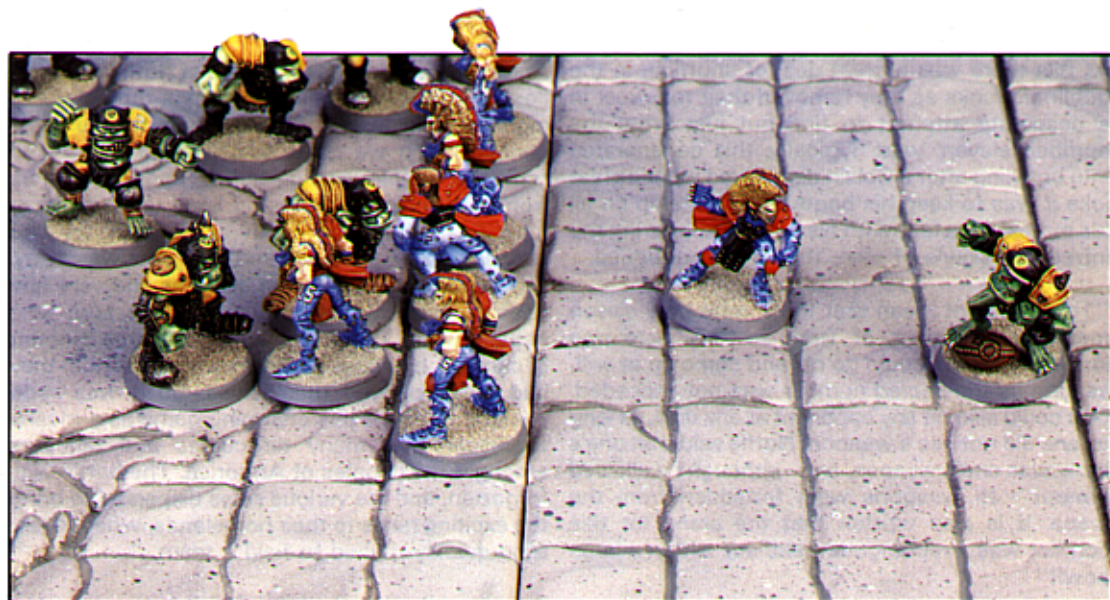
And so it was that the first game of Nuffle Amoral Football, as it soon became known, took place. A pig's bladder was inflated, much to the pig's consternation we must add. Armour was taken from the temple, and placed on chosen warriors from either side. The teams lined up, a shaman 'umpire', dressed in fresh zebra skin for the occasion, blew a whistle and the game was away. There was no proper pitch, no lines and very few rules, and to this day no-one is quite sure who actually won. There was a suitably large amount of carnage, however, and everyone agreed that they had really enjoyed themselves. So it was soon decided to adopt this charming game as a means to resolve the many difficulties and rancours amongst the peoples of Armorica. The battle was forgotten, and the various sides dispersed to bring the exciting news to their homelands, where every tribe quickly rushed to field a team.

It was while those who remained swept up the mess that they discovered a strange green surface just under the bloody mud of the battlefield, a surface engraved with peculiar symbols and lines. The field was scrubbed clean. The workers were hushed, aware of the significance of their find. At last, the sacred Gridiron spoken of in the Book was revealed. The Dwarf seer, who had adopted the name of Sacred Commissioner Roze-El, after a priest of high standing mentioned in the Book, offered a prayer to Nuffle and began to organise the first sect meeting. His mind burned with plans for the future, plans that would culminate in the toughest sects meeting in a physical offering to the great god - the Blood Bowl!

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

During his time as Sacred Commissioner, Roze-El made many great strides in recreating Nuffle's original rites. In the darker recesses of the temple, piles of remarkably well-preserved pamphlets and scrolls were found, giving further details of the ancient game's rituals. A team of seers and scribes were set to work translating and retranslating these, until a vast body of knowledge was assembled about the game. These quickly helped clarify the rules of the game. Soon, games were being played within set time limits and on properly-marked pitches. By the time of his death, at the grand old age of 196, there were sixteen teams in the New World, competing in a regular season which culminated in the glorious excesses of the Blood Bowl final.

Roze-El was succeeded by his acolyte and apprentice Djimm Thorp, and then by the infamous Jorge Hellhound. Hellhound is known for many things, but his most important innovation came when he realised that he could sell far more tickets for games than he could ever hope to pack spectators into any Stadium in the New World. And so he contacted the various Guilds of Magick,



Breakthrough! An Orcland Raiders catcher makes it through the Galadrieth Gladiators' line. A Gladiators' blitzer is in hot pursuit, but will he be in time to stop the touchdown?

More Player & Team Records

Most Violent Player Ever*:

Engel 'The Exterminator' von Evilstein, Chaos All-Stars

Worst Player Ever*:

Div Scumstuck. The Hobgoblin Team

Most Referees Killed - game:

Vurner Vinkler, 2472, 7 fatalities
as voted by the readers of Spikel magazine



ATHELORN AVENGERS
Elf Catcher



BLAKKAGH BLOOD
QUENCHER
Dark Elf Catcher



DWARF GIANTS
Dwarf Lineman



WORLDS EDGE
WANDERERS
Dwarf Blocker



ZHUFBAR MARKTAG
Dwarf Blitzer

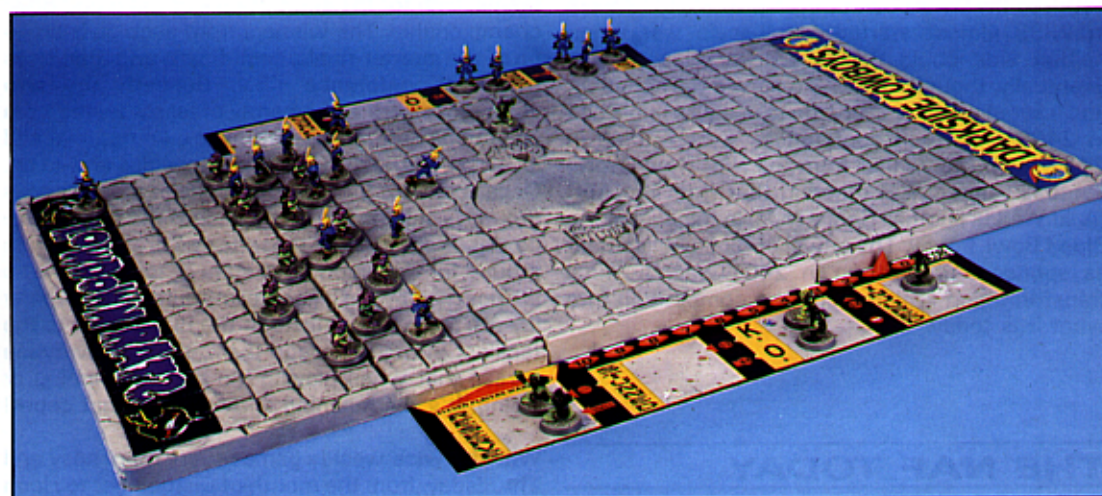
Galadrieth Gladiators vs. Lowdown Rats. The Rats have possession, but the Gladiators are just about to try to blitz the Rats' thrower. What followed was not for the squeamish...





Shutdown! The Gladiators pounce on the Rats' thrower. With the Rats' line crumbling around him, he has nowhere to pass the ball, and can only watch helplessly as the attack is stifled at birth.

The Gouged Eye team are backed up almost to their end zone as the Galadrieth Gladiators make a charge down one side. The Gladiators look set to sweep round the end of the Gouged Eye line for a touchdown.



All set! A Darkside Cowboys' catcher waits in the Lowdown Rats' end zone to receive a touchdown pass.



DWARF REFEREE



DWARF ANVILS
Dwarf Cheerleader



ARCTIC CRAGSPIDERS
Human Lineman



DARKSIDE COWBOYS
Dark Elf Thrower



ARCTIC CRAGSPIDERS
Human Blitzier

asking them to find a way to transmit an image of the game all over the continent. The result was the invention of a device, named after the Campaign for Real Arcanery - the Camra. A bound spirit in a box was allowed to look out in one direction only, at the Blood Bowl field, and his mental image could then be transmitted by teams of magicians using the spell Cabalvision. Anyone could buy a license to have these thoughts transmitted into their own minds. The idea was a huge success. When Hellhound sold the franchise to Channel 7 for the princely sum of 714 gold crowns, it was just the beginning. Rival Guilds set up counter-bids. The Necromancers' Broadcasting Circle coverage began with Blood Bowl X, but they are normally thought to be dead boring. The Crystal Ball Service have been more successful. Most recently, however, the Association of Broadcasting Conjurers won the franchise when it was renewed for the thirtieth time in 2486 (incidentally, the sum had risen to a staggering 12 million!).

It was Hellhound, too, who first organised the teams into proper conferences, and who instituted many practices we now take for granted, such as including players' names on their backs so the bodies could be identified afterwards.

The arrival of proper trade and cultural links with the Old World continent was rapidly followed by the exporting of Blood Bowl to Albion, Bretonnia, The Empire and beyond. There were initially some problems, as Old World teams developed some unique rules of play, and an exchange match between the Dwarf Giants and the Reikland Reavers in 2399 almost started a full-scale war when neither side could decide whose rules to use. Eventually, though, the NAF resolved the situation, and a set of rules for everyone to use was published in 2409. The twin conferences were ratified in 2432, with the winner from the NFC (New World Football Conference) meeting that from the AFC (Auld Worlde Football Conference) in the final of the Blood Bowl Trophy. The arrival of Bloodweiser Beer as sponsors of the cup in 2461 was the final transformation which made the competition into what it is today.

THE NAF TODAY

And now, in 2488, the original sacred site discovered by Mungk is the ultimate shrine for all followers of Blood Bowl. Eight years ago, the NAF moved its headquarters to a prestigious new complex next to the site, and two years later built the Blood Bowl Museum and Hall of Fame nearby. This remarkable building now has a permanent exhibit detailing the history of the game and the careers of many of its most brilliant past players. From his base here, current NAF commissioner Nikk Three-horn governs every aspect of the game across two continents and beyond, from the tops of the highest mountains to deep below the surface of the earth.



In each of the two conferences, there are twenty Blood Bowl teams, divided into divisions of five teams each for the initial stages of the Blood Bowl championship. The winners from each division go on to the quarter-finals, semi-finals, and then on to the inter-conference final. Beneath the two conferences are a huge array of lesser teams from all nations and races, with their own national and local leagues, inter-guild championships and so on. Occasionally, a top team from one of these various groups is selected to move up into the conference proper. More usually, these teams are the training ground for the Blood Bowl stars of tomorrow, who are poached by the bigger teams during the summer lay-off. From the winners of the Blood Bowl to the tackiest Snotling college team, though, everyone agrees that when playing it's not the winning or losing, it's the maiming and crippling that count!

With its twice-weekly games every Moonsday and Thrudsdays, from the month of Dismember to Hoon the next year, Blood Bowl is now a truly international phenomena, regularly watched by countless numbers of humans, Orcs, Elves, Ogres, Dwarves, Trolls, Goblins, Halflings and many more esoteric viewers besides. Just how many watch and play the game is difficult to determine, because it is so widespread. It's even been claimed that the game has permeated the lower levels of the Astral and Demonic Planes; maybe in a few years we shall witness exchange teams of Hell Demons and Elementals joining all the regulars in the Blood Bowl! As Commissioner Three-Horn has famously said on many occasions: "This is Blood Bowl, buddy - anything could happen!" You better believe it!

THE GAME ITSELF

Despite the appalling chaos that seems to reign whenever the whistle blows, there are a great many rules in the game of Blood Bowl. You may not be surprised to hear that many of them are forgotten most or all of the time, but there are some teams who try to uphold some of them. The Heroes of Law, who play in the international Chaos Cup are renowned for being so goody-goody that they play to all the rules; as a consequence, of course, they are almost always beaten by their opponents, and are terribly boring to watch too! However, here are some of the basic rules of the sport; if you wish to know more we recommend you look at Mutilate & Slaughter's exhaustive handbook on the subject, *Genocide The Blood Bowl Way*.

