

Lizardmen: Yin and Yang - Smash and Dash

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INTRODUCTION

Lizardmen combine an unusual mix of strength, speed and mobility, capable of bashing some opponents into submission and running rings around others. Lizardmen do not specialise in any one aspect of the game, that said Lizardmen are not a truly versatile team either - a rookie Saurus suffers from having no core skills, very low agility and can be easily tied up and the Skinks are fragile, cannot play a passing game and have no access to general skills. Lizardmen are best described as a yin and yang team, they work best in tandem, moving around the pitch as one, bound together, just as yin and yang are both opposites and equals so are the Saurii and Skinks.

THE LIZARDMEN PHILOSOPHY

Yin and Yang is the Chinese philosophy of how polar or contrary forces are interconnected and interdependent. It is a natural duality like light and dark, hot and cold, slow and fast, little and large. They are complementary opposites that interact within a greater whole as part of a dynamic system. This whole or dynamic system is the team. The opposites are Skinks and Saurus. The dualities are their strength and fragility, lack of agility and ability to dodge through any amount of tackle zones, their speed and the ease of which opponents can tie your players up. The team must move fluidly like water and be static like rock; they must be both aggressive in one approach and passive at the same time. You must learn how to use their dualities to their advantage and how to stop your opponent exploiting them.

GENERAL TACTICS

Lizardmen are one of a few teams that can really benefit from kicking first. The main advantage of this is they need their Kroxigor and all their Saurii on the field to put up a good solid defence and break the opponents drive up. Having all your key players on the field increases the likelihood of capitalising on any mistakes your opponent might make and even if you lose a few players in this drive scoring is never really a big problem with Lizardmen and you can afford to have a couple of key players out for your drive.

One of Lizardmen's biggest disadvantages is they have no truly expendable players, they have to set up 3 of their best players on the LoS (line of scrimmage) and expose them to 3 free blocks, a blitz and potentially a foul all in the first turn. The advantage of choosing to kick first and take the potential beating that ensues is - it limits the number of occasions you will need to set up defensively and get fouled (if all goes to plan): You will set up defensively in the first turn and the last turn of the game which reduced the amount of chances your opponent will get free fouls against your key players because most coaches will not bother fouling your players in the last turn of the game. If you choose to receive first and you score in turn 8 you will set up your players in the last turn of the first half giving your opponents a chance to foul one of your key players when it does not matter if their player gets sent off. Then you will have to start the next half facing the same predicament. Another advantage of kicking first is that even if your opponent does manage to score in the first half in turn 8 then you should have most of your players left standing so you can attempt a OTTD (one turn touchdown), if you receive first then you might have to wait until the last turn of the game to attempt a OTTD and you may not have enough players left on the field to pull it off.

To be a successful Lizardmen coach you have to learn how to use the strengths and weaknesses of the roster to your benefit. You have to keep your Skinks safe at all costs because they are an easy target for your opponent and at the same time you need to keep your Saurii free, away from tackle zones so that they do not become tied up. You will need to make sure that you always keep your Saurii in a close pack ideally no more than 1 square between them so that they do not become isolated. Keeping your Saurii next to each other or 1 square away maximises their ability to free each other up and screen your ball carrier or defend your end zone. As your team become more developed you will get more freedom with your Saurii enabling them to split up in to two packs of three or three packs of two sometimes. But it is always best to keep them very close to each other protecting your Skinks and giving your team freedom to move laterally across the pitch and forward in to your opponents half.

Controlling the clock is the key to your team's success and you should be aiming to win most games 2-1. When defending you should generally try and force your opponent in to making a quick touch down leaving you enough time to equalise before the end of the half. However Lizardmen do have the ability to steal the ball and make a quick get away to score in the opponents half, so keep your eyes open for opportunities to exploit opponent's mistakes or capitalise on any bad luck. The Skinks are as fast as any elves and Stunty gives them opportunities to reach areas of the field that other players can not. If an opportunity does arise try and swarm round the ball en masse with your Skinks and Saurii so that if you do pick up the ball you will be safely protected by a cage or screen in your opponents next turn. Against some teams it can be a good idea not to pick the ball up at all particularly against those teams with Block/Wrestle-Leap-Tackle-Strip Ball player's like Slann and Wood Elves and instead just surround the ball so it cannot be picked up easily and run down the clock for the rest of the half inflicting as much damage as possible to your opponent for the remainder of the half. This is a similar tactic to that employed by Ogres and can serve Lizardmen very well, however if you are confident of scoring from this type of situation it is always best to do so.

When you are receiving you need to be patient, do not go storming in to your opponents half the first chance you get. Wait until you create an opening that allows you to manoeuvre your whole team deep in to your opponent's half keeping the ball carrier protected by a mix of a loose cage and a defensive

screen. Your Skinks have Ma 8 so you don't need to get too close to the end zone to ensure a touch down is scored, just make sure that you are close enough so that no GFIs (go for its) are needed and that there is safe passage (no rolls have to be made) to the end zone. Ideally you want to get your players deep in to your opponent's half then set up camp next to their end zone while you run down the clock till it is the final turn, then score, using the rest of the half to inflict as much damage as possible to your opponent's team. When you are in this position it can be a good idea to hand off the ball to one of your Saurii so they can get the touchdown (more on this later in the advanced tactics section). There is nothing wrong with stalling and never let anyone tell you otherwise. It is absolutely vital with most races to ensure your victory. Against some teams it is best to cage the ball carrier and slowly move down the pitch inflicting as much pain as you can. This is widely known as the slow grind and it can serve Lizardmen well. Just make sure you never leave your ball carrier exposed and there is very little teams like Skaven can do about this.

STARTING ROSTERS TV 1000k

5	Skinks	300k
6	Saurus	480k
3	Re-rolls	180k
Total		960k

Starting with all 6 Saurii is a must, they can be very slow to skill up and scoring with them isn't always an option. 3 Re-rolls is preferable - the Skinks aren't the most reliable players for picking up the ball and the Saurii have no block and they aren't reliable players for picking up the ball either. This roster also leaves you 40k to play with. You can either keep it, buy an Apothecary after your first game and then start saving for your Kroxigor or you can buy a Coach, a Fan Factor and a Cheerleader to increase the likelihood of winning an extra Re-roll on the kick off table which can be invaluable. The second option still leaves you with 10 k left over which means you should have enough money to buy an Apothecary after your first game.

4	Skinks	240k
6	Saurus	480k
1	Kroxigor	140k
2	Re-rolls	120k
Total		980k

Like the previous roster starting with all 6 Saurii maximises your chances of getting them SPP as quickly as possible and the same applies for the Kroxigor which is of great importance as it increases the likelihood that your Skinks do not get awarded MVP. The added strength of the Kroxigor is a big plus and that combined with Prehensile Tail is very useful for tying opponent players up. However starting with only 2 Re-rolls is risky and leaves little room for mistakes or bad luck. You have 20 k left over with this set up so you can either buy a Coach and Cheerleader or Fan Factor or save it so you can buy an apothecary after your first game.

PLAYERS

Kroxigor



The Kroxigor is my favourite Big Guy in the game. He is the fastest Big Guy with a Ma 6 and is one of the most reliable as well. Bone head is the least negative of all the negatraits.

Prehensile Tail is also a very useful starting skill for a Big Guy especially one that is so reliable.

