

# THE 2004 ALBION COAST CUP

By Simon Merton

**Jake:** Last time I saw Venomous was on a train in France as we tried to find our ways back from the Rendez-Vous Blood Bowl in Paris. Unfortunately I wasn't able to get to the Albion Coast Cup, but as you can tell from the following, it was a lot of fun. Hopefully it'll be on again next year...

It all began earlier this year, when I took a quick breather out of a pub in London that had been home to the Pearly Kings and Queens Tournament that weekend. I overheard one coach discussing a return to Southampton with another. Shocked that there were tournament attendees from my own neck of the woods, I stepped forward, introduced myself, and informed them I would be in touch the following week.

This is how Ben Trayhorn and myself met up, joined forces, and decided to organise the first NAF tournament on the South Coast. Several months of preparation followed, with each of us providing our own skills and talents to bring the tournament to life. Ben sorted out the venue, the prizes, and the website, while I did what I do best... taking money from people, and doing the PR bit by attending lots and lots of Blood Bowl tournaments in England, and even France, getting drunk, and shouting at people until they agreed to attend our humble little tournament.

We were surprised at the response. We had to pick August as the month as it fell between several busy months of Blood Bowl tournaments (it seems that there is virtually one every week somewhere in the world), but with the forthcoming bank holiday we were not sure how many people would be able to attend. Bookings came in fast and we achieved a respectable thirty coaches, which we thought was pretty good for our first attempt at a tournament. But it was not the thirty coaches that surprised, but their generosity. We were given numerous prizes to give away from different people, and Ben and I are still grateful.

All that was left was to decide upon a name. After a small discussion and a bit of forum banter, the Albion Coast Cup (sponsored by Southern Discomfort) was born.

So on the 14th August 2004, thirty coaches arrived at Southampton University Student Union ready to play two days of solid Blood Bowl... well, not quite. Unfortunately,



*The tournament well under way*



*The Final between Atomic Cretin and Stittlewood Wizards*

due to some heavy revelling the night before, one of the coaches, Aran Isom (aka Dwarf Coach), was somewhat worse for wear, and could not actually find the tournament location. Half an hour into the first game there was still no sign, until we finally managed to triangulate his position half way to Reading, and Ben went to recover the errant coach.

The tournament format was with 1,100,000gp rosters taken from any of the official teams, with no Star Players or Wizards allowed. A skill could be picked for a single player before the first, second, fourth and fifth game, and a double roll pick (ie, any skill or a trait) could be given before game three and six. With the possibility of getting traits, Skaven teams were, unsurprisingly, popular, with the ol' warpstone mutating many Storm Vermin into clawed killing machines.

Alongside the seven participating Skaven teams, there were five Wood Elf teams and three Orc and Norse teams. Dwarfs, Necromantic, Lizardmen and Humans each had two teams, and there were also lone representatives from the Amazons, High Elves, Khemri and even Nurgle.

Excitement was already buzzing through the room when the coaches set their eyes on the bulging prizes table, especially when they saw the miniatures that Jake Thornton of Fanatic had kindly donated. We also made everyone sign the commemorative pitch that Philip "Torpor" Homatidis had constructed, which we intended to give away in a raffle on the last day.

As round one got underway we announced that there would be a prize to the coach who inflicted the first kill of

the round. We did not have to wait long as Dave "Indigo" Candlish's Human team killed the Beast of Nurgle playing for coach Michael "Sproutman" Wood... how ironic. Incidentally the Beast did regenerate later in the game, and we did consider taking away the prize, but a fatality is still a fatality, even if it's on a large putrid amorphous regenerating blob.

