

Welcome to the UNDERWORLD

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So – why should your next Blood Bowl team be an underworld team?

Well, if you're looking for an unbeatable, unbreakable, death dealing, SPP producing monster team, then look... somewhere else! Because playing underworld is all about *fun*.

To play underworld well, you have to forget everything you know about BB and start from scratch: You'll be able to dodge everywhere, pull off impossible plays and somehow still manage to lose or have your team crushed by halftime. But don't worry; your next game will be just as exciting.

First analysis: the roster.

UNDERWORLD TEAMS

Decades of warring against the surface races has forged a special bond between the sneaky goblins and the industrious skaven. Add some warpstone to the mix and the result is guaranteed to be spectacular. Add Blood Bowl on top of that and you've got a big entertaining mess.

Qty	Title	Cost	MA	ST	AG	AV	Skills	Talent
0-16	Underworld Goblin	40,000	6	2	3	7	Dodge, Stunty, Right Stuff	GM
0-2	Skaven Lineman	50,000	7	3	3	7	Animosity	GM
0-2	Skaven Thrower	70,000	7	3	3	7	Animosity, Sure Hands, Pass	GPM
0-2	Skaven Blitzzer	90,000	7	3	3	8	Animosity, Block	GSM
0-1	Warpstone Troll	110,000	4	5	1	9	Regenerate, Mighty Blow, Throw Team Mate, Loner, Really Stupid, Always Hungry	SM

Re-roll counter: 70,000 gold pieces each.



The team obviously isn't for beginners. It isn't quite as hard to play as the other stunty teams, but you'll need both experience and a bit of luck to do well with them. The team is neither tough, fast nor strong, and your linemen are lowly gobbos! Gobbos combined with the wrong half of a skaven team for that matter. It looks like the low price is the only thing you have going for you, but somehow the result is greater than the sum of the individual part.

The secret ingredient? Mutations on a normal skill roll.

The Warpstone Troll

He's the only strong and sturdy player on the team, and he's a key component in both your offense and your defense, despite him being Really Stupid. Try to keep him near the clumsiest and bashiest opposing players. It's hard to take out this troll, and if he is tying up one or two opposing players, then your other guys will have an easier time.

Mutations make him a lot more useful than a standard troll. Your first skills should be Claw, to terrify (or maim) opposing players, and Tentacles, to control several catcher-types. Which one you take first probably depends on your league composition more than anything. Claw is likely to get you to your 2nd skill a faster than Tentacles will, but Tentacles has the advantage of working without you activating your Really Stupid player. Guard is a nice 3rd skill, while Strong Arm probably isn't worth it, because TTM is a lot less reliable than just dodging straight through the opposing defense.

On doubles Block is really useful – as it is on most big guys. If you roll a stat increase, ST is great and even combos well with Tentacles. AV might be worth considering, because the Troll can't protect your weaker players when he is taking a dirt nap. All other stats just can't compete with a normal skill pick.

Skaven Blitzers

They are your most important positionals, and you need them both. Over the course of a full season the Blitzers and the Troll are likely to be the only players that haven't been replaced. The Blitzers are the only players in the game who have normal access to the bash trinity (Mighty Blow, Claw and Piling On) while starting with that all important Block skill. Too bad their team mates suck.

One needs Mighty Blow, Claw and Piling On, in that order, stopping only for Jump Up on doubles. Once he has all 3, anything that makes him deadlier will do: Tackle, Frenzy, Grab, Juggernaut or Horns come to mind.

The other blitzer could be skilled as a copy of the first one. Every opposing player you remove will help you keep up with your opponent, who is no doubt taking your gobbos off the pitch too. But as only one player can blitz per turn, you should at least consider training the 2nd Blitzzer for a supporting role: Guard will both protect the gobbos and help them make blocks, while Mighty Blow will remove opposing players and at the same time make them less likely to put a TZ on your Blitzzer. Tackle, Horns and Two Heads may all be worth it, depending on your style of play. Take Dodge on doubles – in which case Blodge, Guard, Stand Firm is awesome.

Any stat will be a big boost – take it. Deciding between MA+ and AV+ is hard. Probably the bashy blitzzer needs AV and the supporter MA.

