

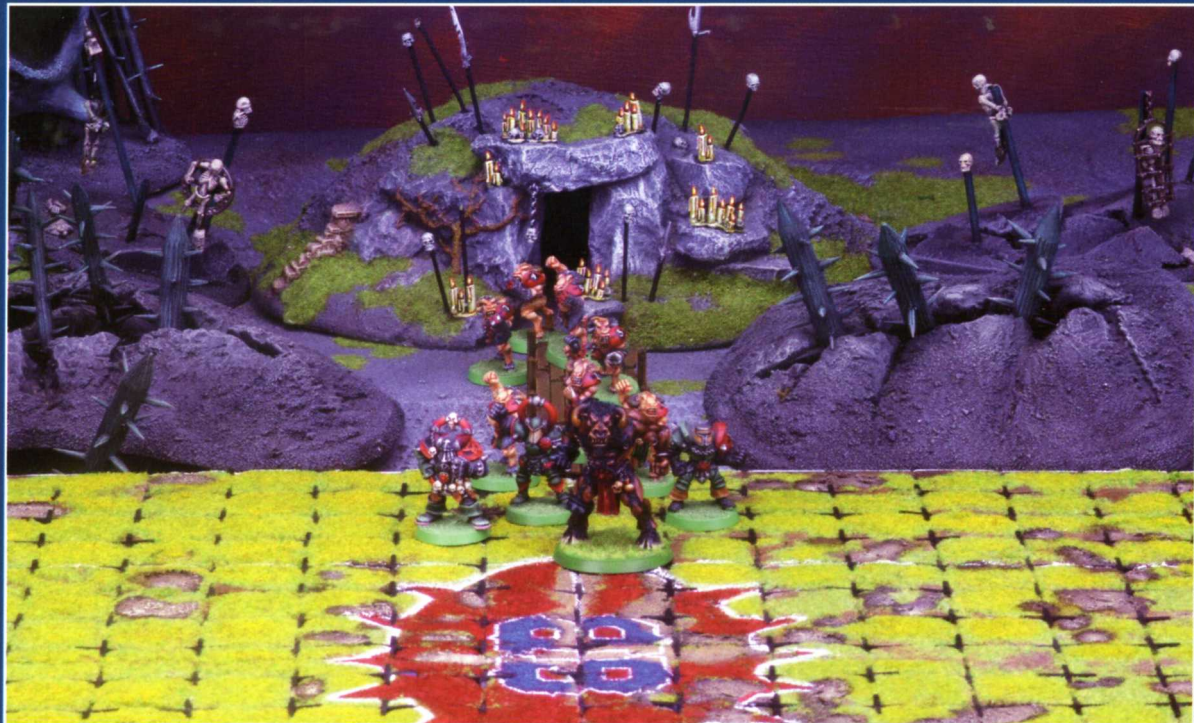
Issue 11

BLOOD BOWL™

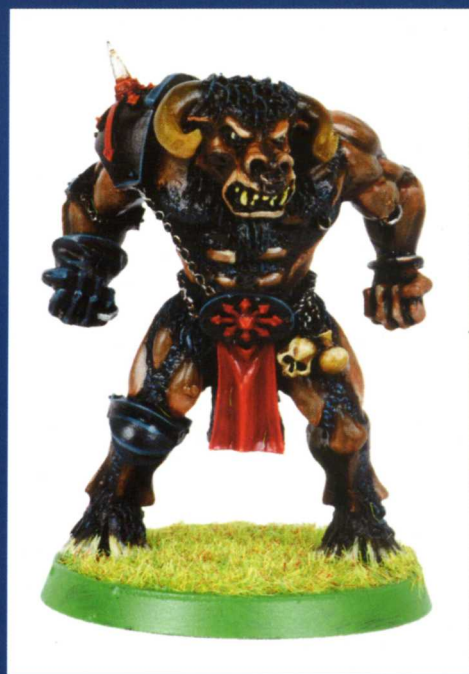
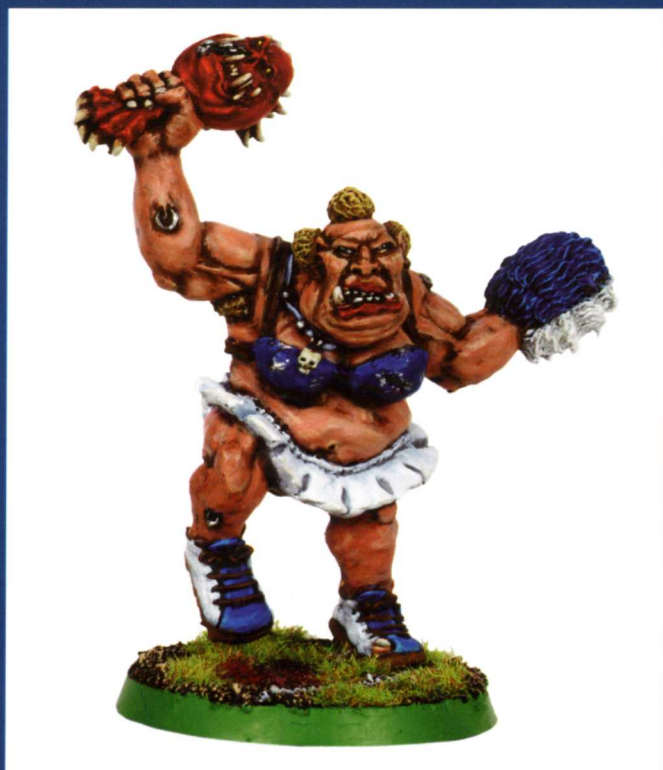
MAGAZINE