### **Albion Coast Cup 2004 Final Match Report**

*Hello ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the inaugural Albion Coast Cup, brought to you by Southern Discomfort. I'm Hal Spikaels, your commentator for today's game, and it promises to be a good one.*

*The Stittlewood Wizzards, led by veteran captain Peri Eredil are a Wood Elf team without peer. They already have success on the open tournament scene, and are looking to add to their impressive tally.*

*And here come Atomic Cretin, with captain Scratch RawPaws, a particularly "gifted" Skaven Stormvermin that really should look into getting a decent manicure, looking at those talons.*

*The weather here is perfect for Blood Bowl, and the sun shines over the glorious Torpor Field. We have a capacity crowd here, all hoping the game is as good as the build up, for these two teams have played some amazing, and sometimes lucky Blood Bowl. Nuffle sure loves these two teams.*





The conclusion of the first games saw Kenneth "Musta Surma" Karru-Olsen rocket to the top table with his Orcs in his first ever tournament against Philip "Torpor" Homatidis' Khemri squad.

Round two began, and this time there was a prize for the first Double Skill rolled. This honour befell Luke "Blitzwing" Gregory as his Rat Ogre fell over his oversized incisor trying to throw a block.

The round concluded with Kenneth Karru-Olsen's Orcs triumphing over the Khemri 3-0 despite the pyramid-dwelling cadaver racking up eight casualties.

Fatigue started to hit home in round three, as six hours of Blood Bowl began to take its toll. The coaches were evidently ready for some serious R&R after a round which found no less than five coaches on top with equal records of two wins and one draw, separated only by touchdown differences.

It's now tradition at most tournaments these days to go out somewhere and party till the wee hours, and the Albion Coast Cup was going to be no exception. So a couple of hours after the end of round three, half the coaches were down the local pub, sampling its fine beverages, including a selection of pint-sized cocktails,

and, thanks to a wandering salesman, local seafood. As the hours passed, and more and more drinks disappeared, I couldn't help but think that it would be a miracle if even half the coaches turned up on time on Sunday morning for the 9am kick-off. Shortly after that things went blurry, and eventually black.

Sunday, the day of rest, unless you're a crazed Blood Bowl coach. With much trepidation I arrived at the University, and, with great relief, found that I was virtually the last person to get there. Nuffle had guided his followers to the tournament, ready for three more games, and the ultimate prize of the first ever Albion Coast Cup.

Those pesky Skaven teams started to dominate the field during round four, and round five saw four potential candidates for the final; Paul "Geggster" Gegg and his Wood Elves battled against Del "Longfang" Hiscock's renowned Skaven team on table one, while Luke "Blitzwing" Gregory, having sorted out his Rat Ogre woes, was out to avoid being ground into astrogranite dust against Richard "Lowsman" Would's Dwarf team.

At the same time the casualty race was beginning to heat up. After day one, the lone Khemri was leading with a massive 18 casualties caused, but slowly, during games four and five, Matt Ord-Hume and his Dwarf team were

*The referee tosses the coin, and Atomic Cretin win the toss. I'm not sure if there are some dodgy dealings going on down there, as the referee appears to have sprouted a third arm. The Skaven must have been bribing with the warpstone again.*

*The Stittlewood Wizzards indicate they are ready to receive, Tweek Fleetfoot lines up to kick off for Atomic Cretin, and... we're off, the first Albion Coast Cup Final is under way. The ball soars through the air hitting the turf by the sideline and bounces out of play. Fleetfoot is being shouted at by his comrades for such an atrocious kick, while the Wizzards gracefully move into position as Nada Truesbot, the Wizzards' Thrower, takes possession of the ball.*

*The Wizzards take no time at all to advance downfield as the Cretins are still arguing with one another over the kick-off. Truesbot hands the ball over to the speedster Graba Sleekfoot, who blasts past midfield and sprints downfield.*

*Ouch! Atomic Cretin get back in the game as Captain Skraich RawPaws dismembers Wizzards' Kicker Gelas Eredil. Hmm... maybe he doesn't need that manicure after all.*