The important thing to remember when using a Kroxigor like all Big Guys is leaving his action till the end of the turn because if you fail then there is only a 50% chance of your Re-roll working should you decide to

use it. You should try not to blitz with your Kroxigor, ever, if possible, generally speaking there is no need to, you have enough strength elsewhere in the team so getting 2 dice blitzes should never be a problem. If your Kroxigor becomes isolated; tied up by one opponent player then blitzing your self free so you can move him to a move advantageous position can be a good idea. However you will usually be able to free him with the aide of a Saurus blitz so do not rush into a block or blitz with your Kroxigor unless it is definitely the best course of action to take. When blocking St 3 players with the Kroxigor always try and assist with 2 players so that the Kroxigor gets 3 dice to choose from. Most importantly – before declaring any action with your Kroxigor you should stop and consider whether there are any benefits in moving him or blocking with him. Good positioning is the key to using the Kroxigor effectively and once the Kroxigor is in a good position and is causing your opponent problems it is often best to just leave him alone for as long as you can. His primary roll is tying opponent players up, acting as a road block and annoying opponents.

Single rolls

Guard, Stand Firm, Break Tackle

Doubles

Block, Dodge, Pro, Diving Tackle

Stat Increases

St+

Guard is a must on a Kroxigor as it is on almost all the big guys. Even though your team appears to be stronger than most others it will not be long before your opponents have Guard on a handful of players while you are still struggling to get block on all of your Saurii. Guard makes him more useful on the defensive set up and increases his effectiveness when screening or fronting a cage. I usually pick Stand Firm as my next skill as I like playing to the Kroxigor's strengths which is his ability to hold players up with his strength and Prehensile Tail. Stand Firm is optional so if using it will leave you knocked down and vulnerable to a foul then opt not to use it and allow your opponent to push you back in to safer position.

Block on a double is an obvious choice. It helps keep him standing and gives him more punch as well. I tend to go for Dodge next over Pro if I am fortunate to get a second double. The reason I like this skill is it increases his effectiveness at tying players up even more. However Pro is a good choice as well. Diving Tackle can also be effective if your Kroxigor already has Block and Stand Firm and you are playing in a league with a lot agile teams.

Saurus



Saurii are the backbone of the team, solid, reliable and the yin to the Skinks yang. Their strengths are their high armour value, speed and strength. Their weaknesses are their agility, lack of any starting skills and they can be slow to develop. Saurii are your most valuable and important players so never leave them isolated and never give your opponent easy opportunities to foul them. With such low agility it is very easier to tie them up initially so pair them up and try not leave a space of more than 1 square between them so they can support each other effectively.

Scoring with Saurii can be tricky but you need to do so as often as possible so they can develop as quickly as possible. Relying on MVP and casualties can mean they are very slow to develop. Picking the ball up with a Saurus is a 5+ roll with a Re-roll that gives you a 55% chance of success. So it is definitely worth a try in your first turn after kick off. After that you will have to make a judgement call about whether or not it safe to try picking it up again. Against the faster more agile races it will generally not be a good idea to try it more than once and against the slower bashy races you may get a couple more turns to attempt it. Handing the ball off to Saurus to score can also be a good idea, but be very selective about when you do it (more on handing off to Saurii in the advance tactics section).

There isn't a great need for taking doubles on Saurii and I never take doubles on them for their first skill or two. This is because the single roll skills are so vital for them at this stage in their development. That said Dodge can be quite a nice choice on a Saurus you develop with Block and Stand Firm and it does give you a free re-roll for failed Break Tackle attempts but I generally feel there are more important skills such as Break Tackle, Guard, Tackle and Mighty Blow etc that you need to get asap. Another double that can be advantageous is Side Step. This is my favourite choice of the doubles and is best used on a player with Block and Guard. It is useful because opponents will be very wary of blocking or blitzing your Saurii in case he ends up in an even more advantageous position than the one he started in. It is also very useful for tying up cages and breaking into them. Mark one corner of a cage with a Side Step Saurus and if he gets blocked and stays on his feet he can Side Step right next to the ball carrier, with St 4 this is a big threat for your opponent to deal with. Diving Tackle is another double roll that Saurii can benefit from however I would not take this skill unless the league I was in was full of high agility teams and even then I would be likely to turn it down.

I do not bother with +Ma or +Av stat increases because their armour is already good enough, as is their movement, and there is a far greater need for other skills such as Break Tackle which will make them more versatile, or Mighty Blow which may put people of trying to man mark them.

Because Lizardmen have no positional players on their roster in the true sense of the word, the Saurii need to be developed to act as your Blitzers, Blockers and sometimes ball handlers. Here are the different ways of developing them.

Saurus Blitzzer

Single rolls

Block, Mighty Blow, Tackle, Pile On, Break Tackle, Guard

Stat Upgrades

+St

You need one Saurus in your team to be a dedicated Blitzzer. The natural skill progression for this player is – Block, Mighty Blow, Tackle, Pile On and Break Tackle. But if you are playing a small league or tournament then taking Mighty Blow first can be more beneficial both for causing damage and developing your Saurus faster. Do not even consider giving any stat upgrades to this player other than +St, all the others will just slow down his development and increase your teams TV for a skill that they do not need. Pile On is a very good skill but make sure you use it sparingly because your Saurus will almost always be more beneficial to your team on his feet. As a general rule I do not use Pile On unless it is just to Re-roll the injury and I have already got greater numbers of players on the field, or if leaving your player on the ground does not weaken your defences in anyway or leave the player open for a foul, the exception to this rule is if you are playing against any players with Claw in which case I will use it every single chance I get. Double rolls are also not needed they add nothing to the effectiveness of the player dedicated to this roll.

Support Saurus

Single rolls

Block, Break Tackle/Guard/Mighty Blow, Tackle/Fend/Stand Firm/Grab

Double rolls

Dodge, Side Step

Stat increase

+St

Saurii can be developed in a few different ways. The majority of the time taking block as the first skill is a good idea, after that your Saurii need to develop to suit their environment. If you are playing in a league full of teams with a lot of Blodge then you will obviously need to give Tackle to your players as soon as possible. If your league is small (around 5 – 10 games) then taking Mighty Blow as a first skill on a couple of Saurii will increase the speed your Saurii develop. If you are playing in a bash heavy league then defensive skills will be needed quickly such as Guard and Break Tackle.

You need these Saurii to support the rest of your team and provide you with as much versatility as possible. Taking Mighty Blow as a second skill on your Saurus is usually a good idea, it stops your opposition man marking them so frequently especially when playing against teams with low Av. It also means your Saurii will gain SPP faster because they will cause more casualties. Break Tackle is needed so you can keep your players mobile. Guard is needed so you can maintain your strength advantage as your opponents teams develop around you. I always like to have 2 Saurii with Stand Firm in my team one of them is the Frenzy Saurus (more on this later), so I usually give one of my Support Saurii Stand Firm as well. Fend can also be a good choice as a later skill in the Saurii development. It means your Saurii are harder to tie up and it also negates the effect of Pile On. It is also very useful if your league has a lot teams with Claw-Pile On players because you do not want to

give Claw players a second chance of trying to break your armour or injure you. Grab is quite a nice skill to have on one Saurus as it means you can set up crowd surfs when combined with your frenzy Saurus. It also negates Side Step so if your league has a lot of elf teams then its importance does increase as elves can tie up your Saurii very effectively once they have Blodge and Side Step. Grab is also useful for pushing your opponents into your Kroxigor and creating space for your other Saurii. Unfortunately there are so many other skills that Saurii need so it is not very high on their list of priorities despite it being a very useful skill.