Throwers

They're called throwers, but they might as well be called runners – or even receivers! Their skill access makes them flexible, and they'll probably develop fast, because if all goes well they'll be picking up the ball and running in the touchdowns. You should only pass or handoff if you are in a hurry or under pressure.

One thrower should be developed as your main ball carrier or runner – if he happens to get hurt in a match, the other one can stand in reasonably well with just his starting skills. For the runner Extra Arms is a great skill – combined with sure hands it will prevent many turnovers. Block is useful too, because ball carriers tend to get blitzed. I usually take block before extra arms, since sure hands is enough to take the ball from the ground. With block I have more protection and I can blitz with them. On doubles, dodge is great for the same reason – but if you don't roll doubles then Two Heads can be quite useful. So can Big Hand, even if it is usually best on gobbos, who can wiggle their way into a tight spot easily.

The second thrower can be developed as an additional Blitzzer, so Block, Horns, 2-Heads, and so on. If you get doubles, usually Dodge is a good choice, but think about mighty blow, it could give life to your other players! And after mighty blow, you could take claw!

Take any stat you can get, with MA for the runner and AV for the 'Blitzer'.

Linerats

They are the least important skaven players on the team, but they are still ST3 (and they can receive the ball without an animosity roll). They die easily, but they are cheap. I use both of them as Blitzers/safeties. Wrestle, Tackle, on both, then one with strip ball, one with horns. 2 heads is also useful. These back-up blitzers can handle Blodgers and ball-carriers, but in most situations you should look for a good blitz with your bashy Blitzzer.

Underworld Goblins !

Mutated goblins are the key to whatever power the underworld team has.

As rookies they're little more than cannon fodder, but when they get their first skill their usefulness increases dramatically. That skill should (almost) always be Two Heads! It increases their mobility greatly, allowing them to go everywhere on a 2+. Do it and make your opponent crazy! Or just tell your opponent that your goblin could go at 2+ in every place (one of my underworld gobbo players is usually called Dr. Everywhere). Your mobility just might scare your opponent, hopefully making him play overly cautiously.

After 2 Heads you could start to customize your gobbos as you want. A double in combo with 2 Heads could be wrestle/block (then Horns) to blitz in cage or Guard to take a guard everywhere (even in cage). As normal skill extra arms is interesting – it could make your gobbo a ball-carrier, freeing up an ST3 skaven to do other things, or it could make the gobbo a reliable receiver.

Big hand could take the ball everywhere: extra arms/big hand/2 heads is a very useful combo, but 3 skills gobbos are rare - they usually die before that!

If you're lucky enough to get an ST3 gobbo, then he needs Horns and 2-Heads ASAP. MA+ is useful for the desperation OTS, and AV+ gobbos could go on the LOS, but that just might be a waste. AG+ rocks – it is 2-Heads and Extra Arms rolled into one, so follow up with Big Hand - Horns is probably too risky.

Diving Tackle and Side Step are awesome skills for blocking running lanes – but you have to seriously consider whether you shouldn't just be grabbing more mutations. On doubles, Block may sound boring, but it's a life saver.

Plasmoid adds: As a rule of thumb, this team needs to stay mobile and stay alive. Your players can do wonderful things, but it won't help if you're heavily outnumbered. You need a dedicated killer, to try to keep up with your opponents cas' count, as well as player protection on everyone else. I'd pretty much go with dodge on all skaven doubles, and block or dodge on all gobbo doubles. In time a lot of your players will be blodgers or wrodgers.

I took extra arms as first skill on both the throwers, and haven't regretted it. I've also been surprisingly satisfied with Kick-Off return on one of them. It helps him cover the back-field alone, freeing the other thrower up for offensive duties, and it really helps on those desperate OTS attempts.

I went for wrestle on the linemen, as I found that my other players didn't really have the time (or the skill access) to take tackle as early as I wanted.

For the Troll, I prefer Tentacles over Claw. Then again, I'm a conservative coach. But I do that without Claw as first pick, 16 SPPs is a long way off. I also really recommend Stand Firm. In my experience a Tentacles (Stand Firm) Troll working in tandem with a frenzy Blitzzer or Lineman can set up those all-important crowd surfs, that can help you to not get outnumbered.