*Twitch Wetnose gets entangled with Sleekfoot, and pops the ball loose, while team-mate Nickit Bent Tail recovers for the Cretins. The Wizzards try to close down Nickit, but he's found Tweek Fleetfoot open with a great pass, and now Fleetfoot, trying to make amends for his bad kicking, is running towards the Wizzards' End Zone.*

*But not for long as Wardancer Gethel leaps into action smashing Tweek Fleetfoot and his two left feet into the ground. Gethel picks up the ball and rolls out to the sideline behind a small line of blockers, and the Stittlewood Catchers head off to the end zone.*

*Atomic Cretin move back up with the bulking Rat Ogre Meat Goaffer chasing down one Catcher, while RawPaws rakes at the other, knocking him to the turf.*

*Oh my... Gethel has fumbled the ball as he attempts to unload it downfield, and now the Cretins go on the attack. The Rat Ogre sends Catcher Tiriell Greystar into the crowd, and the horde of Gutter Runners swarm around the ball.*

*Led by the asbamed Gethel, the Wizzards fight to the ball, and Nada Truesbot recovers, frustrating the*





*The prizes*

rapidly catching up. I'm sure it had nothing to do with Matt's skill selection of Mighty Blow every round, even when he could have taken a trait.

Tension was high on the top tables. Luke's Skaven emerged victorious, thanks to being able to avoid the brunt of the Dwarven assault. Meanwhile in an exciting end to end game, Paul Gegg's Wood Elves paved their way to the final, defeating Del's Skaven.

Before I discuss the final, I should report a scandal that occurred in the last round, and my disgust that there was no other scandalous activity all weekend. What is the Blood Bowl world coming to, eh?

Way down on the bottom table Matt Ord-Hume and his Dwarfs faced off against a hapless Wood Elf team. Unsurprisingly the Dwarfs racked up a lot of casualties, but the Elves won the game... just. But then reports came in that there was a "Gentleman's Agreement" that as long

*Gutter Runners. Meanwhile Graba Sleekfoot runs across the End Zone. He is waving his arms, he's completely open.*

*This could be the opening score. Truesbot has spotted Sleekfoot, brings his arm back to pass and... by Nuffle, this just is not the Wizzards' day. Truesbot has put too much on that pass and it sails over Sleekfoot's head into the crowd. Sleekfoot follows as Skratcb RawPaus throws him on the fans' mercy, literally.*

*Atomic Cretin pick up the ball and charge down the sideline, with Bok Blacknail holding the pigskin real tight.*

*Stittlewood try and breakdown the cage but to no avail, the Cretins are just too strong on the counter-attack, and with time expiring surely the Cretins can score.*

*Blacknail bursts through a hole towards the End Zone, he's almost there, and surely no one can catch him. Whoaaa! Blacknail has slipped up inches from the end zone, and that's the half-time whistle. I'm not sure folks, but there was some unusual arm waving from the Wizzard fans down that end of the stadium. It*

*could be some kind of fan chant, but I swear the ground came up and grabbed Bok Blacknail's feet.*

*The Skaven players are arguing at the referee, while the Stittlewood Wizzards nonchantly head off to the locker room. Atomic Cretin don't seem to be getting much luck from the ref, he's completely ignoring the players, in fact he doesn't seem to be moving at all. Ab well folks, looks like that warpstone bribe at the start of the game has got the better of our official, as he has been petrified. Let's hope they can find a less corrupt referee for the second half. I doubt it though.*

*The second half gets underway, with the Wizzards having just eight players fit to take the field. Meanwhile, at the other end, the Cretins get ready to receive, Gutter Runners hungrily looking for the ball to come their way.*

*The Cretins are stacked up to one side behind the massive Rat Ogre, as the ball dances through the air. Wow, those Elves have to make an art form out of everything.*

*Blacknail grabs the ball for Atomic Cretin, and runs behind the massive wall of Skaven bodies. BAM! Meat*



*More frantic gaming*

as the Wood Elves kept sacrificing themselves in front of the Dwarven spiked gauntlets, the Dwarfs would allow one Elf to live, who could do whatever the hell he wanted with the ball. Nothing was proven, though I spent the rest of the tournament scowling at both coaches. Matt Ord-Hume eventually beat Philip Homatidis' Khemri by one casualty, but Matt very sportingly recognised Philip's achievement, and split the prizes between them.