The Blood Bowl Field

In honour of the very first football site, every field must measure 100 by 60 paces, with a further 10 paces of End Zone at each end. The field is then usually divided by lines across it every five paces. However, since different races have longer or shorter legs, fields vary in size quite considerably. Thus, it is wisest not to get drawn away to the Asgard Ravens Giant team, since each of their steps can be up to a league in length; you'll be travelling for days just to get from the bench to the coin-toss! On the other hand, of course, playing at the Halfling Green Acres stadium is definitely to your advantage if you are the size of a Great Troll.

The Players

Each of the teams in the two major conferences, the NFC and AFC, consist of a large squad of players. However, according to the rules, only 11 players may be on the pitch at one time, in deference to Nuffle's sacred number. Unsurprisingly, this rule has not always been adhered to as closely as it might.



During the first half of the Blood Bowl final of 2476, the Severed Heads (now playing as the Orcland Raiders) managed to sneak a grand total of 27 players onto the field. This despicable cheating was only spotted when there weren't enough oranges to go round at half-time! When asked why they hadn't noticed it earlier, their opponents, the Creeveland Crescents, claimed they didn't notice because all Orcs looked the same to them, especially those who were battering them to the ground. There was also something of a dispute during a famous match between the Greenfield Grasshuggers and the Underworld Creepers, when it was discovered that Greenfield's new star blitzer was in fact two Halflings in an Ogre's kit, one stood on the shoulders of the other! Still, the matter was settled when the Creepers' Troglodyte captain ate both offenders, and play could continue.





The Champions of Death clash with the Darkside Cowboys. A Champions' catcher has worked his way clear of the Cowboys' line, but he's been spotted - his team-mate had better be quick about that pass! The Champions of Death figures here are simple conversions from Citadel's *Skeleton Horde* plastic figures.



**NAGGAROTH
NIGHTWINGS**
Dark Elf Blitzer



DARK RENEGADES
Dark Elf Kicker



**NAGGAROTH
NIGHTWINGS**
Dark Elf Lineman



**GALADRIETH
GLADIATORS**
Elf Cheerleader



KHAIN'S KILLERS
Dark Elf Cheerleader



"We're mean, we're green, we're baaad! You're dead, you're dead, you're dead!" The Orcland Raiders perform their famous battle chant.



**MIDDENHEIM
MARAUDERS**
Human Catcher



**MIDDENHEIM
MARAUDERS**
Human Kicker



REIKLAND REAVERS
Human Blocker



BRUENDAR GRIMJACKS
Human Catcher



ARCTIC CRAGSPIDERS
Human Blocker



Of the 11 noble warriors legally allowed on the field at any one time, some will be standard linemen, but others will be more specialised. These are the most common Blood Bowl specialist players:

Blitzers: These highly-skilled players are usually the stars of the game, combining strength and skill with great speed and flexibility. All the most glamorous Blood Bowl players are blitzers, since they are always at the heart of the action and doing very impressive things! Their usual job is to burst a hole through their opponent's lines, and then run with the ball to score. Team captains are usually blitzers, and all of them without exception are bossy, big-headed show-offs (please don't tell a blitzer we said that, though, or we'll get in trouble; well, we'll get in hospital, which is much the same thing).



Blockers: If one side is trying to bash its way through the opposing team's lines, you will often see the latter's blockers come into action to stop them. These lumbering giants are often slow and dim-witted, but they have the size and power to stop show-off blitzers from getting any further up the field! Ogres and Trolls make especially good blockers, but this fact has hampered the chances of teams like the Oldheim Ogres, who, with nothing but blockers and linemen in their team, have great trouble actually scoring a Touchdown!

Throwers: There is more to Blood Bowl than just grabbing the ball and charging full tilt at the other side (though this has worked for most teams at one time or another). If you can get a player on the other side of your opponent's line, why not simply toss the ball to him and cut out all that unnecessary bloodshed. This, of course, is where the special thrower comes in! These guys are usually lightly armoured (preferring to dodge a tackle rather than be flattened by it), but with strong arms and a good sense of direction. This plainly didn't apply to Halfling thrower Rondo Magoo of the Bluebay Crammers, who was reputedly so shortsighted he had to get someone else to pick his nose for him. His record of 0 completions in 1271 attempts has stood for thirty-two years. The infamous 'bodyline' tactic of the joint Giant-Snotling team of the '60s, the No Hawk Jets, whereby the Giant Thrower used to launch a Snotling and the ball into the End Zone at the same time was temporarily outlawed. But, then, what hasn't been?

Catchers: And of course if you are throwing the ball, it would be nice if there was someone at the other end to catch it! This is where the specialist catcher comes in. Lightly armoured for speed, they are adept at dodging around slower opponents and heading for open field ready for a long pass to arrive. The best catcher of all time is generally reckoned to be the legendary Tarsh Surehands of the otherwise fairly repulsive Skaven team, the Skaven Scramblers. With his two heads and four arms, the mutant Ratman plainly had something of an advantage over less... er... gifted catchers!

While a good deal of attention is paid to the various specialist players, every true Blood Bowl fan would agree that the players who do most of the hard work are the ordinary linemen. These are the guys who get bashed out of the way while trying to stop a hulking great Ogre from menacing their thrower, who get pushed out of the way when their flashy blitzer sets his sights on the End Zone, who get beaten and bruised by the linemen of the opposite side while the more gifted players skip about scoring Touchdowns. 'Moaning like a lineman' is a common phrase in Blood Bowl circles for a bad complainer, but if it wasn't for the linemen whingeing about their flashier team-mates, the newspapers would often have nothing to fill their sports pages with!





THE GAME IN ACTION

As the ancient tome found by Mungk revealed, the object of Nuffle's game is to carry the ball into the opposing team's End Zone, while they try to stop you. The first team to do this three times wins. That sounds simple enough, doesn't it? If that were true, though, games would be a lot less fun than they plainly are. So why is the average game of Blood Bowl such a mind-mangling spectacle of fun and fear?

As the game has developed, some of the 'woollier' areas of the rules have been revised, so there is now a rule which covers just about every circumstance that could ever crop up on the field before, during and after a game. The NAF Official Rules of Blood Bowl comes as a set of fourteen mammoth volumes, each a thousand or so pages in length. However, as there are more and more rules, so there are more and more opportunities to break them, and although the NAF would throw their arms up in horror at such a suggestion, it's the breaking of the rules that really makes the game fun!

Starting Trouble

A typical game is preceded with a coin toss to decide which side starts with the ball. It's here that the cheating generally starts: bribed referees, double-headed and weighted coins, skillful palming and simply punching out the referee and the opposing captain have all been frequently used. A more ingenious tactic, perhaps, was that employed by The Hobgoblin Team in a quarter-final several years ago: they ignored a coin toss which went against them and started play with a ball of their own. This move would be on record as possibly the only even vaguely intelligent thing the Hobgobs ever made, were they not 2-0 down after only eight minutes!

As soon as one side has the ball, it's the job of the players on the other side to take it off them. In fact, it's probably this which is the real problem with the game as far as a referee is concerned, because players just can't seem to control their enthusiasm when faced with an opponent with the ball. Actually, they can't control it when faced with another player. Period. Despite appearances to the contrary, though, the following things are all banned:

Using any sort of weapon: as is written in the original Book of Nuffle (still on view within its sealed glass case at the Blood Bowl Museum), the great god of football taught that one's body is the only weapon one should need. Hmm; in which case, none of today's star players have read enough of his teachings. It is not uncommon to find the odd Blood Bowl player who packs a knuckle-duster or cosh, or in more extreme cases a sword or flail! The late Engel von Evilstein was a great believer in the use of dynamite to really scupper an opponent's passing pattern, before a blow-back curtailed his career. The specialists in really illegal weapon use, though, were the Dwarf Warhammerers, whose use

of a large-calibre cannon to propel players up the field finally earned them a two-year suspension from the conference in 2480!

Tackling an out-of-bounds player: just 'happening' to fly off the side of the pitch and 'accidentally' flatten a player waiting on the sidelines is a nasty foul. Even worse, though, is the practice of 'unluckily' flying off the side of the pitch and 'unfortunately' killing your opponents' coach!



Tripping, kicking, kneeing or punching: unfortunately, an awful lot of this goes on. So, too, do the banned practices of hitting an opponent below the shoulder with one's elbow, jumping on a prone player, eating the ball, eating an opponent, eating the referee, setting one's opposite number on fire, setting the referee on fire, putting poisonous barley water in the opponents' refreshment barrel, getting the ball all sticky and gooey because you're eating an iced bun during the match (Halflings only), turning the ball invisible, fielding invisible players and wearing the wrong colour sweatbands.

Of course, the majority of the many thousands of silly little rules in the NAF rulebooks wouldn't be needed if those in charge of the games actually did their job properly! Trouble is, whenever a new foul is invented, the NAF simply make it against the rules to use it - thus ensuring its popularity for a few seasons to come!



THE REFEREES

Those hard-faced, zebra-striped officials with the funny trousers and the piercing whistles are the NAF's representatives on the field of play. As such, they have a very important job to perform. It's a pity, then, that the good name of a Blood Bowl referee has gone down so much in the public's estimation. Many pretend they are rat gutters or sewer sweepers rather than admit their real profession. Fifty years ago, the average game of Blood Bowl would be officiated over by a team of seven referees and line judges. These days, you're considered extremely lucky if two turn up. The trouble is that referees seem to - erm - die rather easily. Since they don't wear padding or armour, and since they are often frail and wizened ex-players, they really don't stand a chance against players like Vurner Vinkler. Vinkler, nicknamed The Refkiller, made a habit of celebrating a Touchdown by flattening a referee, until he was lynched after a particularly successful game by eighty members of the Referees and Allied Rulekeepers Guild.

Bribery is another uncontrollable problem; the attractions of taking a hefty cut of a game's gate takings in return for not seeing certain rules infringements have been worked out by many officials. The persuasion of the hulking brutes doing the bribing in the first place can often be quite an inducement to corruption as well. Bribery is now so common that the RARG have set official union rates for bribing a referee; under an agreement signed last season, clubs are not allowed to offer less than the going rate.

Some Typical Refereeing Signals

From time to time you'll see the referee give a strange hand signal to indicate the outcome of a decision or declare something's happened. These are some of the most common signals:



Nol Nol Nol Nol



You leave me out of this, you big bully!



Put me down you big...



Well, where's my cheque?



Alright, I give up - I'm going home - you guys can get another referee... etc.



Hmm. now do I really want to get involved in this?



No, not my fingers, please not my fingers...



Illegal holding!



STOPPP IIIITTT!!



Now wait a minute, I was only suggesting that you put him down before pulling his ears off



Foull



Mmmmflghhhmnggh!

REIKLAND REAVERS



Conference: AFC
Division: Central
Team Colours: Blue and yellow
Symbol: Skull and blade
Owner: JJ Griswell Jr
Head Coach: Helmut Zwimmer
Home Stadium: The Altdorf Oldbowl
 (capacity 71,411, surface astrogranite)
Players: Humans



The Reavers were formed almost a century ago, in 2389, when a vacant franchise came up in what was then the Oldlands Conference. Known during their first few years as the Altdorf Acolytes, the team quickly established their reputation for great skill and ability, as original owner DD Griswell Snr poached and bought up the best players throughout the western lands! This policy of marrying awesome buying power with the best money can buy has seen the Reavers in good stead throughout their long life. Today, under DD's great-grandson JJ Griswell Jr, the Reavers are probably the finest all-round team in the AFC.

2389 Altdorf Acolytes formed by business consortium in association with the people of Altdorf. Make their base at the Griswell Memorial Stadium. Thanks to the sterling efforts of head coach Johann Weisshaupt and the large chequebook of DD Griswell, in their first season they come fourth in the Whiteskull Challenge Cup (now the Chaos Cup).