Attack

Attacking with Underworld can be tricky. No real bash power, no speed, low AV. You can't move the ball as fast as the elves, and 2-1 grinding could end in disaster.

You need to play a running drive, moving your cage and creating spaces to move the cage forward. Use the Troll as middle pillar and blitz with Blitzzers (or other skaven) to open a space. If it's impossible, try to change side. Try to score as late as you can to make an opposing equalizer harder. If you have players on the bench and you've got the upper hand, then fouling lots in the first half can set you up for a 2nd-half advantage.

If you're in a hurry or it seems difficult to score, try to divide opponent's forces in two sides. A goblin decoy is hard to stop with anything but the blitz – and if your opponent blitzes your decoy,

then your cage will be in a safer position. Don't do risky moves until your cage is set up properly. After that you can try something strange or difficult with 1-2 gobos. It creates fear in your opponent and it could give you important advantage to go forward and score.

Plasmoid adds: I've generally found Underworld offense to be reasonably reliable. Able to score reasonably fast, but also able to drag it out if you have to – that just requires some dodge rolls from time to time.

I try to pick it up with the Throwers and run it in with the Throwers. Mind you, an Accurate thrower opens up your options quite a bit. Keeps your opponent on his toes.

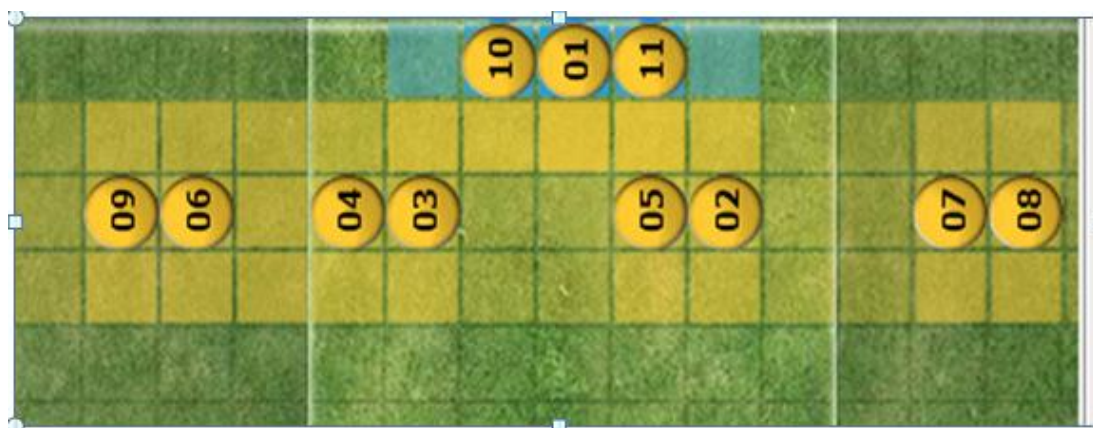
Defense

Even if they seem useless, the Underworld team has a strong defense (except against dwarves and blockers like norse). They can withstand quite a bit, just like the Amazons, just be falling back slowly, and sometimes risking taking a few blocks from blockless opponents. Just don't rely too heavily on Dodge – Nuffle will get you eventually, but just grin and bear it like a true gobbo: They're born to risk and die!

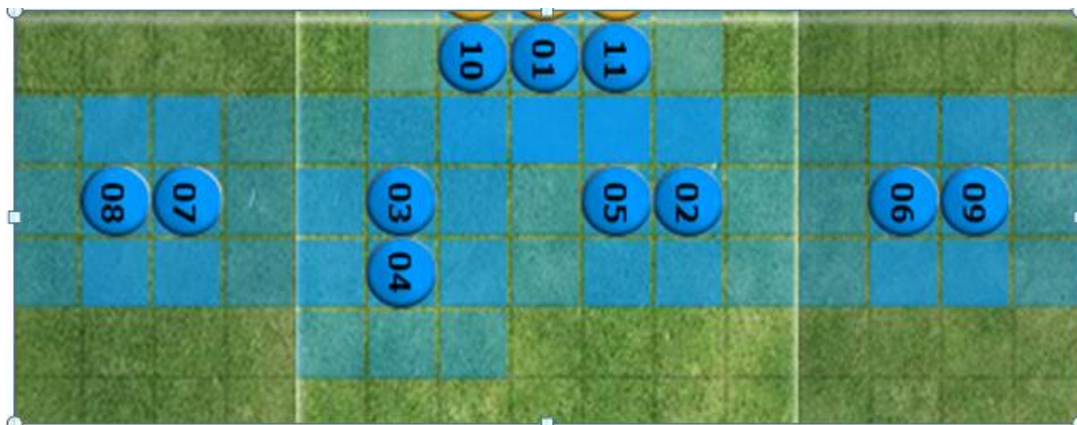
The team can do amazing things with a handful of good rolls - but be careful, taking no risk at all is always a good defense, and if you keep taking chances it will take a heavy toll on your team. If you realize that it's impossible (or very unlikely) that you'll stop your opponent, then remember to save your Troll and a Team ReRoll, so you can try to OTS! When it works it can get you back in a game that looked lost. Do not use TTM unless you have to: Dodging is always easier than throwing players around!