Frenzy Saurus

Single rolls

Block, Frenzy, Mighty Blow/Stand Firm/Break Tackle, Guard

Double rolls

Dodge

Stat Increase

+St

Generally speaking I only like having one player with Frenzy in my Lizardman team although many people will take more. Frenzy is a great skill to have on a Lizardman team because it will dissuade your opponent from positioning two players in the central two squares in each wide zone when kicking. If they do this then you may have an opportunity to surf a player on your first turn after the kick off. If they do not it will leave the wide zone open for setting up a sideline half cage and scoring a two turn touch down. Giving Stand Firm to your Frenzy Saurus is a must in case you leave your self next to the side line after surfing a player, so it can be a good idea to give them Stand Firm before you give them Mighty Blow however this will slow down their development. Also Break Tackle is very useful on this Saurus build because it allows you to retreat if the Frenzy takes you into a potentially dangerous situation.

Saurus Ball Handler

Single rolls

Block, Sure Hands, Break Tackle, Fend, Mighty Blow, Guard

Double rolls

Dodge

Stat increase

+Ag

Making a Saurus a ball handler is a heavily debated issue. They start with Ag1 and no skills so they do not exactly scream out ball handler, however it can be done and they are very effective at it once developed. Personally I do see the benefit of having one, others will strongly disagree. I think the deciding factor on whether you should bother developing one comes down to the length on the tournament or season you are playing in. If you are playing a small season of 5 - 15 games then I would argue that it is not worth investing your time in a Saurus ball handler. If you are playing in a

longer season between 15 – 40 games then it can be worth while. The reason it is advantageous to have one is – Skinks are not the most reliable ball handlers in the game, they only have Ag 3 and they have no access to general skills unless a double is rolled when they gain a skill. This means they cannot get Sure Hands easily and their low strength means even when in a cage they are very vulnerable to players with Strip Ball and Leap (this is why Wood Elves are often one of their trickiest adversaries).

I usually wait till all of my Saurii have gained their first skill before developing a Saurus for handling the ball. If you get +Ag on any of them, take it and that will be your ball handler. If you do not get a +Ag Saurii then wait until all of your Saurii have got their first skill and give one of them Sure hands as their second skill. With Sure Hands the Saurus will still pick the ball up 55% of the time so try and pick the ball up in your first turn and if you are unsuccessful then make a judgement call on whether you can risk trying it in your second and third turns. Against slow bashy teams you will often get a chance to pick it up in the third and sometimes fourth turn of your drive before the opposition start putting too much pressure on you. Against fast teams you might only get one chance to pick it up.

Remember that just because this Saurus is your ball handler does not mean you have to score with it. You can still make a hand off to a Skink on a 3+ or another Saurus on a 5+ roll if you do not think you are going to be able to score with the Saurus, so always keep another player next to your ball handler just in case.

Wrestle Saurus

Single rolls

Wrestle, Strip Ball/Tackle, Break Tackle, Mighty Blow, Guard

Stat increase

+St

Giving a Saurus Wrestle is another build that is disputed by many coaches. By giving a Saurus Wrestle for their first skill you are making it more difficult for them to gain SPP from blocking or blitzing. They do however have their uses. The combination of Wrestle and Strip Ball means that against an opponent with no sure hands you have a 97.2% chance of forcing them to drop the ball on a 2 dice block/blitz. However - I personally do not give any of my Saurii Wrestle for a few reasons: Firstly it slows down their development because the player can not gain SPP from both down rolls on blocks/blitzes. Also most teams will use a player with Sure Hands to carry the ball; often they will have Blodge coverage as well which dramatically shortens your odds of successfully forcing the ball free. Finally I never want my Saurii on the ground if it can be helped. It leaves them open to fouls and losing one St4 player for a turn can significantly weaken your team. Another reason I generally avoid creating this type of Saurus is I prefer giving Wrestle to a Skink on a double roll (more on this later).

Skinks



Skinks provide the speed and mobility to the Lizardmen team. They are typically your ball handlers and provide good defensive cover and the ability to capitalise on any mistakes or bad luck by your opponents. They are the most expensive Stunty players in the game so they are not truly expendable like most Stunty players are and they will often be targeted by your opponents Blitzers to eliminate your ball handling ability and to gain SPP from easy casualties.

The Stunty skill gives them the ability to dodge through any number of tackle zones on a 3+ and they start with Dodge as well. This is a very useful ability but not one that should be used flippantly. A 3+ dodge with Re-roll is by no means a sure thing and dodging with Skinks should be kept to an absolute minimum and only used when there are no other possible options available, or as the final actions of your turn. Skinks are already targeted by most opponents so you do not want to add to your own down fall by injuring your Skinks through failed dodges. Stunty also has negative qualities as well – firstly it means there is a +1 modifier to all injury rolls they suffer up to a roll of 9. This coupled with St2 makes them very fragile. Also there is a -1 modifier to any pass attempts they make so passing with them is really out of the question.

Skinks are best used as a second line of defence in a screen. Using the Saurus to front the screen the Skinks can safely occupy the area behind them, out of reach from the opponent's Blitzers, waiting to capitalise on any mistakes or bad luck by your opponent. This is true when defending or attacking. They have the speed and ability to switch play from one side of the pitch to the other and can sit deep in their own half with the ball until a safe passage to the end zone has been cleared by the Saurii.

The main problem with Skinks above all else is their skill development. They are limited to only taking Agility skills on a normal roll, so they are very limited in the way they can develop. It is often a good idea to retire your Skinks if they reach their second or third skill without gaining a stat increase or double roll. This will help keep your TV down and make it easier to develop some useful Skinks quickly because you only need 16 SPP for the first two skills which is easily attainable in a short space of time. All doubles and stat increases should be taken every time with Skinks. I personally never bother with +Av though as +Mv is far more effective for this player type and dramatically increases your chances of scoring a OTTD. You should still try and keep a few Skinks around with Side Step and Diving Tackle because it is a very effective combination against high agility teams but once you get 3 or more like this then start retiring some of them.

Give all your Skinks Side Step as their first skill then the type of player your Skink becomes is dictated by the number of double rolls and stat increases they get. Here are the different ways of developing them.

Skink Ball Handler

Single rolls

Side Step, Sure Feet, Catch

Double rolls

Block, Sure Hands

Stat increase

+Ag, +Ma, +St

If you chose Block as your first double with a Skink then it is generally a good idea for this player to be your designated Skink ball carrier. Any of the stat increases listed increase the effectiveness of this player type. +Ag means picking up the ball and all dodges are now 2+, +St means you will be safer in a cage and more resilient to opponent's blocks, +Ma means that your player can both run away if your opponent is exerting too much pressure on your and go for a touch down from further away. I generally chose block as my first double on a Skink over Sure Hands as I find it a more useful skill in other areas of the game. Sure Hands is the next obvious choice for a double roll on a Skink with Block. The single roll skills are the best choices for this type of player Side Step keeps him out of danger and means he can hug the touch line. Sure Feet makes the Skink more reliable when Going For It, and Catch gives a free Re-roll when handing off to this player.