GAMES
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The Chaos team, lead by the Minotaur enters the pitch



Two new Big Guys, only one's a cheerleader!

BLOOD BOWL

MAGAZINE



Andy Hall – some unprintable jokes spring to mind...

So, here we are at another Blood Bowl editorial. Bizarrely, as I began writing this, Peter Jackson walked into the office! Yes, that Peter Jackson, the one who has been busy these last five years writing and directing The Lord of The Rings movies! Turns out he's now great friends with Alan and Michael Perry who have been equally busy creating figures of the film for the GW battle game. After a quick chat we got Pete (I'm now on first name terms – yeah, right!) to agree that a Blood Bowl movie would be cool, although I think he's going to be busy with King Kong for quite a while!

So, name dropping aside, what's going on in this issue of Blood Bowl Magazine? We have a round up and rules summary of the GW HQ 'Triple B' Bugman's Blood Bowl league, ran by yours truly. The league proved to be popular giving staff here in Nottingham an outlet for their Blood Bowl cravings!

Veteran coach and member of the BBRC, Dean Maki, shows how to play High Elves and win in the continuing Playbook series, and Steve Babbage, another BBRC member gives us his advice on running a league. Of course, BBMag would not be the same without some crazy house rules and these are ably supplied by Steve Weissman in the form of extra equipment for your players.

The irrepressible Tom Anders also makes an appearance in this issue with a report from his Blood Bowl tournament at GenCon, by the sounds of it one of the best tournaments held at the whole of GenCon, which is quite a feat! Until next time, keep those letters coming in.

Andy

Fourth Official

Jervis Johnson

Match Referee

Andy Hall

Linesmen

Ulisse Razzini

Ball Girl

Talima Fox

Cover

Wayne England
& Darius Hinks



Most Valuable Player

Steve Hambrook –
thanks for all the good
times, mate. I'll miss you.



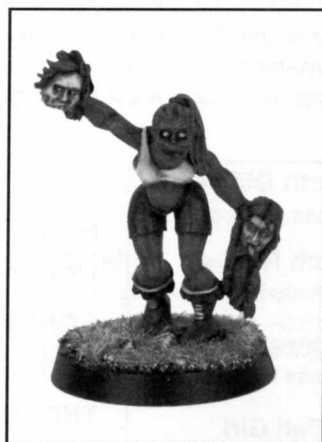
A Fanatic Studio
Publication

CONTENTS

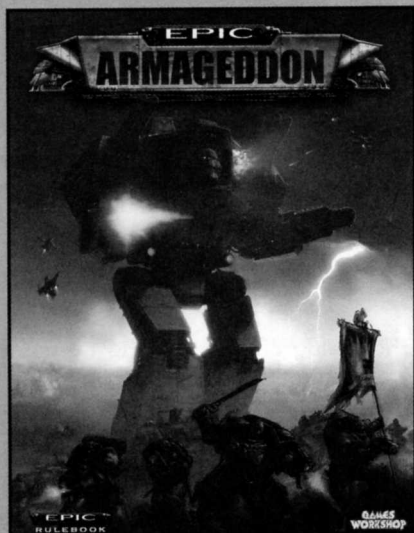
NEWS	2
What's new in Blood Bowl.	
CONTACTS PAGE	3
Everything you need to know on how to contact us	
THE TRIPLE B	4
A report on the Head Office Blood Bowl league, By Andy Hall	
THE HIGH ELF PLAYBOOK	10
Report, by Dean Maki	
MISTER COMMISSIONER!	16
Steve Babbage gives some much-needed advice.	
RUMBLE IN INDY	20
GenCon report, by Tom Anders	
GET THAT BOY A HELMET!	23
Fun House Rules, by Steve Weissman	
COACH'S CORNER	26
Have your say	
MY WORLD	28
Comments, by Chet Zeshonski	
SPIKE! MAGAZINE	29
This issue: Match Report	

NEWS

There's two new releases this month. Both are Big Guys. One is the Minotaur shown below, designed by Adam Clarke. The other, which has been a big hit on the event circuit, is the Ogre Cheerleader designed by Felix Paniagua. The Undead Cheerleaders have already been released but have yet to be seen in this fair publication, so here they are! These models were designed and sculpted by Shane Hoyle.