Against heavy teams, if you have claws and/or mighty blows, try to use them every turn and to protect your own hitters (maybe except the troll). Your opponent will see soon some of his strong players leave the pitch, which just might cost him his appetite for stalling! It's scary to face a developed Underworld team, where both sides can easily suffer 5-6 casualties – if the casualties you suffer are on your less important players then such a bloodbath could be in your favor. If your opponents numbers start to dwindle, or he forgets to protect the ball properly, then it's time to send in a horned gobbo for a shot at the ball. If it works, one of your specialists can grab the ball for you.

Here are my 2 basic defensive set-ups:



1 Troll, 2-3 Blitzer, 4-5 Thrower, 6-7 Lineman, 8-11 gobbo.



1 Troll, 2-3 Blitzzer, 4-5 Thrower, 6-7 Lineman, 8-11 gobbo.

Plasmoid adds:

With a few skilled gobbos in your team, your defense options start to get quite interesting. Running into a cage, knocking down the ball carrier, then scooping up the ball with a big hand players sounds pretty darn lovely. Just remember that you also need to survive. Every time you try to pull something like that, you're likely to leave a lot of players in positions, where they will get blocked. So think about the health of your players. And let the threat of what you *could* do work in your favour.

I should also note that I've often used the blitzers (alongside the Troll) on the LOS. Especially in the early stages of a league, the extra AV and Block means that they're likely to survive the opening turn. It may sound risky, but *sometimes* it is riskier to have 2 gobbos destroyed leaving you outnumbered for the entire drive.

Plasmoid adds - TTM:

Despite the excitement of Gio and I, Underworld aren't easy to play. You'll need every weapon in your arsenal – including TTM. Risky? Certainly! But sometimes it can save your bacon.

First off, there is more to TTM than just the end of half desperation OTS attempt. Mind you, the 4+ landing roll can be scary, but if you're not throwing the ball carrier, then it isn't a turnover. Remember that, because that allows you to do some unique stuff.

For example, throw an Extra Arms goblin ahead. If he lands on his feet, then you can hand off to him on a 2+ and let him run even further, for a long range surprise TD. Also remember that if an opposing would-be-ball-carrier flubs the pick-up (or your wizard brings him down), then a thrown gobbo can earn you a very fast touchdown. Finally, a gobbo with jump up (and AV) can be thrown at an opposing cage, then jump up to block off one of the corners, allowing a non-stunty player (like a horns blitzzer) to access the centre of the cage with a blitz. Lobbing a diving tackle gobbo into an otherwise unreachable position can also slow an opposing offense down.

And then there's the actual OTS.

Setting up is crucial. A kick-off return Thrower can help a lot, but other than that, picking up with an extra arms gobbo will save you an animosity roll. Spread your gobbos out. Put one or two right next to the halfway line. If everything works out then your troll can step 1 square into the opposing half and throw the gobbo, for a welcome move boost. If you the ball can't reach those guys, then have a reserve or two 2 squares behind them. The Troll can still throw those from one square closer to the line, meaning you can aim 5 square into the opposing half. If your gobbo doesn't scatter backwards, then he can still reach the EZ.

Good luck with the dice!

About animosity

First, I recommend reading the rulebook.