2396 When the Griswell Memorial Stadium collapses during a storm (amid rumours of paybacks and cost-cutting by the firm who built it), the team changes its name to the Reikland Reavers and sets up home at the new Altdorf Oldbowl. No-one is quite sure where either of those names comes from, but both help the Reavers to their first cup win, beating the Wuppertal Wotans in the final.

2399 Legendary match against visiting Dwarf Giants team ends in uproar when it's discovered that each team is using its own version of the rules. Game abandoned at 17-4.

2411 DD Griswell Jr takes over as owner of the team on death of his father. Head coach at this time now Blind Willy Müller. Reavers slump to their worst placings ever. Müller reputed to have got the job through blackmailing DD Jr over some rather indiscreet moments with the entire Reavers cheerleading squad.

2432 Reavers start the first season of a fourteen-year low patch when eleven members of the first team are infected during an injudicious Nurgle's Rotters game. Transfers of eight players to the Subterranean Slimeballs helps ease the crisis, but the loss hits the Reavers hard. DD Griswell Jr replaced by son JJ Griswell Snr.

2468 JJ Griswell dies after getting too close to the sidelines during an Asgard Ravens fixture, and is replaced by current owner JJ Griswell Jr. New head coach Helmut Zwimmer arrives soon after, and institutes his 'New Order' of training and preparation.

2485 Reikland thrash the Darkside Cowboys to win Blood Bowl 24, but only after surprise substitute Orlak Stürmdrang replaces fatally-injured captain, Wolfram von Beck, after only ninety seconds. The legendary Zug sets up his still-unbeaten Most Opponents Bitten In One Match record.

2487 Griff Oberwald (incidentally, Stürmdrang's half-cousin!) replaces Orlak as team captain after his predecessor finds the pressures of running the team and posing for the girls as an all-round Blood Bowl megastar too much. The team go from strength to strength, winning their fourth Blood Bowl.

Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2471 (XI), 2479 (XIX), 2485 (XXV), 2487 (XXVII)
 Chaos Cup winners 2396, 2399-2405, 2412, 2422-2427, 2448, 2461, 2463, 2470
 AFC Champions 2462, 2463, 2468, 2471, 2472, 2479, 2483, 2485, 2487

Hall of Fame

Walter damm Kempft, Erdrich Holstein, Coach Johann Weisshaupt, Jules Winder

BEHIND THE PLAYERS

Behind every good (and bad!) Blood Bowl team there's a large team of very highly skilled professionals who handle everything except the actual playing of the game. The Reikland Reavers, for example, include the following 'backroom boys':

Management: At the very top there's owner and president JJ Griswell Jr, together with his staff of eleven directors, yes-men and secretaries. These follow JJ everywhere, noting down any important decisions, ideas or pearls of wisdom which may fall from his lips as he strides through the stadium sacking people. Behind this lot are a further ten financial, legal and administrative staff who handle the day-to-day running of the club.

Coaching: Helmut Zimmer has the responsibility of getting the team in peak fitness, assisted by ten further specialist coaches and two assistants. The specialists each teach and train the players in one particular aspect of the game, be it throwing, catching, maiming, throttling or whatever.

Health: The Reavers employ a medical team of four apothecaries and healers, and also have a full-time counsellor (and lawyer!) whose job it is to look after

the players' well-being between matches, or in the Reavers' case to bail them out so they can play the next day!



Public Relations: This department employs eighteen people, whose various jobs include producing the programmes and club magazines and selling tickets. They also organise the half-time entertainment and train the team of 26 cheerleaders, the Reavettes (and their two bodyguards!).

Add to this number all the locker room boys, equipment cleaners, washerwomen, crowd security men, bar staff, merchandise sellers, rat-on-a-stick vendors and general hangers-on and dogsbodies, and you've got much more than just a team of 11 battle-trained psychos!



VYNHEIM VALKYRIES



Conference: NFC
Division: Northern
Team Colours: Green and white with flames
Symbol: Head and winged helm
Owner: Skalagrimm & Holst Associates
Head Coach: Mad Jake McDead
Home Stadium: Longship Stadium, Vynheim
 (capacity 62,004, surface pack-ice)
Players: Human berserkers



The current top team of the NFC and most recent winners of the Orcidas Team of the Year award are, to be brutally honest, a pack of raving maniacs. Only on the field of play, you understand, for they are *berserkers*, initiates of an obscure Norse religion who work themselves into a killing frenzy which usually only lasts for the length of the match (if it lasts longer it can seriously interfere with post-game autograph signing, which is not good for team PR!). This ability, though, manages to offset the fact that many of the team are part-timers, who work in the deep ocean fishing fleets for some of the year. The team is in fact owned by a large fish processing firm, and even their world-famous stadium is in the shape of a gigantic boat!

2442 Fishermen cut-off in Vynheim for the winter decide that their knockabout games of football should be made official, and a proper team is established. As berserkers, the team soon thrash the living daylights out of every other two-bit team in their league, and go professional the next year with financial help from Skalagrim & Holst (Fish Processing Made Fun!).

2463 In a shock result, the Valkyries trash favourites Reikland in the Blood Bowl final at Longship Stadium. Some cynics suggest that it was unwise for the Reavers to play on ice without prior practice, and even sillier to play in flat-soled shoes and short-sleeved shirts! The Valkyries modestly put it down to sheer skill.

2474 The Gougged Eye are more prepared when they meet Vynheim, but reckon without the quite extraordinary tactics of aptly-named 'Axeface' Manglesson, who accounts for all but one of the Gougged Eye's first 11, leaving Vynheim only the simple task of running the ball up the field to win.

Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2463 (III), 2474 (XIV)
 Orcidas Team of the Year 2487
 NFC championship winners 2463, 2465, 2466, 2474, 2487

Hall of Fame

Gregor Lukash, Magnus 'Axeface' Manglesson, Stefan Spearstaff



THE GOUGED EYE



Conference: AFC
 Division: Central
 Team Colours: Red and white
 Symbol: Eyeball and scar
 Owner: His Most Grossest Majesty
 Gobsuck Skullcrush XII
 Head Coach: Gort Sever-limb
 Home Stadium: The Doom Dome, Drakwald
 (capacity c.88,000, surface astrogranite)
 Players: Orcs



The humans don't have things all their own way on the Blood Bowl field, and nowhere is this more true than at the Doom Dome, dismal dingy home of The Gougged Eye. Under the auspices of tribal overlord Gobsuck Skullcrush XII and the extremely sadistic training methods of Sever-limb, the team have risen from being a laughing stock to chief contenders for top team on the continent. It is unfortunate that the Gougged Eye are in the same division as the Reavers, as one side must defeat the other if they are to proceed into the upper reaches of the various cups and championships.

- 2403 Slaves captured by Orc raiding parties tell the Gougged Eye tribe of a wonderful game played by humans. A spying party manages to kidnap a coach, and soon the Gougged Eye are playing their first few matches. Unfortunately, since the man they captured was a specialist rushing trainer, the team have great trouble passing the ball - trouble which sees them lose all but one of their first seventy-two games.

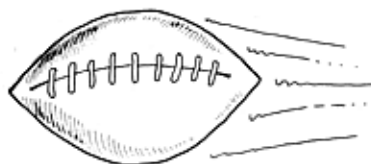


- 2429 Undaunted by early failures, the Gougged Eye finally realise what they are doing wrong, and manage to kidnap passing expert Vimmy Gloam after a late-night Middenheim Marauders training session. After just a little persuasion, he tells all he knows, and under his guidance the Orc team develops into a formidable fighting, er, playing machine.

- 2431 First year in the Central Division, and under the captaincy of Eruk Ogrehack, the Eye manage a respectable third. A recruiting drive pioneered by Blood Bowl-fan Emperor Skullcrush XI allows Orcs a chance to choose between a spell in the army or in the team. Thousands flock to join the Gougged Eye.

- 2464 Unbelievably, the Gougged Eye beat the Reavers in a last-ditch play-off scramble bloodbath, and go all the way to the champions rostrum when they defeat the Dwarf Giants at the Middenheim Stadium. Captain on the day was Hurk Vermismasher, but honours must go to thrice-scorer Bolg Stonemangle (later known as 'Dwarfsmangle').

- 2488 The Gougged Eye, now under the inspired leadership of long-serving Varag Ghouel Chewer, go from strength to strength and massacre to massacre. Another Blood Bowl title cannot be far off.



Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2464 (IV), 2473 (XIII)
 Chaos Cup winners 2441, 2445, 2450-2454,
 2460, 2469, 2473, 2477, 2482-83
 AFC championship winners 2435, 2464, 2470,
 2473, 2474, 2478

Hall of Fame

Eruk Ogrehack, Bolg Stonemangle, Garg Worm-face

ORCLAND RAIDERS



Conference: NFC
Division: Western
Team Colours: Black
Symbol: Orc's head in a circle
Owner: King Ironclaw Faceripper
Head Coach: Cruel eye
Home Stadium: Skull Stadium, Orcland
(capacity 81,422, surface mud)
Players: Orcs



The NFC's top Orc team, the Orcland Raiders, started out as the Severed Heads, but changed their name only last year following a relocation to Orcland after franchise and financial trouble. The Raiders are taking a little time to settle into their new home, but it surely won't be long before they recover the brilliant winning streak they had at the start of the '80s.

2435 After a visit from AFC champions the Gouged Eye, the warriors of the Severed Heads tribe decide that football would be a great way of establishing their supremacy over all the lily-livered Elves and humans who were constantly annoying them with their raids. The team is accepted into the conference in 2437, its owner registered as the Severed Head tribe.

2459 After a short period of near-misses, the Heads beat off all challengers and meet the Schaffen Stallions in what was then the equivalent of today's Blood Bowl final. Unfortunately, they lose 3-0 in seven minutes. After a lengthy enquiry it's revealed that the Stallions' sorcerous coach mindwiped the entire Heads team as they lined up for the kick-off. The result stands, but the Stallions are closed down.

2469 After almost a decade spent carefully rebuilding their ruined team, the Severed Heads finally make it to the top, decimating Middenheim in the Blood Bowl. Man of the match that day was new arrival Grishnak Goblin-Throttler, who got two Touchdowns and three fatalities.

2487 The Severed Heads unexpectedly go bankrupt after some corrupt dealing by tribal chieftains and a half-orc property speculator. A short period of uncertainty comes to an end when King Ironclaw of Orcland invests some of the profits from his healthy Elf-stabbing operation and buys himself a football team. He gets a little more than he bargained for when the entire Severed Heads tribe deposes its chiefs and follows the team, but a swift upping of the tax rate on newcomers soon alleviates his fears. Under the fierce coaching of Ogre ex-torturer Cruel eye, the Orcland Raiders are now looking for their second Blood Bowl title in five years.