Skink Ball Sacker

Single rolls

Side Step, Diving Tackle

Double rolls

Wrestle, Tackle/Strip Ball, Dauntless

Stat increase

+Ag, +Ma, +St

If you choose Wrestle as your first double, then it is generally a good idea to try and develop this player in to your ball sacker. Wrestle and Strip Ball + Re-roll means even with a 2 dice block where your opponent chooses the outcome you will still have a 90.7% chance of successfully forcing a rookie player to drop the ball. However these odds do drop significantly if you are playing against a player with Sure Hands which is very common so it might be a better idea to choose Wrestle then Tackle second as it has a higher chance of success against Blodge + Sure Hands players than the Wrestle Strip Ball combination. This is a judgement call you will have to make depending on the types of teams in your league, your opponents TV, what skills your opponents players may have etc... If you are lucky enough to get a third double on your ball sacker then taking dauntless is the next logical choice.

Again all the stat increases increase the effectiveness of this player considerably. +Ag means your Skink can dodge into any cage on 2+ rolls, +St means he may be able to get 1 dice blocks against ball carriers. +Ma means he can get into a cage block then run away to safety all in the same turn.

Dirty Skink

Single rolls

Sneaky Git

Double rolls

Dirty Player, Kick

Once you have a few Skinks with Block, Wrestle, Sure Hands etc it is time to start developing Skinks for fouling. Take Dirty Player on the first skill roll if it is a double and then Sneaky Git on the next skill roll unless you manage to get another double in which case use this player as your kicker as well. Since you will usually be kicking first as a Lizardmen coach you can use Kick before the first turn of the game and then it doesn't matter if this player gets sent off after this. You do not want any stat increases on this player nor do you want him to gain more than 2 skills ideally because you don't want an expendable player increasing your TV too much. It shouldn't be a problem stopping this player gaining SPP because it should not be scoring and will most likely get sent off at some point in the first half.

It is generally a good idea to have "Dirty Skinks" in your roster once your team has developed, at least two, one for each half, but obviously this will be dictated by the number of doubles your Skinks manage to get.

Other Skinks builds

Guard on a Skink can be quite useful especially when used in tandem with your Skink Ball Sacker. It gives you the ability to dodge a Skink with Guard into a cage so that your Skink Ball Sacker can get a 1 dice block against the ball carrier. However I personally do not bother with this player type for a few reasons. First of all I find Block, Wrestle, Sure Hands and Dirty Player more useful skills on Skinks. Also it will not be long before your opponent has players with Guard manning their cage which will negate the Guard Skinks effectiveness. Finally using Guard means you have to leave your Skink standing next to an opponent player so that you can benefit from the skill. Doing this is asking for trouble and it will not be long before your Guard Skink gets injured

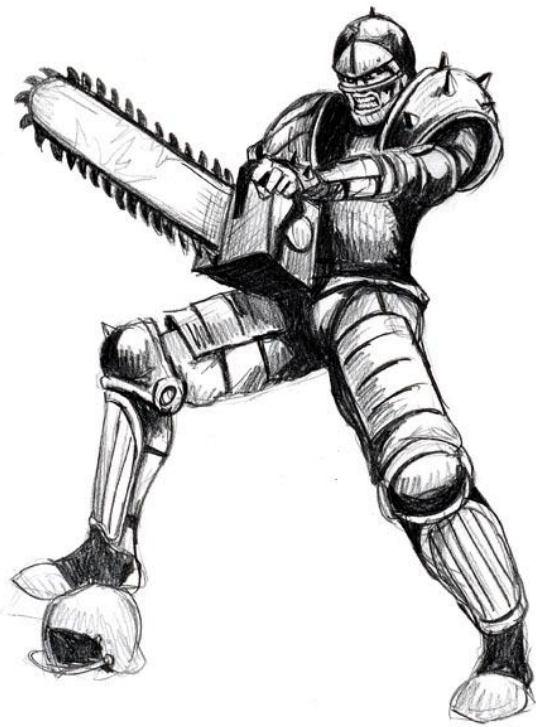
There are a few skills you can give your Skinks to Increase their ability to score a one turn touchdown. I personally never build these player types as I feel they are an unnecessary increase to your TV. That said I have seen them used and they can be fun although not that effective.

The Skinks you can build to assist you with one turn touchdowns are the "Hail Mary Skink", "Sprint Skink" and the "Diving Catch Skink". One of the reasons I don't bother building the "Hail Mary Skink" is that it requires a double roll to get Hail Mary Pass and I personally feel there are far more important doubles skills for Skinks. I also think that it is an unnecessary TV increase.

The second Skink is generally a lot more useful in open play. Side Step, Sure Feet and Sprint combined makes scoring a OTTD a lot easier, but if you have decided to make a "Hail Mary Skink" then taking Diving Catch as a first skill choice can be a good idea. Again I do not bother building a Skink designed solely for this purpose because I prefer my Skinks to be usable in all aspect of the game instead of keeping them on the bench and bringing them on for one attempt at a set play. I also tend to wait for a +Ma stat increase on a Skink and that player becomes my one turn specialist.

STAR PLAYERS

Lizardmen do not get the best selection of Star Players in Bloodbowl in fact I would go so far as to say they get the worst selection of any team in the game thanks in no small part to the useless Slann star players they are lumbered with, thankfully Lizardmen get Slibli who goes a long way in making up for this. Here is a quick break down of Star players -



Helmut Wulf – 110k

Helmut Wulf is the obligatory chainsaw star player for the team. He is useful against teams with a lot of Blodge and Av. There is not much point in playing Helmut against the high armoured teams like Dwarves because he will quickly find himself stuck next to an opponent player after failing to break their armour. Then it will not be long before he is sitting in one of the injury boxes trying to remove a chainsaw from his head.

He is useful against Amazons, the elf teams, Humans, Vampires, Norse, Khemri and Skaven as he will have a good chance of breaking their armour every chance he gets. He is also able to tie players up thanks to Stand Firm, though with no Block or Dodge cover and St3 and Av8 he is not the most reliable player for this. He will often be targeted by your opponent, which means he will rarely last long but this is not such a bad thing as it alleviates pressure from your skinks.

Hemlock -170k

Hemlock is best induced against low Av and Blodge heavy teams. He has Blodge coverage which is very nice for such a cheap star player and Stab is a nice addition to have in the team. However don't be fooled into thinking you should start charging round the pitch trying to stab everyone. Stab is not a very effective skill and should almost never be used as a blitz. It does make up for this in other ways. Firstly there is no risk of a turnover for a failed stab, so you can safely stab at the start of your turn before you do anything else. Also Stab does not get modified by tackle zones so even if you are stuck in the middle of your opponent's cage next to their ball carrier you get a free stab at breaking their Av. Hemlock also has Jump Up so if he gets knocked down he can stand back up and try and stab someone



standing next to him on a 2+ roll. Side Step and Blodge means he is a hard player to shake off and is very useful for marking opponent ball carriers, especially players like Wardancers who will not appreciate having a stab player standing next to them. Be selective about when you choose to mark opponent players with him, even though he has Blodge St2 means he will always be on the end of 2 dice blocks and if positioned poorly it shouldn't be hard for your opponents to get enough tackle zones round him to make it a 3 dice block. Try only to mark your opponent's ball carrier with him once you have pinned your opponent's cage in and have managed to apply a few tackle zones to the cage so you can minimize your opponents blocking potential. Once this is done then Hemlock can cause real problems for your opponent. Because Hemlock is a star player he is also expendable so you can afford to be a little more aggressive with him than you would with one of your own Skinks. He can also be used as an affective ball carrier because of Blodge, just make sure you do not waste SPP by scoring with him.