Note that a gobbo can hand off to a skaven with no animosity roll - this is important! It

Another useful thing about animosity is that if your thrower rolls 1 on animosity to pass to a gobbo and you don't want (or can't) reroll the dice, you can change your target to a skaven player, giving you a 2nd chance. Finally you can avoid the 2+ entirely by throwing to an empty square – and then have a Diving Catch gobbo scoop up the ball, just be aware that you can't decide to throw to an empty square if you've failed the animosity roll already.

Starting rosters

Once you start skilling your players you can take your team in almost any direction you want. But first you need to get the team off the ground. Always include the Warpstone Troll and both Blitzers in your starting line-up. At least one thrower is also essential, but really you want as many non-ST2 players as possible.

The big decision is number of players vis-à-vis number of rerolls. I favour lots of players as they're all fragile, not to mention that fouling can be a worthwhile strategy for you. On top of that, you have many stability-skills on the team, so if you play a little conservatively 3 rerolls ought to be enough.

Finally, you should decide between a starting apothecary vs. Fan Factor and coaching staff. In an established league, you can induce an apothecary (or two) and spend your money on rerolls or fan factor. In a new league starting without an apothecary is quite dangerous, because your players are so fragile. On the other hand, the opposing teams can't be all that deadly yet, so it just might be a worthwhile gamble.

New League		New League, v.2		Established League	
1 Warpstone Troll	110K	1 Warpstone Troll	110K	1 Warpstone Troll	110K
2 Blitzers	180K	2 Blitzers	180K	2 Blitzers	180K
2 Throwers	140K	1 Throwers	70K	1 Thrower	70K
2 Linerats	100K	2 Linerats	100K	2 Linerats	100K
6 Goblins	240K	8 Goblins	320K	5 Goblins	200K
0 Apothecary	0K	0 Apothecary	0K	1 Apothecary	50K
3 ReRolls	210K	3 ReRolls	210K	4 ReRolls	280K
0 Fan Factor	0K	0 Fan Factor	0K	0 Fan Factor	0K
0 Coaching staff	0K	0 Coaching staff	0K	0 Coaching Staff	0K
980K		990K		990K	

Tourney Advice

TV100		TV105		TV110	
1 Warpstone Troll	110K	1 Warpstone Troll	110K	1 Warpstone Troll	110K
2 Blitzers	180K	2 Blitzers	180K	2 Blitzers	180K
2 Throwers	140K	2 Throwers	140K	2 Throwers	140K
2 Linerats	100K	2 Linerats	100K	2 Linerats	100K
7 Goblins*	280K	6 Goblins	240K	7 Goblins	280K
1 Apothecary	50K	1 Apothecary	50K	1 Apothecary	50K
2 ReRolls	140K	3 ReRolls	210K	3 ReRolls	210K
0 Fan Factor	0K	0 Fan Factor	0K	1 Fan Factor	10K
0 Coaching staff	0K	2 Coaching staff	20K	2 Coaching Staff	20K
1000K		1050K		1100K	

*Rerolls are not as useful as lots of players. But you could drop 2 gobbos for a ReRoll.

Skills:

Troll: if there is doubles you can choose to give him Block, you need reliability, otherwise claw is a good choice. Tentacles could be fun, but usually it does not work so much.

Block is nice. I've tried Claw, but didn't like needing to block so much with my loner. He had some spectacular turnovers. Next time I'll try Tentacles (combined with a frenzy player)

Blitzers: MB and claw/tackle/MB. I like MB / MB but many ones like tackle. You should be able to kill all and then foul, so go for it! Claw could be useful if your troll has not it.

I put my one doubles skill on a blitzer, making him a blodger. That worked very well.

I do like tackle, but perhaps frenzy is better. But it is also very risky.

Throwers: block, extra arms, leader, dodge(double). I like to have one more blitzer, so block is good to defend your carrier. Extra arms could be useful, but does not help on defense. Dodge is nice to recover ball, exit from bad situations, but take it only if you can get two doubles, block on troll probably is the best solution for only a double. Leader is nice to the second thrower to get another RR. At 1000 TV it's really nice.

Linerat: wrestle, wrestle. I use it to attack blodger carriers and to defend against nasty slow bashers. It takes down players then you can foul with gobos!