COMING SOON...



Epic: Armageddon!

Take a look below for others



Mordheim Wild Beastmen
Inquisitor Imperial Citizens
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SURFING THE WEB

All our games have great websites full of free downloads, resources and up-to-date news.

www.BloodBowl.com

www.Mordheim.com

www.Epic40000.com

www.Necromunda.com

www.Warmaster.co.uk

www.BattlefleetGothic.com

www.Exterminatus.com

www.Specialist-Games.com

The websites now contain an articles archive. This will tell you whether the rules are experimental, official or house rules. Some can be downloaded as free PDFs. Check out the website for more details.

HOW TO ORDER

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Specialist Games catalogues contain the complete range of miniatures for each of the Specialist Games. You can purchase them from your local direct sales division.

Contact Us We welcome feedback on the magazines and experimental rules we publish. We also have letters pages that need filling so don't hesitate to get in touch! We can be contacted via email: fanatic@games-workshop.co.uk or by post at: Fanatic, Games Workshop, Willow Road, Lenton, Nottingham, NG7 2WS. (Note: if you have a sales or purchasing issue then you should contact your local Mail Order, see the 'How To Order' section, as they will be able to help you much better than us!).

Write for Us We welcome submissions for our magazines – the majority of the articles are written by dedicated hobbyists like yourselves. Before you send us anything, we recommend you read the submission guidelines. These can be found at our website www.specialist-games.com in the Fanatic Studio section.

THE 'BBB' LEAGUE

By Andy Hall

A report on the recent Head Office Blood Bowl League

Way back in issue 8 I announced my intention to run a head office wide Blood Bowl league. It had been two years since the last head office league, that's not to say there had been no Blood Bowl at HQ just that there had been a lot of departmental tournaments but no company wide league had been organised since Rob Murphy's featured in BBMag 2.

After putting up a few posters around the building to gauge interest and I was surprised at the great response. Within days coaches were frantically painting new teams or touching up old ones ready to begin playing. Whilst discussing the league with Jervis we thought that it was a great opportunity to experiment with a few house rules that deal with team progression and the way the injury roll worked. Below is the intro pack that was sent to participants. It's worth noting that at this stage the rules below were meant only to test how we could reduce team progression. You are quite welcome to use them in your own leagues but bear in mind that these had not even been fully discussed by the BBRC and that, as discussed later, playtesting proved some rules to be flawed.

THE TRIPLE B LEAGUE RULES

You must use the Living Rulebook 2 version of the rules with the exception of the experimental playtest rules described below.

The Living Rulebook 2 can be downloaded for free off the web at www.BloodBowl.com. or you could ask Andy to provide you with the PDF. If you have a copy of the 2003 Annual as well as the BB Handbook then you have the LRB2 version of the rules.

To start the league all teams must be rookie TR 100. You must create your team using the rules on page 16 of the handbook. Record your team on the official Team Roster pad or on the accompanied Excel sheet. During the league opponents may ask to look at your Team Roster at any time.

You may use any of the teams in the Blood Bowl Handbook and the 2003 Annual – including the experimental ones. So the full list of legal teams is:

Chaos Dwarf, Chaos, Dark Elf, Dwarf, Goblin, Halfling, High Elf, Human, Orc, Skaven, Undead, Wood Elf, Amazon, Lizardmen, Norse, Khemri, Necromantic, Vampire, Rotters, Ogre, Chaos Pact, Old World, Lustrian and Elf. (The new Elf team list is available in BBmag 8 or you can contact Andy Hall, who'll supply you with the roster.)

The following changes are to be used when different from the published rules.

(All page numbers reference the printed Handbook not the LRB).

INJURIES

Replace the Injury table on page 11 with the new one on the League Reference sheet at the end of this document.

FOULING

Replace the Fouling rules on page 23 with new rules described below.

One player per team turn is allowed to make a *Foul action*. This allows the player to move a number of squares equal to his MA and then make a foul against an opposing player who is both prone and in an adjacent square. The coach nominates the victim and then makes an Armour roll for him. Other players that are adjacent to the victim may assist the player making the foul; each extra player joining in adds +1 to the Armour roll. Defending players may also give assists to a player that is being fouled. Each defensive assist modifies the armour roll by -1 per assist. No player may assist a foul if they are in the tackle zone of an opposing player and no player may assist a foul if he is not standing. If the score beats the victims Armour value then he is injured and a roll is made on the Injury table to see what has happened to him. However, if the coach rolls a double for the Armour roll then – no matter what happens to the victim – the referee spots the foul and sends off the player who committed it for the rest of the match. Assisting players are let off with a severe caution! If the ref spots a foul then the team suffers a turnover and their turn ends immediately. A coach may not replace a player who has been sent off until after a touchdown

has been scored or a half has ended. (Note – you no longer get the +1 for fouling, it is just a straight Armour roll unless you have assists).