Lottabottol - 220k

The positives of this player are – he is fast and Diving Tackle and Shadowing is quite a nice skill combination and he is quite good at interceptions and that's about it. With no Block or Dodge coverage Diving Tackle and Shadowing become almost redundant. Movement is not something Lizardmen are lacking in so he offers no real benefit there. With St3, Ag3, and Av 8 no Block or Dodge he is very fragile for a star player, can be tied up quite easily, he is not a reliable ball handler because he has no Sure Hands, Block or Dodge and is he is ridiculously expensive for a player with no real benefit. Never ever take this player.

Quetzal Leap -250k

Quetzal is the better of the two Slann star players but still very expensive for a player with no basic skills. Ag 4 and Ma 8 combined with Leap and Very Long Legs means this player is quite proficient at capitalising on loose balls and then distributing it to his team mates. However the lack of Block/Wrestle or Dodge is again a massive problem especially on a player with St2 and Av7. He is also overpriced and doesn't really bring a great deal to the team. He is a good catcher but Lizardmen never throw the ball which again makes this player quite redundant. Again I would never bother inducing this player; partly because I don't see any benefit of having him in my team, but also because Slibli costs the same and is far better value for money.





Slibli -250k

Slibli is the best star player available to Lizardmen. He is affordable and all of his skills are very useful. Another St 4 player in your team is always nice to have especially one with Block, Guard and Stand Firm. He is a road block, a player you can safely leave surrounded by your opponents players while your other Saurii benefit from his Guard skill.

Stand Firm can be a very frustrating skill for your opponents and Slibli can successfully tie up 2 St3 opponents without any trouble. Because he is a star player you also benefit from not really caring what happens to him. Av9 means he is very resilient except against Claw players.

Because of his effectiveness Slibli also becomes a big target for your opponent which is no bad thing and alleviates some of the pressure on your other Saurii. He will free up a lot of space on the field for your other players to exploit and unlike your own Saurii you can leave Slibli isolated in dangerous positions tying up a few players for as long as possible however it is generally best to keep him with the pack because he still only has Ag1 and no Break Tackle.

Grab is also quite a nice skill; it is useful for setting up crowd surfs, helping with one turn touchdowns and cancels out Side Step so it can be very handy against the elf teams in particular.

Morg n'Thorg - 430k

Morg n'Thorg is a beast and a player I love seeing on the field of play. However he is very expensive. St6 Block and Mighty Blow is a very nice skill combination to have and he can cause some real damage to your opponent's team. He is also an impassable object in a cage and can tie up 3 or more players with out trouble. However you will rarely have enough money to induce Morg n'Thorg and if you do then it might be more advantageous to induce a Wizard and Slibli instead. If you have enough for Morg n'Thorg, a Wizard and more then go for it.



DEFENSIVE SETUPS

One of the Lizardmen's biggest weaknesses is their lack of any expendable players. You have to put either 3 Saurii on the LoS or 2 Saurii and a Kroxigor. Putting Skinks on the LoS is suicidal unless playing against Claw heavy teams when it may unfortunately be the best option. I would only consider putting the 2 Skinks and a Saurus on the LoS against team with 3 or more Claw/MB/PO players on the opposing team any less than 3 and I would stick with the regular set ups. So normally you are stuck with 3 of you most valuable players lined up and ready to take a beating. This is not usually such a problem against so called finesse teams but against the bashy or foul heavy teams it can be very problematic. The defensive set ups below show how best to set up against the different opponents you will face.

Anti-foul Setup

This set up is by no means full proof but it can help prevent a few extra assists on a foul. By placing the whole team centrally and within 3 squares of the LoS you are potentially restricting the numbers of assists on a foul. This set up is best deployed against "bashy" teams - Chaos Dwarves, Chaos Pact, Dwarves, Khemri, Norse, Ogres, Orcs, Undead and foul heavy teams - Goblins, Halflings and Vampires. Use this set up against Chaos and Nurgle as well if they do not have a lot of Claw on their team yet or only have it on a couple of players max. You need to make a judgement call here. If the opponent has too many players with Claw then you might be better off putting 2 Skinks and a Saurus on the LoS.

This set up does leave the two wide zones wide open which is why it should not be used against the faster races. Against the aforementioned teams this is not a problem - letting your opponent commit their drive to one of the wide zones early on in their half can be a real advantage. Your players are all quick enough to block the drive and stop them from scoring, or force them to score quickly leaving you enough time to pull one back before the end of the half.

Fig1.

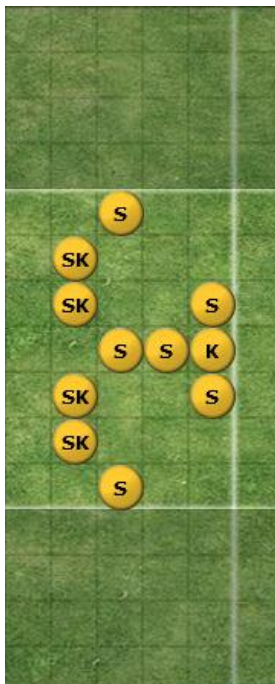


Fig2.

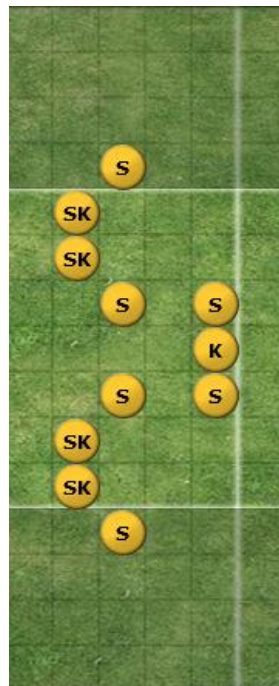


Fig3.

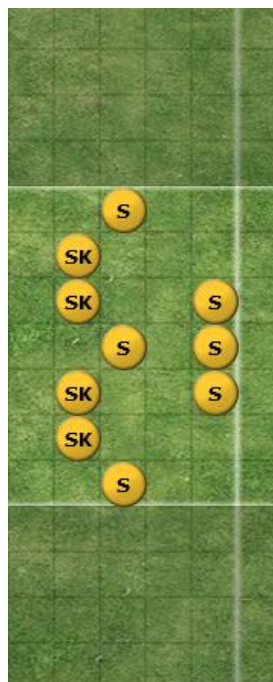
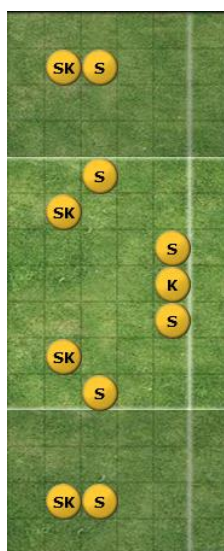


Fig1. This is the best way of preventing an effective foul on your opponents first turn. The set up means your opponent is potentially very limited in the number of tackle zones they can get on the foul. The Saurus 1 square behind the LoS can be switched with a Skink or the Kroxigor depending on which players you want to protect the most. If you do choose to put a Skink in place of the Saurus use one with side step so you can keep your skink near your 3 LoS players if it is blitzed. The problem with this set up is it leaves more room in the wide zones than in Fig 2 which can be exploited. It also means you have 4 players very congested in the centre of the pitch that can get tied up quite easily.

Fig2. This is my favourite set up and the one I use most often. It is slightly less effective at hindering fouls but it offers more cover in the wide zones and is not quite as congested as fig 1.