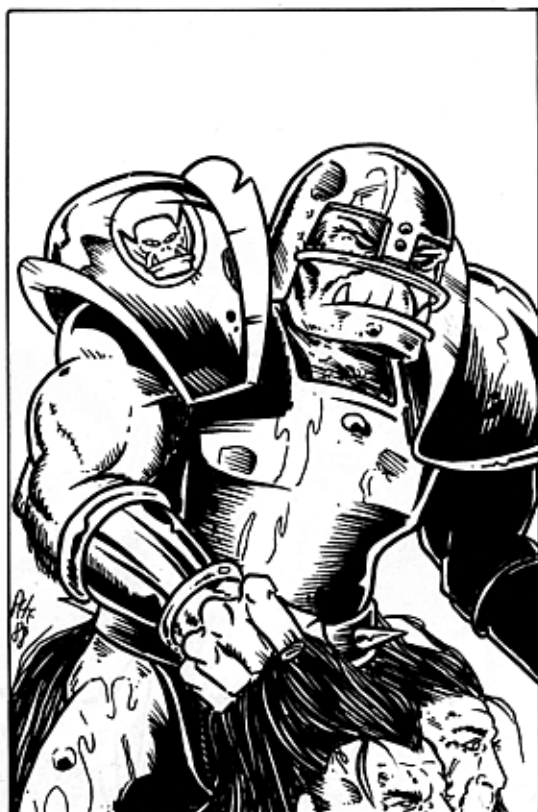


Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2469 (IX), 2483 (XXIII)
Orcidas Team of the Year 2483
NFC championship winners 2459, 2469, 2483

Hall of Fame

Gorbag 'Rabid' Foamface, Urgan Rancid, Coach Lefthand Wolfstab



THE CHAOS ALL-STARS



Conference: AFC
Division: Eastern
Team Colours: Red and green flames
Symbol: Chaos symbol
Owner: Prince Dorian the Lost
Head Coach: unknown
Home Stadium: The Palace of Eternal Suffering
 (capacity unknown, surface varies)
Players: Ogres, lesser goblins, trolls and various doomed warriors from other races



As most folk know, the world is a very strange place, full to the very brim with weird and wonderful things. Around the turn of the century, some of the weird and wonderful things decided to form a football team. The Chaos All-Stars are a very odd team, but a very successful one too. They are owned by thrice-damned Prince Dorian, the legendary heir to several ancient nations who has thrown it all away and made a pact with his devilish Chaos gods to run their football team for them. The team is a haven for many renegades and outcasts from all walks of the world, as well as great many Chaos creatures like Ogres and Trolls. Opponents occasionally have trouble coping with the wild magic which infests games against the All-Stars, but since it is officially a natural phenomena nothing can be done about it; players will just have to learn how to cope with balls that turn into blanchmange or grand pianos at a moment's notice!

2402 The Chaos All-Stars are formed through Dorian's eldritch demon-pact, and due to a strange quirk in the time continuum manage to win the Chaos Cup two years running five years earlier...

2420 Owing to one of the Elder Demigods pressing the wrong button at a crucial moment, the entire team is transported to another plane ten minutes after winning the Chaos Cup for the fifth time. Their epic nine-year quest to return to this world and regain their rightful trophy is too long to be told here; for more details see the over-long Nine Years Knee-deep In Chaos by sports journalist, Royston Vermouth, who was with the team at the time. Needless to say, they did it.

2467 Under the very charismatic captaincy of skilled Snakeman V'hnn Qlss Zzchtrr (known to commentators the world over as 'Snakey'l'), the All-Stars beat, and then eat, the much-fancied Shiretown Stuffers to take Blood Bowl VII. In disgust, many Halflings have boycotted their games ever since, forcing regular All-Stars fans to find some other half-time refreshment.

2487 Star player, the hulking Morg'th N'hthrog, manages to 'persuade' NAF boss Nikk Three-Horn to admit him to the Hall of Fame before he retires, using only a pencil sharpener, three carrots and a small desk lamp. This year, Morg'th still leads the team, who are on course to win their 12th Chaos Cup title

Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2467 (VII)
 Chaos Cup winners 2397-98, 2409, 2419-20, 2434, 2436, 2449, 2468, 2471, 2487
 AFC championship winners 2461, 2467

Hall of Fame

Duke Luther von Hawkefire, Morg'th N'hthrog, V'hnn Qlss Zzchtrr



THE HOBGOBLIN TEAM



Conference: NFC
Division: Western
Team Colours: Green and black
Symbol: A hastily-scrawled X
Owner: Emperor Mad Grull Starkloon
Head Coach: None
Home Stadium: None
Players: Hobgoblins



However much of a threat it poses to our future health to say it, we just couldn't find anything complimentary to say for this team. I mean, this team is so stupid the only name they could think of was 'the Hobgoblin Team'. Half of them weren't even Hobgoblins at the time! The Hobgobs haven't got a home stadium, because the first one they built caught fire, the second one fell over, and the third caught fire and then fell over. Why these guys ever bother turning up for matches is quite beyond our comprehension (actually, some of them don't bother turning up some weeks, since it's easy for them to forget they're in the team). Well, we suppose that if we were to be totally honest, we'd have to say that they make what little effort they

do every week because they just love having a almighty punch-up. Put 'em in armour, screw on some spikes and they're away: kicking faces, pulling eyes, poking heads, gouging noses. Talk about born in battle! As a consequence of all this indiscipline and violence, the Hobgoblin Team have been sent off and caused more matches to be abandoned than any other team ever. And as a result of all that, in terms of sheer numbers of diehard fans, they are also the most popular team in history.

Team Honours
 None

Hall of Fame
 None

LOWDOWN RATS



Conference: NFC
Division: Northern
Team Colours: Purple and black
Symbol: Poisoned knife
Owner: Hymie Snivel
Head Coach: Hymie Snivel
Home Stadium: The Swampdome, Ubrovnia
 (capacity 183, surface unstable swamp)
Players: Goblins



What can one say of a team like the Lowdown Rats (without leaving oneself open for some serious damage at the hands of peeved Rats fans)? Some unkind folk would say that the 'Lowdown' in their name actually refers to the team's perpetual position in their division, and it must be said that the team haven't been all that successful in recent years. Well, ever, really. Of course, they have had problems. Living on a series of floating platforms drifting in the middle of the Ubrovnia Swampmire doesn't give one a lot of room for practising running play (throwing was all but banned after team accountants complained at the number of balls being lost in the marsh). The Swampdome, incidentally, is really just two large rafts lashed together.

achieved his goal - the Rats are a truly mediocre team.

Snivel (of 'Snivel by name, Snivel by nature' ad campaign fame, trivia fans) has never been known for his spending ability and the team has had to scrape through on very little money, with a consequent lack of results.

2472 Goblin annoyance at being thought inferior at absolutely everything spilt over into action when local rats-gizzard magnate Hymie Snivel decided to found a football team that would show the sporting world just where the Goblins really stood. He

2488 After sixteen years of abject failure, the Rats have begun to develop some natural skill at battling their way against all the odds. The Goblins' natural stringy toughness now makes them a tougher team to stomp all over, though everyone seems to agree that the lack of success is directly equal to the length of time that Snivel stays as self-appointed Head Coach!

Team Honours
 none

Hall of Fame
 none



DWARF GIANTS



Conference: NFC
Division: Northern
Team Colours: Grey and Dark Blue
Symbol: A runic GIANTS
Owner: Thorn Durinsgold III
Head Coach: Gudrun Wolfric
Home Stadium: Three Towers Stadium, Calagarth
 (capacity 59,400, surface granite)
Players: Dwarfs



The Giants are an old team with a very long and distinguished history. They were one of Roze-El's original Blood Bowl sects, and they have been present for every major development in the game's history. In more recent times, thanks to the motivation of team owner and patron, King Durinsgold, they have consolidated their talents and relaunched themselves into the fully-modernised, up-to-the-minute, high-tech Blood Bowl game of today. This paid off almost immediately, when they beat the Middenheim Marauders in a close-fought match. The Giants proved that they might well be a team with a long and ancient history, but they can slog it out with the best of them!



2381 When they realise their religion is getting in the way of having a good time, the Illuminated Seers of the Sacred Orb of Nuffle change their name, update their rather stuffy image, and become the Dwarf Giants. Retiring captain Varak Varaksson becomes Head Coach, and sets about instituting a ruthless retraining programme.

2400 After numerous modest successes, the Giant's good fortunes reach a peak when they end the season as NFC champions. However, a long and bloody underground war against the various inhuman Orc and Goblin armies led by Argvak Pentel begins soon after and the entire team are drafted. When the war ends - 36 years later - the team is all but forgotten. However, thanks to some serious determination from new coach Karrag (Varaksson died heroically in the war), the team are soon ready for action again, winning the NFC championship in 2438.

2488 In more modern times, the Giants have consolidated their skills with typical Dwarf patience, until they are one of the top teams in the NFC. They hold the record for winning the most NFC championships, and a few more besides. Under the tuition of youthful new coach Wolfric, and the inspired (and some would say quite crazy) captaincy of Grimwold Grimmbreath ('The Helmsmasher!'), the team are regularly setting new records for fatalities and Touchdowns alike.

Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2462 (III), 2484 (XXIV)
 Orcidas Team of the Year 2484
 NFC championship winners 2399, 2438, 2451, 2462, 2464, 2471, 2484

Hall of Fame

Durgul 'The Killer' Hilliman, Coach Farakhan Karrag, Varak Varaksson



ELFHEIM EAGLES



Conference: AFC
Division: Western
Team Colours: Purple and Orange
Symbol: An eagle's head
Owner: Valahar Galantë
Head Coach: Perellian Ashblade
Home Stadium: The Vale, Laurelorn
(capacity 68,822, surface grass)
Players: Elves



The Elves were slow to take up Roze-El's challenge, but once they saw how popular the game made their Dwarf, human and even Halfling allies they hastily formed several teams. The Eagles developed out of two of these, when in a move similar to the recent Giants relaunch, their old image of daisy-sniffing pastoral weirdos was replaced with a more dynamic, business-like demeanour. Judging by their hard-fought Blood Bowl win in the 2480 final, this has paid off well for the young team (that's young in terms of Elves, of course; many players are 250 or over!). Orcs still declare that one should never trust an Elf in a suit, but that hasn't stopped the Eagles realising their potential as one of the finest passing play teams in the world.

2468 The Dar-Ellerath Beechtrees and the Ashvale Valar combine to form the new-look Elfheim Eagles after some clever business moves by half-Elven entrepreneur Galantë (the standard joke is that his mother was an Elf and his father was a Cost Accountant).

2471 Scandal breaks when the Eagles are thrown out of the Chaos Cup for no other reason than that they are Elves, when the competition's sponsorship is taken over by Orcidas. After a lengthy court battle - and not a little real warfare besides! - the NAF rule that Orcidas were wrong. The company pass up the chance to renew their sponsorship in the following season, but Elfheim vow never to play in the Chaos Cup again.

2480 Many Elves make absolute fortunes by betting on their team when the Eagles beat the revolting Nurgles Rotters in Blood Bowl XX. How they actually managed this incredible feat - and without a single fatality either - is still being investigated by an official NAF committee. The investigation is unfortunately being hampered by the fact that investigators keep dying after interviewing the relevant Rotters players, but it has uncovered evidence of widespread use of Elven high magic, animated grass, a huge vat of antiseptic and a covert team of troubleshooters from the Acne-Clear Corporation.

2488 Still, the investigation hasn't hampered the Eagles' recent winning streak, which has been led by charismatic Valen Swift, whose brother Lucien is captain of the Galadriath Gladiators.

Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2480 (XX)
AFC championship winners 2480

Hall of Fame

Erewine Ar-Khorigan, Rowan 'Rootstem' Elderbranch, Ruatha Tembilin



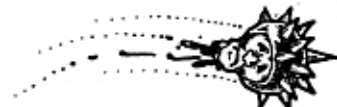
CHAMPIONS OF DEATH



Conference: AFC
Division: Northern
Team Colours: Black
Symbol: A skull
Owner: Tomolandry the Undying
Head Coach: None
Home Stadium: Pain Park, Underearth
 (capacity unknown, surface crushed bone)
Players: The dead



Deep in the Coldworm Mountains, beyond the limits of human civilisation, there is a vast opening to a system of gloomy caves. It is a dark, forbidding, evil place - and it's the home of the Champions of Death. Registered with the NAF in 2439, the Champions are the property of a gifted necromancer known as Tomolandry the Undying. The sorcerer has dwelt in these caves for many centuries, wizened by age if not destroyed by it, as he delved ever deeper into the mysteries of Black Art.



About the year 2425, Tomolandry became bored with all that tedious mucking about with corpses and coffins. He used his skills to tune into what other mages were doing, discovered himself patched into the broadcasting net of the Necromancers Broadcasting Circle, and was delighted to discover football! Soon Tomolandry's enthusiasm grew so much that he took the plunge and started his own football club.