SKILLS

Make the following changes to skills described below.

Dirty Player The player with this skill may add +2 to the armour roll when fouling.

Mighty Blow A player with this skill may add +1 to an Armour roll caused by a block or foul.

Piling On A player with Piling on may re-roll a failed Armour Roll against a victim caused by a block. If he does use the Re-roll then he must be placed prone in his own square (although you do not have to make an armour roll for him). If the victim has been pushed back then the player must follow up to use this skill. Piling on does not cause a turnover unless the player was also carrying the ball.

Razor Sharp Claws or Fangs A player with this skill may add +2 to any Armour rolls that he makes.

Stunty The +1 to injury roll is no longer used. Instead it is a +1 to the Armour Roll whenever a Stunty player is blocked. All other Stunty rules remain the same.

HANDICAPS

The below rules replace the handicap rules on page 41 & 42 on the BB Handbook.

The Handicap table in the Blood Bowl Handbook and the rules associated with it are no longer used. Instead, at the start of each match both teams must roll once on an event table. There are two event tables (*see the League Reference Sheet*), one for up and coming teams, and one for veteran teams. All team's start out as up and coming teams and therefore roll once on the up and coming teams table. A team becomes a veteran team as soon as its' team rating goes over 150 points at the end of a match (i.e. in step 5 of the post-match sequence). Veteran teams roll once on the veteran teams table. Once a team becomes a veteran team it will remain so for ever, and cannot become an up and coming team again even if its' team rating drops back down below 151 points. Note that your team has become a veteran team on the team roster.

Picking The Random Event

Once you know which table to roll on simply make a D66 roll and look up the result on the appropriate table. The table will tell you when

the result can be used and what effect it has. Each result may be used once during the match, and once only! Results that can be used 'at any time' may be used whenever you like but may not interrupt an action that is already taking place (i.e. if played during an player's action then complete the action before applying the result from the random events table).

Desperate Measures

If the opposing team has a Team Rating that is more than fifty points higher than your own then you may use a Desperate Measure to try and even the odds in the match. In addition to an event.

It's important that you are able to keep the Desperate Measure selected secret until you use it, and because of this you will need to use one of the random number counters supplied with the game to pick it. Take the counters numbered from 1-16, and randomly select one. Keep the counter you have chosen secret from your opponent until you use it. Note that this will mean that the set of random number counters will no longer be complete, so you will need to either use your opponent's counters or use a different method of selecting random players during the match until the counter has been used.

Using Cards for Events and Desperate Measures

If you prefer you may use playing cards to pick random events and Desperate Measures. You will need a single pack of ordinary playing cards that is split into three decks, one for each table as shown below. If you are using cards then any result that must take effect 'immediately' must be revealed as soon as you get the card. If you fail to play the card at the start then you forfeit the match, don't receive any winnings, and any injuries suffered by the opposing team are negated.

Deck	Consists of
Up & Coming	Ace to 9 of diamonds and ace to 9 of hearts
Veteran Teams	Ace to 9 of spades and ace to 9 of clubs
Desperate measures	10 of all suits & all picture cards

MATCH WINNINGS TABLE

Replace the Match Winnings table on page 43 of the rule book with the one on the League Reference sheet at the end of this document.

Note: If you roll a negative result then the costs of running a team have spiralled out of

profit – you must pay the amount rolled out of your treasury. If a team cannot pay then they must lose a re-roll. If they have no re-rolls they lose a player (they can't afford his wages anymore). The player they lose is the coaches choice.

AGEING

The ageing rules on page 40 of the handbook are no longer used.

MATCH WINNINGS TABLE

Gate	001-099	100-115	116-130	131-145	146-160	161-175	176-190	191-205	206-220	221-235	236-250	251-265	266-280	281-295	296-310	311+
0-20,000	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-12	-13	-14
20,001-40,000	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-12	-13
40,001-60,000	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-12
60,001-80,000	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11
80,001-100,000	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9	-10
100,001-120,000	+6	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9
120,001-140,000	+7	+6	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
140,001-160,000	+8	+7	+6	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7
160,001+	+9	+8	+7	+6	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6

Won Match: +1

Match Winnings = (dice roll + Modifiers) x 10,000
Note: If you roll a negative result then the costs of running a team have spiralled out of profit – you must pay the amount rolled out of your treasury. If a team cannot pay then they must lose a re-roll. If they have no re-rolls they lose a player (they can't afford his wages anymore). The player they lose is the coaches choice.

STAR PLAYER POINTS

Replace the Star Player Points table on page 39 of the handbook with the one on the League Reference sheet.