Fig3. Is a variation of Fig 2, it shows how the set up can be adapted before you purchase your Kroxigor or if you are a Saurus or Kroxigor down.

Anti-Speed Setup



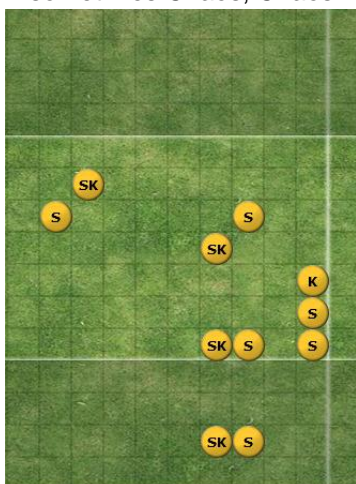
I usually use this set up against the faster teams Dark Elf, Elf, High Elf, Human, Lizardmen, Skaven and Wood Elf. This set up is particularly useful against the elf teams as it makes blitzing the Skinks tricky and it holds up the play so there are no channels for their players to exploit. It is also employed against Skaven and Lizardmen to prevent them setting up a cage deep in your half and running down the clock. Once your Lizardmen team is developed put two Saurii with Stand Firm in the wide zones so they cannot be frenzied off the pitch by a Rat Ogre or Witch Elf etc... until this time you may need to adapt the set up depending on your opponent's roster.

The two Skinks in the central part of the field are deployed 1 square inside from the Saurii to make it more difficult for Ag4 players to dodge straight past your Saurii and blitz the Skinks. Against Humans I usually move them directly behind the 2 Saurii instead of diagonal from them so it is slightly more difficult from the Human Blitzers to blitz them.

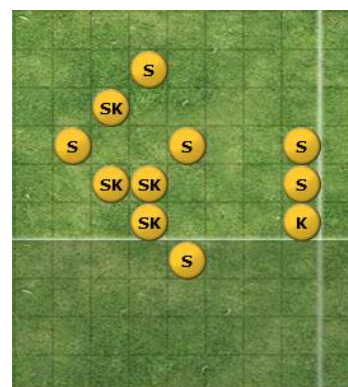
This set up should also be deployed if you have left your opponent two turns to score a touch before the end of the half.

Asymmetrical Setup

I deploy these set up's against Amazon, Necromantic and also sometimes Chaos, Chaos Dwarf and Nurgle. The advantage of these set ups is it encourages your opponent down one wide zone and you can then pressure your opponent into scoring early on in their half or stop them in their tracks all together using your superior strength and movement to cage them in.



This is a good set up against Amazon because you will usually end up with at least 1 Saurus free to move in your turn while the others end up being tied up by all their Blodge players. Also the two Skinks nearest the top of the picture on the left are just within blitzing range of the Amazon players after GFIs. This encourages your opponent to target these players which will leave their Blitzers exposed



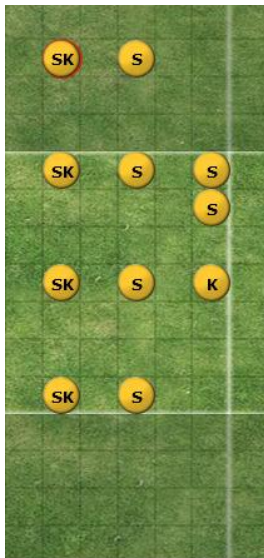
and potentially cost your opponent a Re-roll or turn over if they fall in to this trap.

These set ups are also good against Necromantic because they have a mix of slow players and fast players. These set ups encourage Necromantic coaches to split their players up so their Zombies and Flesh Golems deal with the 3 LoS players on one side of the field while the fast players in the team try and take advantage of the space left in the opposite wide zone. Splitting the Necromantic team up like this weakens their ability to cage the ball carrier using their flesh Golems therefore weakening their offence significantly. I also use these set ups against Chaos, Chaos Dwarf and Nurgle sometimes if the opponent has a lot of Claw players in the team (3 or more), to try and force them in to scoring really quickly. In these instances I will consider putting 2 Skinks and 1 Saurus on the LoS and spread the extra Saurii out.

Out of the two set ups shown the one on the right is my preferred asymmetrical set up because it keeps the Skinks safer although the one on the right helps cover the wide zone at the bottom of the picture better. If you are playing against opponents with Frenzy and you do not have Stand Firm on the Saurus in the wide zone then you are better off using the set up on the right.

Anti - OTTD Setup

This is my preferred method of preventing opponents from scoring one turn touchdowns. Ideally all 4 of the Skinks would have Diving Tackle but if you only have one or two it is best to deploy those 2 Skinks where the top 2 Skinks are in the picture are. Similarly it is preferable to have Stand Firm on the Saurus that is deployed at the top of the picture so that your Saurus cannot be crowd curfed by players with Frenzy. If you have 2 Saurii with Stand Firm then put the other one in the uppermost position of the 3 LoS players.



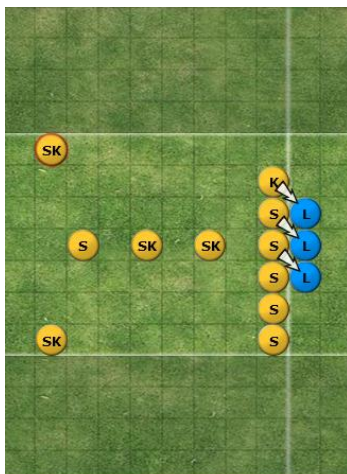
This set up will only work against those teams that are trying to achieve a OTTD via chain pushes. Against players like Gutter Runners with MA+, Sprint and Sure feet you are better off just lining your players up along the field so the player has to make 3 dodges.

If you have 3 Skinks with Side Step then it could be best to line them up centrally on the LoS with a gap of one space between each of them. This should only be considered if the Skinks are completely expendable, if you want to keep your Skinks alive then it is not advisable.

OFFENSIVE SETUPS

VS – Slow Teams

When using this set up block with the Saurus in the centre of the LoS first, then use the Saurii above.



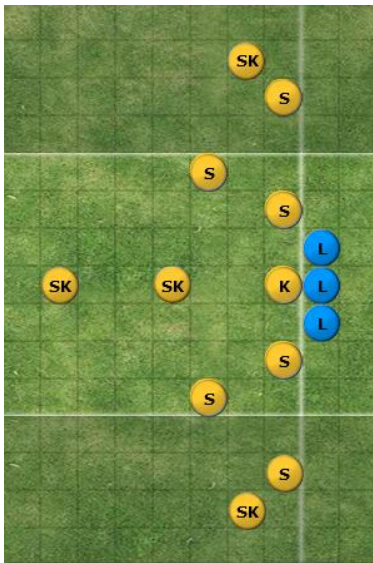
If either of the first two blocked players are left standing then use the remaining Saurii to knock them down. After those 2 are down next do your Blitz and finally let your Kroxigor block an opponent.

The forward most Skink is your dirty player and the two Skinks furthest back are in movement range to assist in a foul if required.

Build a small wall in front of the ball before trying to pick the ball up. Once the ball is picked up and all else is done then commit your foul. This set up is best used against the slower teams. If blitz is rolled on the kick off table against any of the faster teams then you will be in big trouble.