Gobos: usually I keep them without skills because they die easy. Maybe you can take one with two heads to dodge everywhere (please call him Dr. Everywhere!).

I took one with Two Heads. He had some terrible luck, but even so, I'd definitely do it again.

Especially if the tournament rules grant an extra skill or 2 to the non-tier-1 teams.

An overview against every race: (By Gio)

Amazons: they are nasty, not fast but full of dodge. You are also full of dodge, but less.. and you have only 2 block players. Try to use well your troll pillar to stop all those dodging girls. Probably zonnies will have many guards, so you need to divide them and move fast. But really no idea to win, the only way is to bash them! Once I got an incredible tie... I was 0-2 at my 6th of 2nd half... got a good TTM and a blitz after! So I scored 2-2!

Chaos: keep in mind that they can bash your gobos 3d everywhere... then you should be able to kill them with claw and MB. A nice matchup

Chaos Dwarf: no idea how to face them. Try to score as soon as possible and to defend some way. Since you are exposed to fast bulls and tackle dwarfs, you can't play. Claws could help, but opponent's guard will destroy you soon. They are even more difficult to face than dwarves.

Chaos Pact: they have few skills so just avoid the hand to hand and try to slow them. You can attack by the normal way running your cage. Their bashy power will try to hit your skavens, so keep your throwers and blitzers well protected.

Dark Elf: they are bastard, so use your fouls, take out key players and try to forward your cage. In defense you have to slow their cage and maybe to blitz the carrier with gobos.

Dwarf: they will destroy your players, but they are slow. You can try to slow them and to divide them. Troll should bring all those guards and maybe his claw could hit! In attack try to score fast or you will be crushed!

Elf: they have a good defense and the best attack, so you need to apply the 2-1 technique and to foul them. Your bashy power should give you a good advantage when you put TZs on all those people.

Goblin: these are nasty, because they can block your gobos, they have chainsaw, but probably your blitzers will destroy them soon. Try to kill a gobo every turn by the blitzers, don't foul, only on the pogo!

Halfling: they have the chef, so few RRs for you ☹ but you don't need all those RRs. Try to kill flings every turn with blitzers and avoid trees.

High Elf: powered AV elf but with less defense and less RRs. You probably will face them only few times, but you need the 2-1 technique and to foul. Try to hit catchers: they are your problem, then blitzers.

Human: ogre, blitzers, catchers and thrower... they are the good copy of your team, they are faster and they bash more. They can even foul you! You have to use your claw and dodge and have luck: they are faster and with good AV.

Khemri: you need to divide them and slow their score. Don't take gobos near TGs, 3d could hit as tackle, so be careful. Khemri skellies are fragile so hit them. Foul positionals and try to hit those thro-ras... without them khemri could not attack or quite!

Lizardman: they are strong, fast and... they suffer gobos! Yes... you can put a gobo for every saurus (without block), they could hit only at 2d, and you risk only few damages! Then you can blitz those skinks... Fear only the krox and tackled or blocker sauri! Kill all skinks and you will win.

Necromantic: they will try to kill your troll. They will kill your troll. So try to kill something before, if you lose your troll, you will have no defenses.

Norse: they will crush you! You need to avoid to stay near players, foul those positionals, and hit hit hit!

Nurgle: slow and bastard, the beast is a problem, so you can drive it away or hit it down by the troll. Your skills should be good to take away problems.

Ogre: just avoid to be too bashed, but it should be an easy matchup.

Orc: they are strong, so you need your claw and to try to avoid blitzers on gobos. Since you have many dodge you could play well.

Skaven: another good copy of your team. They have gutter runners and this is the difference. They do all with GRs, you have to kill them and crush them by fouls.

Slann: don't underestimate those tricky animals. They could win easy against you because they could jump in your cage. Try to prevent jumping, to make them lose all their RRs, to kill those nasty catchers.

Undead: they are one of the powerful BB tourney teams, you need to limit mummy power and blitzers. Ghouls should be fouled!

Underworld: mirror... it depends on rosters and on bashes.

Vampire: try to kill all thralls, vamps should be fouled and keep far from thralls. With a running game all should be ok.

Wood Elf: nasty nasty nasty, the only way is to put gobos on linelf and to bash with MB 3d or 2d to kill some elf every turn.