DESPERATE MEASURES

Counter	Playing Card	Result
1	10 Clubs	Half time Snack
Declare: At half-time.		
Effect: There's something not quite right with the half-time snack! D6 players may not start the half (they can come normally thereafter).		
2	Jack Clubs	Spiked Drink
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: Your opponents Star Player (the one with most SPPs – choose if there is a tie) has been poisoned after a night out. He may not play in the next game.		
3	Queen Clubs	Comedy Anvil
Declare: At the beginning of your turn.		
Effect: With a puff of green smoke an Anvil appears 12 feet up in the sky and plunges towards the pitch! Pick a target square and then scatter 3 times. Any player under the final square must immediately make an Injury roll (do not roll for armour).		
4	King Clubs	Helium Ball
Declare: Just before a Pass action.		
Effect: The ball has been 'tampered' with and is now considerably lighter! You may count one band down when rolling for a pass. So a Long Pass is a Short Pass, Long Bomb a Long Pass etc. (For this Pass action only).		
5	10 Hearts	Banana Skin
Declare: When an opposing player enters a tackle zone next to one of your players.		
Effect: The opposing player falls over and must make an injury roll.		
6	Jack Hearts	Mine
Declare: When an opposing player enters a square in your half of the pitch that is not in your end zone.		
Effect: The player is hit with by a strength 10 block which counts as being made by a player with the Block and Mighty Blow skills.		
7	Queen Hearts	Trampoline Pit-Trap
Declare: When an opposing player enters a square in your half of the pitch that is not in your end zone.		
Effect: The player scatters D6 squares in a random direction (roll for the direction first, then the number of squares). The player lands prone and an armour roll must be made to see if they are injured. If the square is occupied then the occupant is pushed back and knocked over.		
8	King Hearts	Spy
Declare: When the opposing team uses a team re-roll.		
Effect: The re-roll is lost and the previous result stands.		
9	10 Spades	Scutt's Deluge Of Despair
Declare: At the start of an opponent's turn.		
Effect: All movement values are halved for player's on the opposing team (round down) until the end of the turn.		
10	Jack Spades	Is It A Touchdown?
Declare: When an opposing player scores a touchdown.		
Effect: The opposing team suffers a turnover and will only score a touchdown if the player with the ball is still standing in the end zone at the end of your turn.		
11	Queen Spades	Assassin
Declare: At the start of one of your turns.		
Effect: The assassin hits an opposing player with a poison dart. Pick one player on the opposing team and placed them in the knocked out box in their dug-out.		
12	King Spades	Rakerth's Scroll Of Obliteration
Declare: When one of your player's makes a block.		
Effect: The victim of the block is automatically pushed back and knocked over – no dice are rolled.		
13	10 Diamonds	Hal's Scroll Of Transportation
Declare: When one of your player's takes an action.		
Effect: Before the player takes his action you may move him to any empty square up to D6 squares away from where he is standing. If there are no empty squares in range then the player may not teleport and the spell is wasted.		
14	Jack Diamonds	Stiletto
Declare: When one of your player's makes a block.		
Effect: The victim of the block is automatically knocked down and fails their armour roll – no dice are rolled for the block or armour roll.		
15	Queen Diamonds	Set Piece Play
Declare: When you pass the ball.		
Effect: The pass is automatically accurate and is automatically caught, no dice roll is required for either thing. Opposing player may still try to intercept the ball, and the player the ball is thrown to must be in range of the thrower.		
16	king Diamonds	Razzle-Dazzle
Declare: After a player has completed an action.		
Effect: The player may take a second action.		