VS – Fast Teams

This set up is for use against fast and high agility teams. All the possible routes in to your half are covered against 2+ dodge rolls and there are no safe routes through the offensive set up using leap



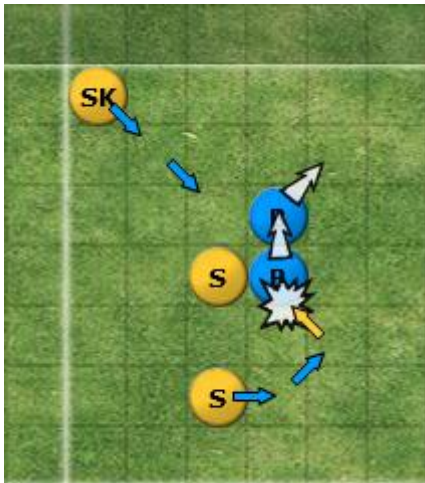
either. The two weak points are the 2 Skinks in the wide zones so make sure you use Skinks with Sidestep in these positions if possible to minimise your opponent's chances of breaking into your half in the event of the Blitz kick off result.

As before use your Saurii to block and blitz first then create a wall in front of the ball before picking it up with a Saurus or Skink. Finally block with your Kroxigor and then foul if you have planned to.

ADVANCED PLAYS

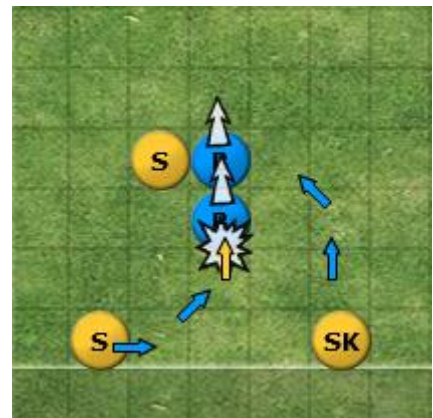
Chain Pushing

Saurii can get tied up easily by opponent players especially while your Lizardmen team are at a low TV. Here are some effective ways of freeing your players up.



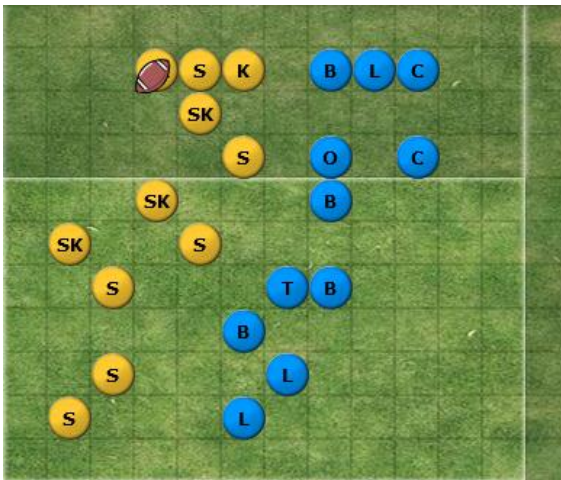
First of all move a supporting player next to the Saurus that is being tied up. This can be any player. Then Blitz with a free Saurus chain-pushing the other opponent player away from your Saurus. Then use the remainder of your movement to join the cage or shield you have deployed. If the player does not get knocked down with the Blitz then you can still Block him with the next Saurii which should still free him from tackle zones for your opponents turn.

This is another way of chain-pushing though it is far less effective than the first example because the Saurus that is tied up will still have a tackle zone on him even if you roll a POW with your blitz against the first opponent player. After the first player is knocked over then block the second player to free your self up for your opponents turn. The problem with this chain-push is that it can leave 3 of your players in tackle zones if the rolls do not go your way and there is a smaller probability of successfully freeing your players up.



Screening

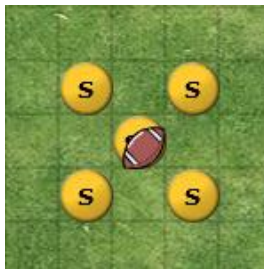
Screening is a tactic where you form a defensive screen between your opponents and your ball carrier or end zone. This is best used against slower teams that have the ability to tie your players up



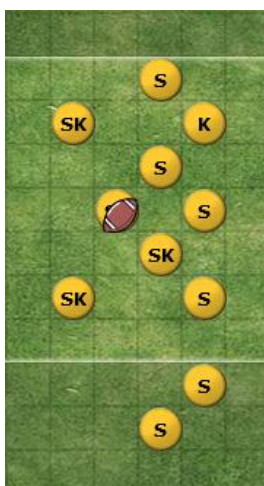
and try and break your drive up by out muscling you. It enables you to move play laterally if play is becoming too congested or it looks like your ball carrier is under threat. When forming a screen it is best to have two banks so if any of your players are blitzed then the opponent will be discouraged from following up to avoid giving you an extra block on your turn. The ball carrier should never be part of this second defensive rank. Instead they should occupy a space deep in your own half or hiding behind a section of the screen that you feel is impregnable.

Caging

There are two types of cage, tight cages and loose cages. It is best to use cages when playing against fast and agile races, slowly moving up the field using your superior strength and access to strength skills to try and clear the field of as many opponent players as possible – also known as the “slow grind”.



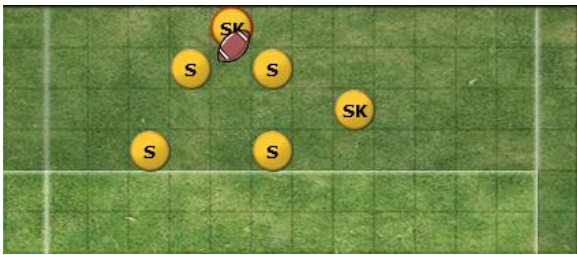
This is typical tight cage. You protect your ball carrier by placing a Saurus or Skink at each diagonal from the ball carrier. This formation means any Ag 4 players will have to roll a 5+ to dodge into the cage. It is typically used while the rest of your team tie up and block the opponent's players. This isn't so effective with Lizardmen as you have to either use your main Blockers and Blitzers to form the cage leaving the rest of the field a little light weight or use your Skinks which means the cage is quite fragile.



This is an example of a loose cage. It is more flexible than a tight cage and harder to break up. It is half way between screening and a tight cage. The players are not stuck as tightly to the ball carrier and are instead blocking all possible routes to him. If this is done well then you can make it harder to dodge into than a tight cage for agile players by giving them a succession of dodges to make instead of just 1. The loose cage combined with screening is generally speaking the best way for Lizardmen to move around the field. The tight cage can restrict their movement too much which is their greatest asset while the loose cage/screening allows them to move their cage around the field with greater ease and fluidity.

Sideline Half Cage

If you use the Sideline Half Cage then you must always have Side Step on the Skink with the ball. It is also preferable to have Stand Firm on the two Saurii diagonal to the Skink. This is a very risky



strategy as you can quickly find yourself pinned in against the side of the field, especially against elf teams who often have Blodge - Side Step players or Leap - Strip Ball players on their team and have the speed to block you off completely. While Lizardmen are one of the races that can make best use of the Side Line Half Cage it is generally only advisable to use this tactic when going for a two turn touchdown. As you can see all the players

are in positions that can be reached directly from kick off with out having to make any GFIs. The ball carrier is also in range for a touchdown in the following turn without having to make any GFIs. The three players in front of the Sideline Half Cage are “screening”. This increases the effectiveness of the Sideline Half Cage considerably and will protect the ball carrier from high Ag players and leap players. It is also preferable to have Side Step on the Skink at the front of the screen.