But instead of hiring players away from other clubs, he simply resurrected a dozen skeletons, cast a spell of his own devising which gave them rudimentary knowledge of the rules of the game - and the Champions of Death were (re)born!

2439 In their first season in the AFC, the Champs attract much opposition from all the other teams. Tomolandry, in a rare interview with Spikel magazine, declares that the other teams are just jealous because their players have to stop playing when they die, and because he doesn't have a weekly wage bill to pay! In their first few seasons, the team do reasonably well, though they have a tendency to go to pieces in rough scrambles for the ball.

2451 Tomolandry is accused by the Dwarf Giants of kidnapping one of their players, when it is revealed that the skeleton of ex-Giant lineman, Skrull Halfheight, has been resurrected and is now playing for the Champs! Most teams bring in player contracts stating that players' bodies are still team property even after their death!

2466 With a team captained by Ramtut the Third, a rediscovered mummy of an original Blood Bowl player from eight thousand years ago, the Champs storm to victory against the Vynheim Valkyries.

2486 The team repeat the feat two years ago, despite some trouble in the quarter-finals when a Werewolf player went berserk, and run off with and bury a star blitzer's leg bones! Despite having players who are individually older than the combined ages of any team they play against, the Champions of Death continue to be a deadly team!

Team Honours

Blood Bowl winners 2466 (VI), 2486 (XXVI)
 AFC championship winners 2446, 2466, 2486

Hall of Fame

None (no players ever retire - they're simply put in storage for a few years before being revived again!)



DARKSIDE COWBOYS



Conference: NFC
Division: Central
Team Colours: Blue and yellow
Symbol: Crescent moon
Owner: Prince Derren ar-lolovia
Head Coach: Luxen Tuentir
Home Stadium: The Darkside Cavern, Underearth
 (capacity c90,000, surface astrogranite)
Players: Dark Elves



The good Elves of Laurelorn may have taken their time forming their football teams, but this certainly wasn't the case with the Darkside Cowboys. The Dark Elves are constantly on the look-out for inroads into surface society. Furthermore, their twisted, degenerate culture is infamous for its worship of weird and deviant violence, and Blood Bowl fits into their religious beliefs very well indeed. The Cowboys are a cruel, ultra-violent team, and consequently do very well at the game. The combination of high intelligence, natural grace, degenerate violence and a hatred of all other living beings has helped them to the top several times.

2422 The Overearth (Dark Elf word for the surface world) first learns of the existence of the Darkside Cowboys when the Halfling Pinkfoot Panthers visit them for a friendly match and don't return!

2438 Several teams threaten to boycott the Cowboys when they apply to join the NFC, but the dark-skinned assassins were admitted anyway. Instantly, sordid revelations started to appear about their peculiar habits, such as using small trussed-up Troglydites as balls to save wear on expensive imported ones. These only seemed to heighten the Cowboys' mystique with the thrill-starved fans.

2461 The Cowboys play in the very first Blood Bowl, beating the Chaos All-Stars in a very sloppy game (literally - the Cowboys used illegal magic to turn most of the All-Stars front row into slugs!).

2473 Darkside nearly disband after the infamous match against the Kishargo Werebears (which lasted 19 days before being abandoned at 2-2 on the death of the last player from either side). New NAF rules limiting the time of games come too late to save the Werebears, but the Cowboys manage to reform and rebuild their team under the skilled leadership of dashing Jerimia Kool. Their drive culminated in glory when they won Blood Bowl XXI, during which Kool set his unbroken passing record.

2488 Kool retired last season to make way for Hubris Rakarth, the latest in a long line of glamorous Darkside players.

Team Honours

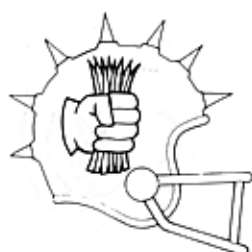
Blood Bowl winners 2461 (I), 2481 (XXI)
 Orcidas Team of the Year 2481
 NFC championship winners 2461, 2481, 2485

Hall of Fame

Rokudan Fey, Jerimia 'Flashing Blade' Kool



GREENFIELD GRASSHUGGERS



Conference: NFC
Division: Central
Team Colours: Dark green and golden brown
Symbol: Fist Clutching Grass
Owner: Berrybriar 'Bingo' Fatfellow
Head Coach: Drago Foodcraver
Home Stadium: The Dinner Dome, Greenfield
 (capacity 12,770, surface grass)
Players: Halflings



Why Halflings actually make the effort of getting all kitted out for a game every week, only to perpetually be stomped into the ground and left for dead, has been a complete mystery to a great many sportsfans for years. However, we think we have discovered the answer. According to Halfling tradition, everyone who plays in a game gets to join in a gigantic slap-up tea after the game is over! It is thus not usual to see previously-injured Halflings get up from their stretchers and tear off in the direction of the dressing room when the final whistle goes!

The Greenfield Grasshuggers are a typical Halfling team. They can't run very far, they can't throw, and fatalities every match are quite horrendous, but still the plucky little chaps soldier on. What some Halflings will do for a free feed...

Team Honours

NFC championship winners 2476

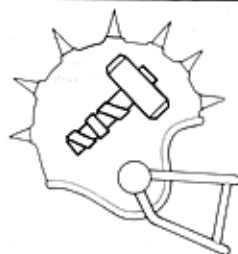
Hall of Fame

Jingo Merrychap

- 2465 After losing a bet, Berrybriar Fatfellow founds the Greenfield Grasshuggers. Halflings love any excuse to go somewhere and stuff themselves with popcorn and candy-floss and cakes and cans of Bloodweiser, so the sport is unexpectedly successful.
- 2476 Due to a crippling player's strike and a ban on visiting teams from the AFC, the Grasshuggers are one of only two teams playing this year! Luckily for everyone, however, they are beaten 3-0 by the Creeveland Crescents.
- 2482 After losing to the Asgard Ravens, the Grasshuggers disband due to lack of players (foolish ex-coach Omo Snuffsniffer continued to substitute for injured and dead players). The Grasshuggers finally gave up when the 734th corpse was carried from the field. New legislation limiting the size of Blood Bowl squads was rushed through the very next week by the NAF.
- 2487 The Grasshuggers return, much the same as they ever were. The players and coach were different, of course, but nothing else has changed. They are still overweight, undertalented and look ridiculous in full Blood Bowl kit - and the very fat ones still go Squit! like a pimple when Storm Giants tread on them.



DWARF WARHAMMERERS



Conference: NFC
Division: Eastern
Team Colours: Grey and yellow
Symbol: A huge warhammer
Owner: The Last Council
Head Coach: 'Insane' Thorsson Axeheim
Home Stadium: The Dwarf Dome, Khûlgarr
 (capacity 55,600, surface obsidian)
Players: Dwarfs



Arch-rivals of the Dwarf Giants, the Warhammerers are most interesting to us because of their perpetual insistence in breaking the rules in the most obvious and flamboyant way. Their use of explosives and high-calibre breech-loading cannon as part of their passing play is just one case in point. These guys are plain dangerous! What's worse, they don't know when to stop, which is when accidents always seem to happen. In the Blood Bowl final only two years ago, for example, the Warhammerers were 2-0 up against the Champions of Death when their legendary trio of blitzers, the Mjolnir brothers, tried to reinforce their flying-V tactic with several hundred-weight of TNT and a large bag of coach-bolts. They certainly burst through the opposition's lines; trouble is, they also burst through the Warhammerers' substitutes bench and wiped out half of their own team. Did they learn? Are you kidding? Just last year the team were suspended for three games for illegal use of a bulldozer. From this season, they are required by law to print at the bottom of match tickets, Beware - these guys are kerr-ayzee!



Team Honours

Orcidas Team of the Year 2486
 NFC championship winners 2473, 2486

Hall of Fame

Evo 'Bomber' Baradil, Yukk Ghulag



TEAM STATISTICS (2487-88 SEASON)

The charts for each conference reveal the following facts about the teams, in this order: Games Won, Lost, Tied (* = match abandoned), Points For, Points Against, Fatalities For, Fatalities Against. Matches WN/LO/TD do not include Blood Bowl championship or Chaos Cup games. Fatalities For include game officials and members of the public.

NFC Conference

Central Division	WN	LO	TD	PF	PA	FF	FA
Darkside Cowboys	15	1	0	47	15	24	5
Everbold Unicorns	9	7	0	35	24	19	9
Evil Gits	8	7	1*	28	22	2	18
Athelorn Avengers	5	11	0	19	36	6	4
Greenfield							
Grasshuggers	3	12	1*	12	39	0	14

Northern Division

Vynheim Valkyries	15	1	0	46	16	28	5
Dwarf Giants	13	3	0	41	12	18	6
Nurgle's Rotters	7	9	0	25	30	17	44
Asgard Ravens	4	12	0	14	40	44	0
Lowdown Rats	1	15	0	4	47	31	11

Eastern Division

Dwarf Warhammerers	14	2	0	46	8	14	7
Skaven Scramblers	11	5	0	39	19	30	0
Creeveland Crescents	8	8	0	29	30	8	9
Southstorm Squids	6	9	1	20	32	6	9
Bluebay Crammers	4	11	1	13	36	3	12

Western Division

Orcland Raiders	16	0	0	48	12	16	3
Galadrieth Gladiators	12	4	0	42	19	2	5
Lustria Croakers	9	7	0	31	24	14	3
Worlds Edge							
Wanderers	3	13	0	11	44	38	1
The Hobgoblin Team	0	16	0	3	48	86	34

Blood Bowl Championship

Quarter Finals

Darkside Cowboys bt. Orcland Raiders 3-0
Vynheim Valkyries bt. Dwarf Warhammerers 3-1

Semi Final

Vynheim Valkyries bt. Darkside Cowboys 3-1

Blood Bowl XXVII

Reikland Reavers bt. Vynheim Valkyries 3-2

Passing: season Darkside Cowboys 3310 paces / single game Orcland Raiders 371 paces

Rushing: season Darkside Cowboys 2411 paces / single game Vynheim Valkyries 211 paces

Fatalities: season Nurgle's Rotters 1744 / single game Nurgle's Rotters 341

AFC Conference

Central Division	WN	LO	TD	PF	PA	FF	FA
Reikland Reavers	15	0	1*	47	12	11	6
The Gouged Eye	12	4	0	41	16	32	8
Naggaroth Nightwings	7	8	1*	29	27	6	4
Underworld Creepers	6	10	0	24	33	26	9
Bluchen Berserkers	2	14	0	9	45	35	6

Northern Division

Champions of Death	14	1	1*	45	13	23	-
Middenheim Marauders	11	5	0	36	20	10	7
Arctic Cragspiders	9	7	0	32	28	15	3
Albion Wanderers	7	9	0	24	35	12	14
Icecastle Wolves	4	11	1*	16	35	8	10

Eastern Division

Chaos All-Stars	15	1	0	46	14	30	13
Oldheim Ogres	9	6	1	32	24	18	7
Bright Crusaders	9	7	0	28	25	21	7
Khan's Killers	4	11	1	14	35	4	14
Scarcrag Snivellers	2	14	0	7	43	1	19

Western Division

Elfheim Eagles	14	2	0	46	11	14	10
Westside Werewolves	10	6	0	38	21	27	3
Dark Renegades	7	9	0	25	33	9	8
Stunted Stoutfellows	5	11	0	18	34	2	13
Brüendar Grimjacks	3	13	0	11	42	22	4

Blood Bowl Championship

Quarter Finals

Reikland Reavers bt. Chaos All-Stars 3-1
Elfheim Eagles bt. Champions of Death 3-2

Semi Final

Reikland Reavers bt. Elfheim Eagles 3-0

Passing: season Reikland Reavers 3420 paces / single game Elfheim Eagles 363 paces

Rushing: season Chaos All-Stars 2821 paces / single game Chaos All-Stars 203 paces

Fatalities: season Bluchen Berserkers 35 / single game The Gouged Eye 18



DO YOU REMEMBER?