UP & COMING RANDOM EVENTS

D66	Playing Card	Result
11-12	2 Diamonds	Side Bet
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: Pick out loud which team you think will win, or if the match will be a draw. If you guess the result correctly you receive D6 x 10,000 gold pieces at the end of the match. If you guess wrong then you suffer a -1 modifier to your winnings dice roll.		
13-14	3 Diamonds	News Feature
Declare: At the end of the match.		
Effect: You receive D3 x 10,000 gold pieces, +1 FF.		
15-16	4 Diamonds	That Boys Got Talent!
Declare: At the start of any drive as you set your player's up, or at the end of the match after you have collected your winnings.		
Effect: You may immediately hire another player for your team at half price. You must have the money in the bank and room on the roster.		
21-22	5 Diamonds	Magic Pills
Declare: At the start of any drive as you set your player's up.		
Effect: All of your players count as having +1 movement until either team scores or the end of the half, whichever comes first.		
23-24	6 Diamonds	Appearance Fee
Declare: At the start of the match, before either team sets up for the first drive.		
Effect: The opposing player with the most star player points will only play in this match if he receives 1,000 gold pieces per star player point.		
25-26	7 Diamonds	Help The Orphans
Declare: At the end of the match.		
Effect: You may choose to forgo your match winnings but receive +D3 fan factors instead.		
31-32	8 Diamonds	Witch Doctor
Declare: At any time.		
Effect: A local witch doctor volunteers his services for this match only to help your team. He works just like an Apothecary, even for teams that are not normally allowed to have one.		
33-34	9 Diamonds	T-Shirts
Declare: At the end of the match.		
Effect: Collect 10,000 gold pieces per fan factor		
35-36	Ace Diamonds	Donation
Declare: At the end of the match.		
Effect: You receive D6 x 10,000 gold pieces		
41-42	2 Hearts	Overdoing It
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: Select a random player in your team. They have been training just a bit too hard, and you must roll on the serious injury table for them. Apply the result immediately. If the player survives they gain 5 star player points. If this is enough for them to gain a skill then you may assign the skill immediately.		
43-44	3 Hearts	Biased Referee
Declare: When an opposing player commits a foul.		
Effect: The referee automatically sends the player off, no dice roll is required.		
45-46	4 Hearts	Intensive Training
Declare: At the start of the match, after both sides have set up for the first drive.		
Effect: Pick one player in your team and assign them any skill they are allowed to take. They may use this skill for the duration of the match.		
51-52	5 Hearts	Heroic Effort
Declare: When one of your player's is knocked over by a block, before the armour roll is made.		
Effect: The player manages to stay on his feet and no armour roll is made. If the player was holding the ball he hangs onto it!		
53-54	6 Hearts	I'm okay coach!
Declare: At any time.		
Effect: Move a player who is KO'd, badly hurt or seriously injured to the reserves box.		
55-56	7 Hearts	Inspired Play
Declare: When one of your player's takes an action.		
Effect: The player may re-roll any and all dice rolls he makes during the action.		
61-62	8 Hearts	Get 'Em Lads
Declare: When a player on your team is seriously injured or killed during an opposing team turn.		
Effect: All of your players count as having +1 strength until the end of your next team turn.		
63-64	9 Hearts	Charity Match
Declare: At the start of the match.		
Effect: Add +1 to your team's fan factor.		
65-66	Ace Hearts	Team Talk
Declare: At the start of any drive as you set your player's up.		
Effect: You receive and extra D3 team re-rolls that can be used in this half (or during extra time if the drive occurs in extra time).		

That's it! The rest of the rules are exactly as described in the Handbook and LRB. They are designed to remove redundant dice rolls and make playing the game easier and quicker especially in the pre and post match

VETERAN TEAM RANDOM EVENTS

D66	Playing Card	Result
11-12	2 Clubs	Ageing
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: The player with the most star player points in your team receives a niggling injury (you may choose the player in the case of a tie). Roll to see if they can play this match using the normal rules for niggling injuries.		
13-14	3 Clubs	Uninspired
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: The number of team re-rolls you may use in each half is halved, rounding fractions down.		
15-16	4 Clubs	I am the greatest
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: Your opponent must pick any two players on your team. These two players may not be set up on the field at the same time.		
21-22	5 Clubs	Too many hits to the head
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: One randomly selected player in your team picks up the Really Stupid trait.		
23-24	6 Clubs	In The Bag
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: You must field the players with the least number of star player points in your team when you set up. This restriction is lifted as soon as the opposing side scores touchdown.		
25-26	7 Clubs	Under Scrutiny
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: Any player from your team that commits a foul will be sent off unless you roll a double, rather than if you roll a double as would normally be the case. If you roll a double for the armour roll then the referee misses the foul so the player is not sent off.		
31-32	8 Clubs	Bad Press
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: Your fan factor goes own by 1 point.		
33-34	9 Clubs	Head-Hunted
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: One randomly selected member of your coaching staff leaves to join another team.		
35-36	Ace Clubs	Peaked
Declare: Immediately.		
Effect: Roll a D6 for each player in your team, starting with the player with the most star player points (you may choose the player in the case of a tie). If you roll a 2-6 nothing happens to that player, but you must roll for the next player to see if they have peaked. On a roll of 1 the player has peaked and may longer gain star player points, but you do not have to roll to see if any other players have peaked. If you roll for all the players in the team without rolling a 1, then no player has peaked.		
41-42	2 Spades	Bribe The Ref
Declare: At the start of any drive, before you set up.		
Effect: You may set up 12 players on the pitch.		
43-44	3 Spades	Double-Whammy
Declare: When one of your players commits a foul and the opposing player passes their armour roll.		
Effect: You may re-roll the armour roll.		
45-46	4 Spades	Palmed Coin
Declare: At the start of the match.		
Effect: You automatically win the coin toss and may choose to either kick or receive. If both teams have palmed coins then decide who receives normally.		
51-52	5 Spades	Knuckle Dusters
Declare: At any time.		
Effect: Pick a player on your team. They count as having the Mighty Blow for the rest of the match.		
53-54	6 Spades	Kidnap Rival Coach
Declare: At any time.		
Effect: Pick one member of the opposing coaching staff (not the head coach!) They may not be used for the rest of the match. In addition the opposing team's winning's roll suffers a -1 modifier, and your winning's roll receives a +1 modifier.		
55-56	7 Spades	Team Anthem
Declare: At any time.		
Effect: Team receives +1 FF for the rest of the half.		
61-62	8 Spades	Stay On Target!
Declare: Whenever your team suffers a turnover other than for illegal procedure or a foul.		
Effect: The turnover is ignored and you may keep on playing.		
63-64	9 Spades	Option Play
Declare: When one of your player's takes an action.		
Effect: The player may take a pass, hand-off or blitz action even if another player in the team has already done so this turn.		
65-66	Ace Spades	Injury Time
Declare: At the end of either half.		
Effect: Both teams receive one extra turn.		