Back to the final. The coaches were all in their seats as they watched Paul Gegg and Luke Gregory take their position for the glory of winning the Albion Coast Cup. But before the game could commence we had a special treat. Taking a

break from his pre-season training, flying in especially to deliver the game ball was Varag Ghou-Chewer. We were very lucky that such a famous Star of the game could make an appearance, though we did have to fight him back when he started shouting and intimidating the two finalists. Oh well, what do you expect from an Orc?

The game began with Paul's Wood Elves receiving. They sprinted up field, only to lose possession deep in Luke's half. Luke in turn lost possession of the ball as the Skaven crossed midfield. An exchange of possession continued throughout the first half. The Skaven finally broke free with the ball in the last two turns, but the ball carrier fell

*Goafer slams into Arduil Hellas, and he's not moving. The Wizzards' Medic is running onto the pitch, they have to use that Apothecary now, they can't afford to lose another player. Look at him go, is it that natural Wood Elven finesse getting that healer to his patient, or just fear of being tenderised by a ten-foot, 450-pound rat?*

*Bok Blacknail flips the ball out to Nickit Bent Tail, with most of the remaining Wizzards tangled up with one-on-one blocking... and... Touchdown! Atomic Cretin finally breaks the deadlock.*

*Atomic Cretin now kick off deep, and Nada Truesbot runs over to collect the ball. I think the Wizzards are going to have real problems scoring now though due to... wait a minute, Truesbot has dumped the ball off to Gethel, who leaps majestically over the Cretins' defensive wall and sprints into the End Zone... nothing is going to stop that kind of play. These Wizzards sure know how to conjure up some Blood Bowl magic.*

*It's now 1-1 and the Cretins are going to get the ball again. Can they regain the lead? Bok Blacknail catches the kick-off and looks up to pass; he has Bent Tail open once again.*

*Blacknail's pass is woefully under thrown, and Valar Kellion dodges in and picks up that ball. While this has been going on Graba Sleekfoot, who has finally found his way out of the crowd, has snuck into the End Zone, and is wide open.*

*The ball soars through the air. Oh no, it looks like it's going over his head again. But wait! By Nuffle, what a catch! With the ball going high Sleekfoot backflips off the stands and catches the ball mid-somersault. Absolutely fantastic. Touchdown.*

*2-1 now, and can the Stittlewood Wizzards hold off just a few more minutes and win the Cup?*

*Atomic Cretin look annoyed at that one, and are beginning to squabble again. RawPaws is squeaking*



over sprinting for the End Zone. Half time: 0-0. Not exactly the high scoring shoot out we expected, and I had to convince the other coaches, when reporting the score to them, that it was a really exhilarating game to watch.

The second half began with the Skaven receiving, and the Wood Elves were down a player or two. With less bodies in the way the Skaven scored in just two turns. The favour was returned in just turn 3, when a fantastic solo effort by a Wardancer levelled the score at one apiece.

Now things were getting really good... and exceedingly tense. The Skaven headed downfield on their next possession, but disaster struck as a short pass was under thrown.

Before the Skaven could pause for breath, the Wood Elves had pounced on the ball, chucked it out to a Catcher and the Elves were up 2-1 with just two turns to play.

The Skaven had everything to play for, and the Wood Elves, thanks to injury were having problems covering the pitch. The Skaven threw clinical blocks, blasted open a hole in the middle of the pitch and a Gutter Runner ran to the End Zone as time expired... 2-2. The first Albion Coast Cup was going to sudden death overtime.

At this point other coaches were finishing up, and beginning to crowd around the final, and you could cut the atmosphere with a spoon (sorry, I've been banned from touching sharp objects).