The long, long history of Blood Bowl is littered with the corpses of teams which - for one reason or another - didn't survive to play another day. Some run out of money; understandable, because Blood Bowl is an expensive game involving vast sums of money - bribing all those referees and buying all those illegal spellcasters requires a fortune when their costs are added up over the whole year. Some run out of fans; this also understandable, because Blood Bowl fans are notoriously fickle. A team which loses every game in a row for seven years can expect to have its gate substantially reduced. In some cases, fans have taken even more drastic action to stop a downward slide in fortunes: in 2473 the Streissen Vampires were systematically put out of their misery by unhappy fans after they came last in every category for three years running. Worst of all, though, some teams run out of players. This happens rather a lot. These are just some of the many teams no longer with us:

Shortstuff Scurriers - A Gnome team, the Scurriers first entered the NFC Central Division in 2479. Unluckily, though, they lost their first 34 games, and promptly disbanded in a wave of disgust! (2479-2480)

Haffenheim Hornets - Eaten by mistake at a pre-match dinner for the Oldheim Ogres. They were mistaken for slaves dressed in Hornets gear, whom the Ogres were to consume to bring them luck. This time it did, in fact, because the incident gave the Oldheim team a clear pass to the next round. (2417-2460)

Wüppertal Wotans - Every single member of this long-running team, including the owner (who was at home in bed at the time), was very suspiciously struck by lightning two minutes before the start of an important quarter-final versus the Chaos All-Stars. (2483)



THE GLITTERING PRIZES

There are a number of awards and trophies up for grabs every season, of which the main three are the Chaos Cup, the Orcidas Team of the Year Award, and, of course, the Bloodweiser Blood Bowl itself.

The Chaos Cup

As you can see, the Chaos Cup is not exactly the most desirable of objects to win. The status it carries, however, is second only to the Blood Bowl. Originally known as the Whiteskull Challenge Cup, it is played for by eight top teams from the AFC while the conference winners are away competing in the Blood Bowl.

Like all awards, the cup has had its share of scandal. When sponsorship of the competition was taken over by Orcidas in 2471, the Elfheim Eagles were thrown out for not featuring any Chaos-tainted players in their side, and several other sides pulled out in sympathy. These days only those teams with at least one Chaos-tainted player in the squad are admitted to the competition. This severely stemmed the winning streak of the Reikland Reavers, who had notched up a record 19 wins of the Chaos Cup before dropping out permanently in 2472 after refusing to employ an Orc player.



The Orcidas Team of the Year Award

This award, which takes the form of a mounted golden running boot on a delightful plinth, is awarded to the NFC team of the last 12 months whom a panel of independent judges decides has made the greatest achievement. In practice this usually means the NFC Championship winner, but there have been several shocks, as in 2485 when the Evil Gits won the trophy despite having the second-worst record in the conference. Later disclosures revealed that the Gits had simply scratched their name onto the trophy over that of the Darkside Cowboys - and no-one even noticed!

The Blood Bowl

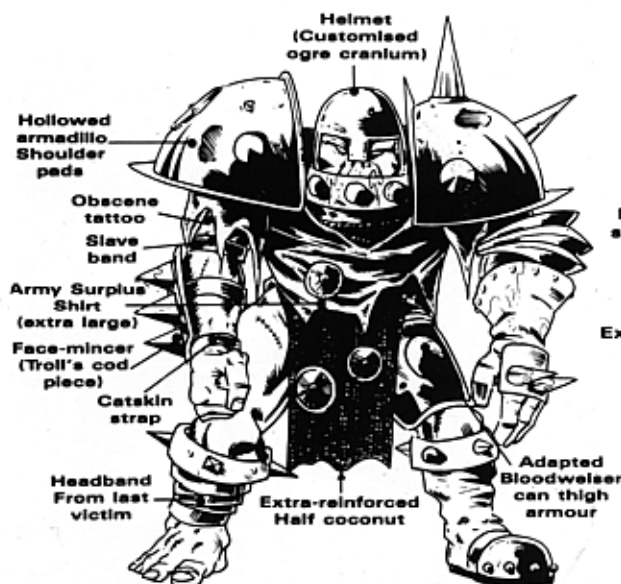
The granddaddy of them all, however, is the Bloodweiser Blood Bowl Championship Winners' Trophy, commonly known as the Blood Bowl. It is awarded to the winner of the final match between the NFC and AFC Conference champions. Before

2461, the Blood Bowl championship games were merely friendly - but competitive - played purely to award the status of Best Team in the World to the winners. With the arrival of big business in the shape of the Bloodweiser Corporation, however, the competition made a major stride in popularity. The Blood Bowl final can now garner a world-wide audience of 250 million sports-fans across four continents, and is worth over a million crowns in prize money to the winners.

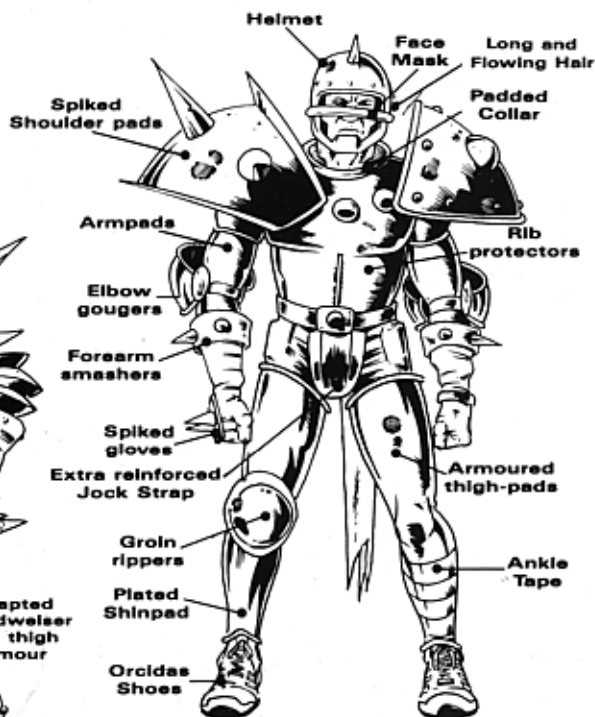
There is also the Blood Bowl Trophy itself, otherwise known as the Buddy Grafstein Trophy after the chairman of Bloodweiser who first presented it. It's made from solid Dwarf gold, and as such is extremely valuable. This value has caused the original trophy to be stolen many times, and in fact the current one is the fourth trophy to be made. These days, its current value is such that most winners spend all the prize money from the competition just paying for security devices to protect for the year they have it!

EQUIPMENT

It can cost upwards of 150,000 gold crowns to outfit a professional team for a season - and to look at the way players treat their kit you'd think the money grew on trees. However, all that padding and armour comes in very useful for keeping a player alive long enough to maybe make a few yards or to toss the ball to another player. The cost of equipment is now so high that some teams, especially those from the poorer goblinoid races, insist a player supply his own equipment from whatever he can find. Some players have become remarkably inventive at making Blood Bowl gear from other objects.



VARAG GHOUL-CHEWER



GRIFF OBERWALD

THE BALL

The very first ball, history tells us, was made from the inflated bladder of an unfortunate pig called Dennis. Sorry to say, the ball used that day has not survived to the present, but the Blood Bowl Museum does contain a lot of balls from the early days of the game. In those days a ball could be just about any shape, and made from just about any material that could stand up to the punishment of a Blood Bowl match, but still be light enough to be thrown.



These days, all balls are made by the BBBC, the Blood Bowl Ball Company, of Rock Rapids near Middenheim. Game standard professional balls cost around 30 gold crowns, and each one bears the personal signiature of NAF chief Nikk Three-Horn. The rules state that the home team must provide 25 footballs for every game. The typical Blood Bowl ball weighs around a pound, and is filled with air. On that note, Goblin players, especially, seem to delight in sneaking a ball filled with lighter-than-air marsh gas into the hands of an opposing thrower before a vital pass, just to see the expression on his face as his world-beating pass goes floating up and away into the void! In recent years, teams have been experimenting with spiked balls which will stick to a player after being thrown; these allow a team to circumvent the rules banning weapons from the field of play!

STAR PLAYERS

GRIFF OBERWALD

Reikland Reavers

It isn't often that Head Coach of the Reikland Reavers, Harry Zwimmer, has a nice word to say about any other human being, but it is recorded that when he first saw the young Griff Oberwald play, he actually declared: "Zat boy is almost above-average!" Such immense praise from the tight-lipped coach was only the first in a great many compliments paid to the young superstar from Streissen, who has since been called "Griff the godlike!" (*Spikel* magazine), "Phew! what a scorer!" (*Middenheim Mirror*) and "The greatest single gift to our profession since Morg'th N'hthrog first bit a Goblin's head off in the Chaos Cup!" (*Undertaker's Gazette*). High praise indeed.

The young Oberwald first came to the attention of Reavers fans in his first game for the team at the end of 2483, in which his ferocious tackle play garnered him three ears, a nose and a two-match suspension. Undaunted by this minor set-back, Griff gained a permanent place in the Reavers first team, where he battled his way through the lines alongside his half-cousin and team captain Orlak Stürmdrang. A quite remarkable second season for the Reavers earned him a precious Best Newcomer Medal, and culminated in his scoring the winning Touchdown against the Darkside Cowboys in the full-scale rout that was Blood Bowl XXV.

Oberwald's qualities are those of the classic Blood Bowl hero. He's tall, superfit and strong, with a grace and co-ordination that can leave most other players standing. Instantly recognisable across a murky Blood Bowl field by the usual splattering of gore across his kit, Oberwald cuts a very dashing figure and it's no surprise the girls go wild when he has the ball in his capable hands.



At the beginning of last season, after leading the Reavers through some of the best years in their 91-year history, captain Orlak Stürmdrang decided to step down from the post and return to simply being a player. There was only one man to replace him, and Oberwald duly started the second match of the '87 season as team captain. He immediately made his mark on the team, driving them harder than ever with startling results. Reikland finished the year as Blood Bowl champions yet again, and Oberwald was voted AFC Player of the Year by a panel of his peers. Quite simply, this young man is a star!

Age: 26
Height: 6 ft 4 in
Weight: 168 lbs
College: von Strudel's, Streissen
Crush: Reikland Reavers first round choice 2483
Teams: Reikland Reavers
Position: Blitzter; team captain.

Best Game: Reavers versus Vynheim Valkyries, Blood Bowl XXVII, 2487.

Rushing 202 paces, 2 Touchdowns, 3 fatalities
Best Season: 2487. 12 passes caught for 128 paces.

Total rushing 2104 paces, 15 Touchdowns, 6 fatalities

Career Totals: Rushing 7922 paces, 48 Touchdowns, 31 fatalities

Awards: Bloodweiser Best Newcomer Medal 2484.
 AFC Player of the Year 2487.

Blood Bowl winners medal 2485, 2487

Zug played his first game for the Reavers first team in the autumn of 2476, and succeeded in making his presence felt by severely injuring eight Middenheim players in the first half. Over the years, he has become a firm favourite with the fans, for he can be a most exhilarating player to watch. Sure, he doesn't do all the fancy stuff - he rarely breaks out of a walk, for example; but he's an expert at incapacitating an opponent with a simple backhand swipe of one of his great paws. One interesting result of this technique is that he has the largest collection of Orc teeth in the Empire.

Age: unknown
Height: 7 ft 2 in
Weight: 325 lbs
College: none
Crush: none
Teams: Reikland Reavers
Position: anywhere he likes

Best Game: 2485 vs Champions of Death

Rushing 2 paces, 0 Touchdowns, 42 fatalities

Best Season: 2485, despite being suspended for 3 games for killing the referee who disallowed the only successful catch of his career.