sequences. The rules are also designed to stunt team progression to an extent therefore creating more balanced games between powerful teams.

INJURY TABLE

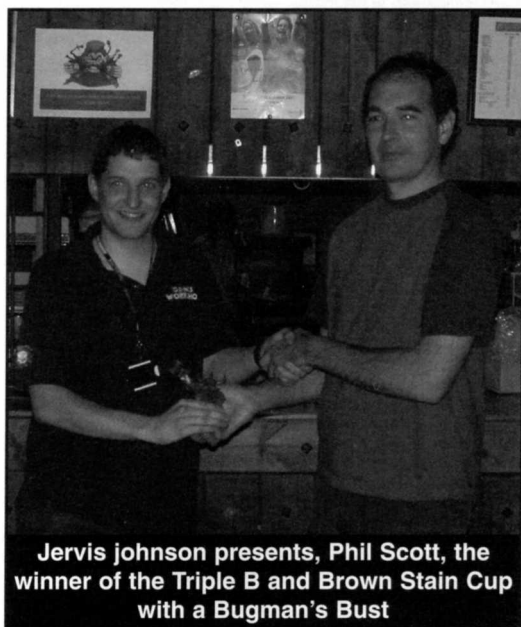
2D6	Result
2-7	STUNNED – Leave the player on the field but turn him face down. All they may do for their next action is turn face up. Once face up, they may stand up on any subsequent turn using the normal rules.
8-9	KO'D – Take the player off the field and place them in the dugout in the KO'd Players box. At the next Kick-Off, before you set up any players, roll for each of your players that have been KO'd. On a roll of 1-3 they must remain in the KO'd box and may not be used although you may roll again for them at the next kick-off. On a roll of 4-6 you may return the player to the reserves box and can use them as normal from now on.
10	BADLY HURT – Take the player off the field and place him in the Dead & Injured Players box. The player must miss the rest of the game.
11	SERIOUS INJURY – Take the player off the field and place them in the Dugout in the Dead & Injured Players box. The Player must miss the rest of the game. If you are playing a League match, then the player must miss the next game as well.
12	DEAD! – Take the player off the field and place them in the Dead & Injured box. The player won't be playing Blood Bowl anymore unless he joins an Undead team!

STAR PLAYER POINTS

Per Passing Completion	1 SPP
Per Casualty	2 SPPs
Per Interception	2 SPPs
Per Touchdown	3 SPPs
Per MVP award	5 SPPs
SPPs/Title/SP Rolls	
0-10	Rookie None
11-30	Experienced One
31-60	Veteran Two
61-100	Emerging Star Three
101-150	Star Player Four
151	Super-Star Five

The league itself turned out to be very popular, like every BB League at first I got an influx of coaches and was worried that I may even be oversubscribed but as the weeks progressed the drop outs started until I had a core of players that can be seen on the league table opposite. I also ran a structured cup tournament I named the Brown Stain Cup, and kept players regularly updated with weekly emails and league table updates. Tuesday nights in Bugman's was nominated as league night with any coaches playing getting free munchies! At the top of the table the league was closely fought with Tristram Buckroyd's Phoenix Kings High Elf team battling it out with fellow Elf coach, Phil Scott's Greenwood Rangers. As the league entered into the later stages it was clear that the Greenwood Rangers, who were undefeated, were going to win the day. In fact, of the three awards on offer – The Brown Stain Cup, Top of the Table and Best Win Ratio, the Rangers won all three! I've persuaded Phil to play in the Blood Bowl next year, so if you draw him in a game – beware! The Phoenix Kings sadly all sank in their Dragonship in the closing weeks of the league. That or Tristram wanted to try the Necromantic team and so retired them.

Based on player feedback and our own analysis we concluded that overall the rules worked well, although if I could do it again there are a few things I would change. The Star Player Points table was too harsh. With players not gaining as many skills as normal but the TR kept increasing, this overly-inflated the team's TR. In effect teams were being treated as a higher TR than they actually were. Next time, I'd probably keep the skill gains numerous in the beginning and then plateau them off as the player went higher up the table or I'd even just keep the Star Player Points as they are in the LRB. The match winnings table was okay but could do with



Jervis Johnson presents, Phil Scott, the winner of the Triple B and Brown Stain Cup with a Bugman's Bust

tweaking. The penalty of losing re-rolls then players could be replaced with teams simply going into debt, and then having to sell off team assets is an interesting concept. Coaches also accused the Veterans table as being too harsh but I remain unconvinced!