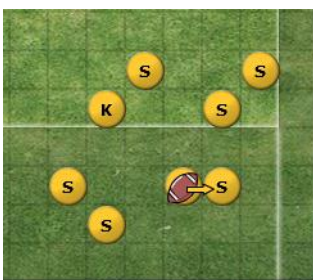
Tying Players Up

The Kroxigor's main purpose is tying up players as discussed earlier. So here is a very basic and effective way of using two players to tie up three St3 opponents. Once your Kroxigor is in this type of position then there is no need to block, just sit on the players leaving them trapped. This is especially useful against elf teams as they have no access to Guard unless they roll doubles when they gain a new skill, so they will need to get two extra assists on your Saurus so they can block/blitz themselves free or three on your Kroxigor to get a 2 dice block. The effectiveness of this type of trap increases massively once you get Guard and Stand Firm on your Kroxigor and Block, Stand



Firm and Guard on your Saurus. This trap basically forces your opponent to make 3+ dodges away from the Kroxigor which means your opponent will likely leave these players trapped for their whole turn then dodge them away as the last actions of their turn if possible. Tying up players like this opens up more space on the pitch for you to exploit, and makes it easier for you to target your opponents key players with your Blitzier.

Handing off to your Saurii



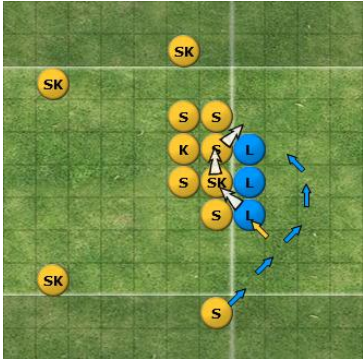
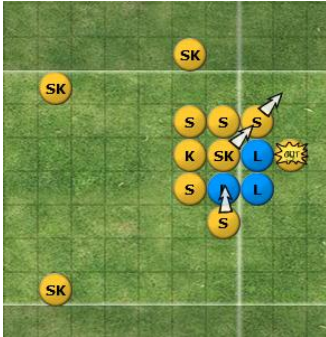
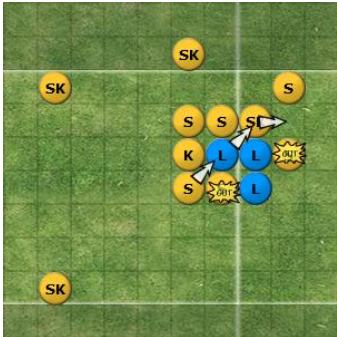
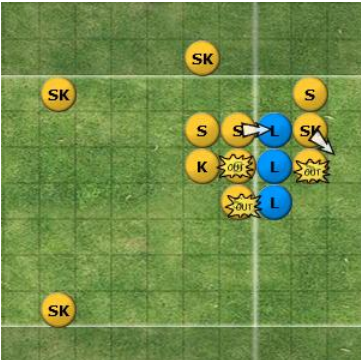
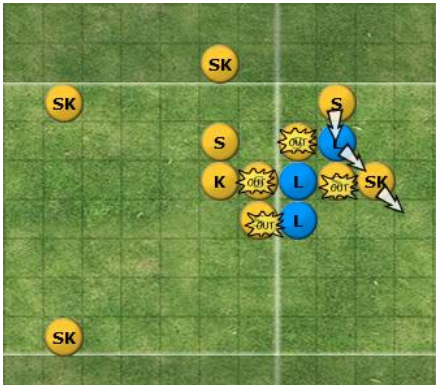
Below is a diagram of a loose cage deep in the opponents half. Ideally you will find yourself in this sort of position with 2 or 3 turns left. Your Saurii can be very slow to develop if you are just relying on MVP and casualties to skill them up so scoring with them is very important to speed up their development. You need to be very selective about when you do this. If you manage to get a 1-0 lead in your opponent's half then trying to score with your Ag1 players in your half is very good idea. But if the game is tied and there are a few turns left I wouldn't recommend trying this. I would also avoid trying this if you are playing against

Slann and Wood Elves because they have the ability to leap into your cage and pick the ball up should it scatter free, however if it is not possible for them to score even if they do get the ball somehow then give it a go. The ball carrier is a Skink in this diagram he can make a hand off to the Saurus on a 5+, with a Re-roll this gives you a 55% chance of succeeding. Note that the Saurus that is being handed the ball is two squares away from the edges of the pitch. This is so if you fail the hand off the ball does not land next to the edge of the pitch where a failed pick up attempt could cause the ball to scatter off the pitch. Similarly the Saurus being handed the ball is 2 or more squares away from the players on the outer edge of the cage this is so if you are unsuccessful when handing off then the ball does not end up near the edge of the cage where an opponent could push back one of your players into the ball causing it to scatter out the cage.

One Turn Touchdown

Here are a two ways of achieving a one turn touchdown with your Lizardmen. There are many other ways of doing this but here are a few examples so you can work out how it can be achieved in other situations. More experienced coaches will set up in ways that makes it more difficult to score a OTTD but it will almost always be possible.

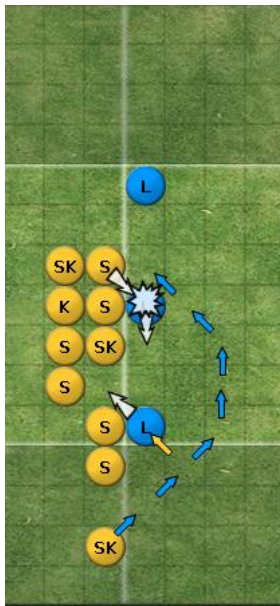
Example 1

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

You can score after step 4, so do not use a Re-roll if you roll a POW on your block. It just means you will have to make 2 GFIs instead of one to reach the end zone. If you do roll another push back then continue to step 5.

Example 2

1.



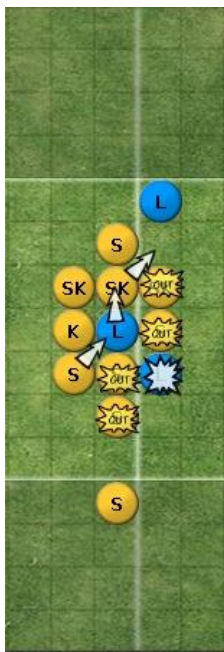
2.



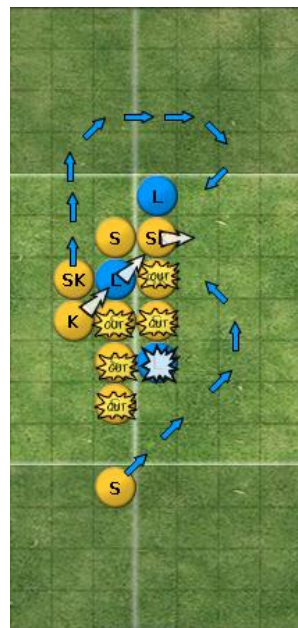
3.



4.



5.



6.



There are many other ways of scoring one turn touchdowns. These examples were to just show you the basic principle of scoring a OTTD. It can also help to have one Skink with Hail Mary Pass and another with Diving Catch, Sure Feet, Sprint, Catch and Side Step which can open up more OTTD opportunities although I personally wouldn't bother developing those players.

Post Script

I hope you have enjoyed reading my Lizardmen guide. If you have any feedback please find Garion on the main BB/FFB forums or sites. I am always open to criticism as long as it is constructive so please feel free to contact me if you believe anything is missing from this playbook or if you would like more information on anything covered in these pages.

And may Nuffle have mercy on you

(All pencil drawings courtesy of Knut_Rockie)