Total rushing 31 paces, 1 Touchdown, 94 fatalities

Career Totals: Rushing 122 paces, 4 Touchdowns, 366 fatalities

Awards: McMurry's Spamburgers Footballer of the Year 2482, 2484, 2485

Anti-violence Watchdog Committee Worst Tackle of the Year 2484, 2487

Blood Bowl winners medal 2479, 2485, 2487

Blood Bowl players medal 2483

ZUG

Reikland Reavers

Under a long charter stretching back many, many years, the Reikland Reavers are beholden to take on one of the young orphans from Altdorf's schools as an apprentice. This practice has often paid off, as most of the young foundlings have grown up to be real tough cookies who'd bite an Orc's leg off soon as tackle him. However, when in 2468, a hulking, great, useless, whimpering lump known only as Zug arrived as that year's selection, the Reavers suspected they'd been sold a dummy. He was huge, overweight and unfit, ugly, brutish and apparently very stupid. As a result, he was also very unhappy and made life a living hell for the rest of the apprentices with his uncooperative behaviour.

After several months of nonsense from the mountainous lump, Head Coach Helmut Zwimmer could stand the disruption no longer and decided to take Zug in hand. Zwimmer has never been known for his gentle approach to coaching, and gradually, Coach Zwimmer managed to penetrate the clouds surrounding his pupil's brain. A new, happier Zug began training with the rest of the team. Everyone soon realised just what an achievement their head coach had made, for the new Zug was a revelation. His immense bulk was offset by a very skillful coordination; this guy had size and strength, and he knew what to do with them!



VARAG GHOUL-CHEWER

The Gougged Eye

Major Blood Bowl stars come in all shapes and sizes. Some fans idolise players because they are handsome, or strong or very charismatic. Others, though, actually notice and appreciate good tactical playing, and a minority are great fans of long-serving Gougged Eye captain, Varag Ghoul-Chewer. Despite the regular handicap of having to lead a team who couldn't collectively arm-wrestle a squirrel, the mix of Varag's tactical brain and violent playing style has ensured him a good-sized crowd of rabid fans.

Varag was originally a foreman at the Wolfleg lead mines in eastern Drakwald, but was captured by slavers from the rival Gougged Eye tribe in 2471. The following year, he was spotted by the coach of their football team, the celebrated Gort Sever-limb, while he was putting one of his captors in the critical list. Quickly recognising the potential playing advantages of having a player who could make a few rudimentary decisions, Coach Sever-limb took a tremendous chance and put the inexperienced Varag at the head of his resurrected 2475 team (most of the 2474 Eye team had been massacred by 'Axeface' Mangelsson of the Vynheim Valkyries in Blood Bowl XIV the year before).

Ghoul-Chewer was an instant hit, and despite a few complications involving some over-drastring punishments for player insubordination, has remained at the head of the increasingly-successful Gougged Eye team. His finest hour so far was leading his team of young braves to a second Chaos Cup win a few years ago. Now he has his sights set on moulding the Gougged Eye into a team worthy of winning the Blood Bowl championship too!



Age: 30
Height: 5 ft 2 in
Weight: 188 lbs
College: none
Crush: none; sold as slave 2472
Teams: The Gougged Eye
Position: Blitzier; team captain

Best Game: 2481 vs Oldheim Ogres
 Rushing 202 paces, passing 29 paces, 3 Touchdowns, 13 fatalities
Best Season: 2483, which included a second Chaos Cup victory
 Total rushing 1840 paces, passing 71 paces, 12 Touchdowns, 21 fatalities
Career Totals: Rushing 1042 paces, passing 402 paces, 51 Touchdowns, 299 fatalities
Awards: Orcworld magazine Man of the Year
 AFC Player of the Year 2485.
 Chaos Cup winners medal 2477, 2482, 2483
 Blood Bowl players medal 2478.

HUBRIS RAKARTH

Darkside Cowboys

Despite his age, Hubris is one of the younger players on the highly experienced - and very successful - Cowboys side (Elves take time to mature). A perfect product of the Darkside Academy in western Underearth, Rakarth is clever, courageous but also an evil and cynical player. Like the rest of his team, he is perfectly prepared to cheat and foul to win, a fact that far too many of Darkside's opponents still fail to take into account.

Hubris Rakarth made his debut for the Darkside Cowboys in 2482, after being chosen in the Crush by the Dark Elf team (the other team bidding for him, incredibly, were the Holy Crusaders - he wouldn't have fitted in there!). Under the patronage of then-captain Jeremia Kool, the Flashing Blade, he soon developed into an excellently well-rounded player, able both to run with the ball and to throw with extreme accuracy. There were other strings to his proverbial bow too...

In 2479, the Darkside Cowboys team were the first to illegally use magical spells on the Blood Bowl field. Previous to this date, all magic had been confined to sneaky uses from off the field - sleep spells cast on an opponent's blockers before a vital manoeuvre, plagues of rats inflicted on the substitutes' bench, that sort of thing. But after years of experimentation in the rarefied atmosphere of the Underearth University research labs, the Cowboys perfected small, portable spells to be carried by individual players, which could be discharged at will, zapping a vital player into his constituent atoms with the point of a finger! The spells were banned from championship matches almost immediately, but when the Cowboys feel they can get away with it, they'll often zap someone anyway! Rakarth is a superb sorcerer, and will lash out with a stinging fireball or a blast of fire in moments of great passion or annoyance. It's not very safe to annoy Hubris Rakarth!



The Bright Crusaders' famous "left hook" tactic breaks them through the Gouged Eye's first line in strength. Will they make it clear to the end zone!



The Gouged Eye boys react swiftly, pulling back and closing the gap. The Crusaders have made ground, but the Eyes managed to shut the door in time to prevent a disaster.



Irresistible force vs immovable object. Old enemies clash as a blitz from the Galadrieth Gladiators meets an Orcland Raiders' blitz.



ARKUL BLACKHAND
Famed Dark Elf Catcher



BORG'N HTHROG
"THE HOWITZER"
Feared Ogre Freebooter



Age: 142
Height: 6 ft 6 in
Weight: 172 lbs
College: Darkside Academy
Crush: Darkside first round choice 2482
Teams: Darkside Cowboys
Position: Blitzler/ magician; team captain

Best Game: 2486, versus the Galadrieth Gladiators
 Rushing 117 paces, passing 181 paces, 2 Touchdowns, 82 fatalities
Best Season: 2486
 Total rushing 609 paces, passing 1013 paces, 22 Touchdowns, 181 fatalities
Career Totals: Rushing 2844 paces, passing 3133 paces, 39 Touchdowns, 350 fatalities
Awards: Evillest Player of the Year award 2486
 Player Least likely To (Stick to the Rules) 2483
 Black Sorcerer's Guild Special Citation 2486
 Blood Bowl players medal 2485

GRISHNAK GOBLIN-THROTTLER

Orcland Raiders

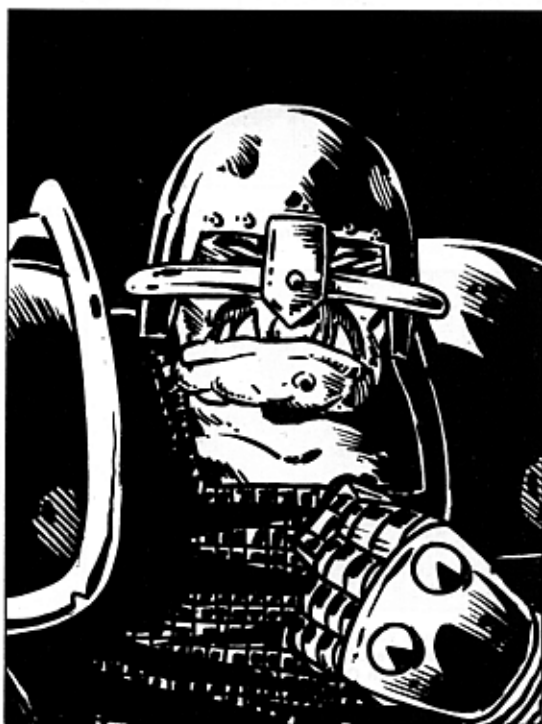
Rivalry is just as strong between Orc players as it is between humans, and nowhere is this more evident than in that between Varag Ghou-Chewer of the Gouged Eye and Grishnak, chief thrower of the Orcland Raiders. Despite his skill at passing the football, Grish is also a superb rushing player, and has held several team maiming records in recent years because of his headstrong attitude towards tackling. You'll find this experienced player wherever the action is; punching, gouging or stabbing, he just doesn't care which technique he uses, just as long as it does the job.

Goblin-Throttler started his career with the Schaffen Stallions, but stayed only a season before being forcibly exchanged with the Severed Heads (now the Raiders). He was the star of the 2469 Blood Bowl, scoring 2 Touchdowns and killing 6 of the Middenheim opposition to win the match for his team. Since then he's maintained consistently good play, though his jealous rivalry with Ghou-Chewer has persistently got him into trouble off the field.



Age: unknown
Height: 5 ft 4 in
Weight: 174 lbs
College: Lakeside Academy for Gentlemen, Uruk
Crush: Schaffen Stallion second round choice 2467
Teams: Schaffen Stallions, Severed Heads (now the Orcland Raiders)
Position: Thrower

Best Game: 2472, vs Southstorm Squids
 Rushing 32 paces, passing 321 paces, 3 Touchdowns, 1 fatality
Best Season: 2483, including Blood Bowl XXIII
 Total rushing 81 paces, passing 2126 paces, 27 Touchdowns, 66 fatalities
Career Totals: Rushing 488 paces, passing 18948 paces, 102 Touchdowns, 244 fatalities
Awards: Player Most Likely To (Kill Someone Real Soon) 2481, 2484
 Blood Bowl winners medal 2469, 2483



MORG'TH N'HTHROG

Chaos All-Stars

For all their bizarre magic and weird rites, the Chaos All-Stars are very popular with the Blood Bowl-watching public. This popularity is due, at least in part, to the success of their hulk-like Ogre blocker, Morg'th N'Hthrog. Morg'th, or 'The Ballista' as tongue-tied commentators have nicknamed him, is a huge, lumbering juggernaut of a player. With his half-shaven head and grim, tusky visage he looks very frightening, but - off the field - he's as gentle as a lamb and a great hit with children. As a result of his award-winning series of road safety adverts, accidents have been cut by more than a quarter, and he's sold more soft toilet paper than anyone in history!

On the Blood Bowl field, though, Morg'th is the accident; at least, he always leaves the objects of his tackles looking like they've been in a road smash! His play tactics are effective in their simplicity - either he bludgeons his way through the opposition and scores, trampling everyone in his way; or he gives the ball to one of his Lesser Goblin team-mates and throws them into the End Zone to score!

Club historians still aren't quite sure where Morg'th came from; legend has always had it that he simply walked into a practice session one day and signed himself up. Wherever he came from, he was a natural Chaos All-Stars player, being both calculating and cruel, and blessed with a brutal-looking exterior. He's always been very shy of revealing details of his personal history to sports reporters, and has been known to demonstrate his shyness to the more irritating of them. Incidentally, Morg'th is the only player in the history of the game to be elected to the Hall of Fame before he has retired from the game; see page 18 on the Chaos All-Stars for the interesting method he used to achieve this honour.