*The tournament winner, Luke Gregory*

Luke won the toss, and chose to receive. Once again the depleted Wood Elves lined up ready to kick off. There were going to need something special to avoid being swarmed.

*orders to his backfield, and the Gutter Runners get ready once more.*

*Tweek Fleetfoot has the ball, and begins to move up field. The Skaven are just throwing clinical blocks out there, and Wood Elves are falling like deadwood. Fleetfoot shuffles the ball forward to Bok Blacknail, but they have to hurry, there are only seconds left in the game. What timing, Blacknail hits a hole in the line that wasn't there moments ago, and is clean through. But can he get into the End Zone in time? Five seconds to go... four... three... two... Touchdown! They've done it. Atomic Cretin have equalised. We are going to sudden death overtime, folks.*

*Atomic Cretin win the coin toss. Stittlewood are going to give it everything here. Just listen to that crowd cheer. The fans are really behind the Elves here.*

*The ball lands at the feet of Tweek Fleetfoot, and I'm sure we've seen this before. The Wizzards have seen the*

*play forming too, but there just aren't enough of them left to stop it. Stittlewood are giving it everything, but the blocking of the Rat Ogre and Skatch RawPaws is simply unstoppable. Fleetfoot passes to Twitch Wetnose, who jumps over the fallen Elves, and scampers towards the End Zone. The last few Wizzards are chasing him, but they aren't going to catch him.*

*TOUCHDOWN!*

*Atomic Cretin win the First Albion Coast Cup 3-2 in overtime. What a game. The crowd are loving it, except for the Wood Elf fans, but I think they are now getting leapt on by the Cretin's fans... and the Cretins are erecting a huge warpstone monolith in the middle of the pitch.*

*I think it's time to go. I'm Hal Spikaels, this was the Albion Coast Cup, see you next year folks. GET ME OUTTA HERE!*



*The prize winners*

Unfortunately, the Skaven were just too good. In a virtual carbon copy of their second touchdown, the Skaven smashed open another gap and a Gutter Runner scuttled through to cup victory. I'm pretty sure that had the Elves received they would have scored first, but as it was, this day was going to belong to the Skaven, and Luke Gregory.

See the special match report for a blow-by-blow account of the final.

Coaches were giving ten minutes to relax, while Ben and I figured out all the final results, and prepared the prizes.

**The prizewinners were:**

- Winner of the Albion Coast Cup 2004:** Luke Gregory
- Runner-up:** Paul Gegg
- Third Place:** Richard Would
- Most Touchdowns:** Louis Xavier-Dauguet
- Most Casualties:** Matt Ord-Hume
- Best Painted:** Del Hiscocks
- Most Sporting:** Dave Downes
- Best Newcomer:** Kenneth Karru-Olsen
- Raffle Winner (for the Commemorative Signed Pitch):** Gavin Kelly.

Overall we think the tournament was a rousing success. All the coaches enjoyed themselves thoroughly, and were impressed how smoothly the whole tournament ran... trust me guys, it didn't seem very smooth from our side.

Ben and I would like to thank all the coaches for attending, especially those that came from overseas, all the tournament staff for helping out over the weekend and all those lovely people that donated prizes.

Rest assured we are going to make the 2005 Albion Coast Cup even better.

<p><i>Author</i></p>	<p><i>Simon Merton has been playing Blood Bowl since the first edition, and was the controversial winner of the 2002 Resurrection Tournament. He can be found at many Blood Bowl Tournaments trying to relive past glory, or rambling online as "Venomous Breath".</i></p>	
<p><i>Further Information</i></p>	<p><i>The Blood Bowl box set is available from all good GW stockists.</i></p>	
<p><i>More BB</i></p>	<p><i>Turn to page 34 for Snottling teams.</i></p>	
<p><i>Website</i></p>	<p><i><a href="http://www.BloodBowl.com">www.BloodBowl.com</a></i></p>	