Age: unknown

Height: 7 ft 11 in

Weight: 390 lbs

College: none

Crush: none; simply 'arrived', 2469

Teams: Chaos All-Stars

Position: Blocker; team captain

Best Game: 2473, against Icecastle Wolves

Rushing 72 paces, 1 Touchdown, 176 fatalities (including 13 Wolves)

Best Season: 2482, first season as team captain

Total rushing 402 paces, 19 Touchdowns, 208 fatalities

Career Totals: Rushing 2322 paces, passing 12 paces, 27 Touchdowns, 512 fatalities

Awards: Services to Organ Transplants Medal 2479

Anti-violence Watchdog Committee Worst Tackle of the Year 2479, 2480, 2485, 2486

NFC Player of the Year 2485

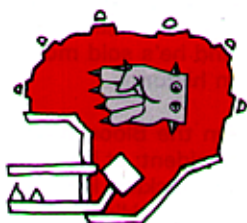
Chaos Cup winners medal 2471, 2487





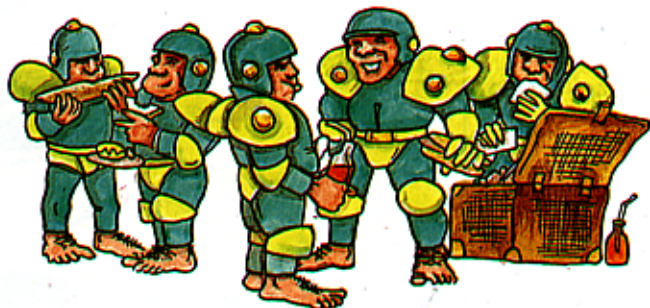
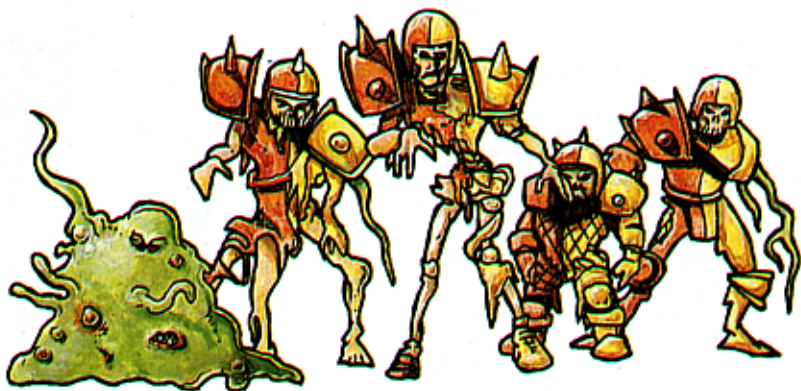
OLDHEIM OGRES

This ferocious bunch have found it difficult to find opponents in their conference for two reasons. Most people are afraid of their terrible reputation - tales of how they eat their opponents abound. But more often than not, it's simply a case of them getting lost on the way to the match.



NURGLE'S ROTTERS

The fact that this team smell badly is assumed rather than proven. True, they are all made up of semi-decomposed flesh surrounded by swarms of flies, but by the time anyone gets close enough to get a really accurate whiff, they've inevitably caught one of the Rotters' nasty diseases, and usually die before they can suggest personal hygiene.



GREENFIELD GRASS HUGGERS

These enthusiastic Halflings have often caused people to wonder what it is that drives them onto the field every week, only to get thoroughly stomped by the opposition. The answer is simple: a slap up meal for surviving team members.



UNDERWORLD CREEPERS

This unlikely pot-pourri of Skaven and Goblins is a juggernaut of innovation in the field of dastardly tactics. If one of their ambitious plans backfires on the Gobbos (who usually get everything wrong, anyway), the Skaven just sit back and watch the stupid creatures hurt themselves - it appeals to their warped sense of humour.



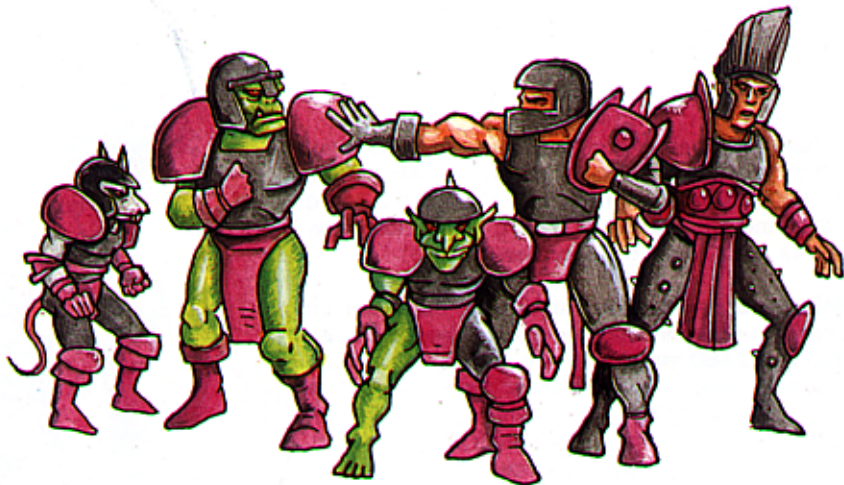
ALBION WANDERERS

The Albion Wanderers are the self-confessed gentlemen of the sport: never a bad word to say about any of the other teams. When they're wiped out by foul play, they put it down to 'bad luck, chaps' and 'health problems'. But when they win, they're so sickeningly magnanimous and humble, whole stadiums become lynching mobs.



MONGREL HORDE

The most motley crew ever to hit the Astrogranite®, these misfits are disorganised but deadly. However, their bloodthirsty attitude doesn't make up for the fact that team members spend half their games whingeing at each other about how they'd rather be playing in a different position/team/sport. They either win by lots or lose by lots.



THE CRUSH

In the very earliest days of the sport, new Blood Bowl players were recruited from any old idiot who wanted to play. This was fine, but often left teams with throwers who couldn't even hold the ball, never mind throw it. Eventually, though, a system of college training grew up, with promising players learning the game as part of their studies, and the best students moving up to the professional Blood Bowl teams on graduation.



The process of selection which decides which players go where is known as The Crush. It's a very complicated procedure, but - basically - all the available players are put in a large room, with representatives of all the NFC and AFC teams stood outside. On the word 'Go!', all the players rush to get through the room's small door to get to the team of their choice before their quota of new players is filled. The Crush takes place two weeks after the Blood Bowl final, at the start of the summer recess, and always attracts high viewing figures because of that exciting scramble for the door!

Once the Crush is over, teams can then spend a month or so trading players, before the serious business of signing contracts, selling one's soul and getting down to training commences. Of course, not all players get signed to a club this way. Most of the Orc and Goblin clubs, especially, fill their ranks from members of their local tribe, or with likely-looking slaves purchased from slavers or 'drafted' by the team themselves.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

The long history of Blood Bowl is littered with the memories of hundreds of truly great players who for one reason or another are no longer with us. Some die, of course, but many others retire from the game and take up new occupations. Here are some of our personal favourites from years gone by:

Harry 'The Hammer' Kehry: Harry, once star head-stomper for the Creeveland Crescents, was renowned for the intricate war-dances he used to perform whenever he scored (usually done on the recumbent bodies of the opposition!). Harry retired in 2486, after a long 32 years in the game, and is now a dancing teacher.

Big Jobo Hairyfeet: Lanky Halfling captain of the Greenfield Grasshuggers until 2475, when he was rather drastically reduced in height after being stepped on by the legendary Storm-Giant half-back Gork Cloud-Scraper of the Asgard Ravens. Jobo was buried two weeks later in a small sack.

G'Ral Bloodsucker: Ace Champions of Death star, G'Ral, was one of the top scorers in the AFC before his enforced retirement in 2487 after getting blood poisoning from a rusty Dwarf. The Ghoul now works for the Blood Donor Service.

Stunted Grom Red-Axe: Famous for his 41-league scoring rush when fired from an over-loaded cannon during a 2480 match with the Gouged Eye, Grom was the Dwarf Warhammerers' top scorer before his sudden death last season when he looked down the barrel of a howitzer which hadn't gone off. Still, he was posthumously awarded the Channel 7 Viewers' Award for Most Entertaining Player Death of 2487.

Jeremia Kool: The Flashing Blade retired last year, and is now consultant in offensive magic to the research department of the Underearth University. Here, he's helping develop ever more portable and ever more deadly spells for the Darkside Cowboys, for whom he was captain for almost 12 record-breaking years.



THE ASTROGRANITE CONTROVERSY

Blood Bowl games have traditionally been played on grass. Grass is good, for its springy, soft and natural. However, grass isn't very resistant to the elements: it gets wet, muddy and swampy, and it requires a lot of hard work on the part of groundsman to keep it in tip-top condition. On the other hand, it is written in the Holy Book of Nuffle that grass is the sacred material of the patron god of football, so grass has almost always been used for Blood Bowl pitches.

That is, until 2485, when we saw the arrival of a totally new playing surface, a synthetic concoction called Astrogranite®. The first team to replace their grassy field with the revolutionary new substance were the Darkside Cowboys, who decided to stop struggling to grow grass underground in their Darkside cavern Stadium, and replaced it all with the new substance. No-one is quite sure just what the stuff is made from, but Astrogranite has certain advantages: it requires virtually no upkeep after laying, apart perhaps for a quick sweep-up after a match; it doesn't need sunlight to make it grow and keep it healthy (a very big plus-point for subterranean Orc and other teams!); and it is much, much cheaper than grass.

However, it does have some quite alarming differences to grass, which have caused many bitter (and universally unsuccessful) complaints to the NAF. Because of its synthetic nature, loose balls bounce around in a very different way; falling on it can give a player a nasty rash; if it rains during a match the water tends to form large, stagnant lakes; and - most importantly - one can't bury someone's face in the mud anymore! Many traditionally-minded teams have refused to have anything to do with the stuff, but all the more successful teams, including the likes of Reikland and the Gouged Eye, have invested in it. It looks like Astrogranite is here to stay, though many teams still campaign to have it banned, with little success. The NAF's line is that they "welcome it as yet another exciting development in making our great game even more fun!!", and this statement naturally has absolutely nothing to do with NAF head Nikk Three-Horn being the owner of the company which makes Astrogranite.



CHEERLEADERS

Where would we be without those beauties of the Blood Bowl battlefield, those cuddly cuties of the Chaos Cup confrontation, the cheerleaders? You know, every team gets demoralised at some time or another, but there's nothing like a happy chant from a posse of pretty girls to turn a 2-0 deficit at half-time to the Lowdown Rats into a triumph for modern pest-control! Every team in both the NFC and AFC has its own cheerleading squad, from the stark Elven beauty of the Darkside Cowgirls to the roly-poly homeliness of the Greenfield Giggles. Even Nurgle's Rotters have a gang of cheerleading lovelies who are probably very pretty if you happen to be a ten foot blob of putrescent disease like the rest of the Rotters players.

Most teams have very strict rules about cheerleaders, especially where relations with players are concerned. Some teams forbid any form of contact between the stars and the squad, with infringement punishable by instant dismissal. The most important off-duty task of any cheerleader who knows her stuff, though, is creating those incredible chants and cheers. Here is a selection from some of today's top teams:

The Gouged Eye

*We are Orcs and dat's no lie
We'll make yoo screem an' make yoo cry
We'll pull yore hair an' pinch yore thigh
An' if dat doant work we'll gouge your eye!
Gissa G, gissa O, gissa W, gissa J... (etc)*



*"We're the **!***! Gits, we'll **!!**** and *!!***! and **!!***! on you!"*

Other well know Gits chants include their famous variation of "You'll Never Walk Again" and the intimidatory cry "There's Gonna Be A Fatal Accident!"

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DWARF GIANTS

The Giants are an old team with a very long and distinguished history. Under the tuition of youthful new coach Wolfric, and the inspired leadership of Grimwold Grimbreath ('The Helmsmasher'), the Giants are still setting new records for fatalities and Touchdowns alike.



MIDDENHEIM MARAUDERS

The Marauders always show signs of greatness, especially in the ultraviolet excesses of arch-maimer Uthar Hagg, but face strict competition from the Reavers and Gougled Eye. Still, their year could come very soon - many Blood Bowl pundits continue to tip them as the team to watch!



GALADRIETH GLADIATORS

Renowned as being the first Elf team to have a truly effective running game, the Gladiators are close to regaining the form that led to their winning Blood Bowl X in 2470. Still, with Lucien Swift (arguably the best Elf Blitzler ever) at the helm, it can only be a matter of time before they get to the final once again.