The final league standings are shown opposite. The League table was sorted in the following order: Games Won, Team Rating and Touchdowns Scored. Coaches could retire their teams if they wished, the penalty being that they would lose all Touchdowns scored with their previous team and would have to start at TR 100 again. However games played still stood which is why Tristram Buckroyd still clung onto second place. Coaches that did retire teams are highlighted with an (R).

If you wish to start a league (a logical progression if you're still new to Blood Bowl), then check out Steve Babbage's excellent article on page 16.

Pos	Team Name	Race	Coach	Games Played	Games Won	Games Drawn	Games Lost	Team Rating	TDs Scored
1	The Greenwood Rangers	Wood Elf	Phil Scott	26	22	4	0	237	78
2	Royston Rednecks	Necromantic	Tris Buckroyd	37	18	4	15	147	10 (R)
3	Waldenhof Wanderers	Undead	Andy Jackson	26	14	2	10	195	48
4	Tlaxtlan Tornados	Lizardmen	Kevin Beadle	23	12	2	9	206	45
5	Trommal-a-Kazak	Dwarf	Andy Holmes	16	12	1	3	192	24
6	Da Sledge Hammers	Chaos Dwarf	Phil Denham	29	11	4	14	129	5
7	The Dirty Rats	Skaven	Kevin Martin	31	9	0	22	170	26 (R)
8	Hurruk Highlanders	Orc	Pete Haines	9	6	0	3	184	15
9	Tilean Sparrowhawks	Human	Andrea Pomelli	11	6	2	3	180	21
10	Ulthuan Sentinels	Elves	Marc Harrington	14	6	2	6	167	14 (R)
11	Da Green Meanies	Orc	Yan Zachs	22	5	5	12	155	29
12	Svarheim Seawolves	Norse	Tom Waddington	9	4	2	3	176	10
13	The Warpstone Cowboys	Skaven	Peter Foley	7	4	2	1	161	24
14	Heimis Synir	Norse	Kurt Nielsen	6	4	1	1	160	15
15	Tepoc's Titans	Lizardmen	Paul Crowcroft	9	4	0	5	150	9
16	Barking Madmen	Norse	Yannic Hudziak	6	4	0	2	149	9
17	Copenhagen Clanrats	Skaven	Asger Granerud	6	4	0	2	142	19
18	The Blood Eagles	Norse	Dylan Owen	8	3	1	4	169	9
19	Lustrian Gators	Lizardmen	Anthony Reynolds	6	3	1	2	133	10
20	Boast When your Winning	Dark Elves	Brian Orr	6	2	1	3	155	12
21	Moulder's Maruader's II	Human	Paul Scott	7	2	1	4	149	14
22	Blood Skull Manglas	Orc	Brian Aderson	6	2	1	3	135	9
23	Short on Talent	Dwarf	Mark Lawreson	3	2	0	1	133	5
24	Norrkoping Reavers	Humans	Martin Isaksson	4	2	0	2	132	8
25	Flat-Liners	Undead	Paul Webber	2	2	0	0	122	6
26	Da Putrids	Rotters	Ullisse Razzini	6	1	2	3	151	8
27	Badland Broozers	Orc	Tom Mole	3	1	1	1	125	5
28	The Dwarf Tossers	Dwarf	Matt Keefe	3	1	0	2	119	2
29	Murderous Macclouds	Dark Elf	Nelson	1	1	0	0	107	2
30	The Sylvanian Family	Vampire	Dean Winson	7	0	0	7	141	4
31	Lustrian Lizards	Lizardmen	Richard Nash	2	0	0	2	112	0
32	Da Mushroom Runnas	Goblins	Ian McLaughlin	3	0	0	3	108	4
33	Qurveza Wonder Lust	Amazon	Paul Ensor	1	0	0	1	107	0 (R)
34	Chaqua Kroxies	Lizardmen	Gil Surepi	4	0	1	3	104	3
35	Darkblade's Doomed	Dark Elf	Seb Hammar	1	0	0	1	100	0
36	Haehwyd Harlequins	Elf	Gerwyn Walters	3	0	0	3	96	5
37	Sandiacre Steelers	Dwarf	Gareth Richards	2	0	0	2	96	0

THE HIGH ELF PLAYBOOK

Being excerpts from the original tomes 'Stratagems and Artifice of Blood Bowl Success – Using Your Natural Superiority for Conquest on the Pitch' by legendary High Elven coach Angus M'kee, first published 2432.

Translated from the original High Elven by Dean Maki.

A NOTE FROM THE TRANSLATOR

It is with great honour that we are able to present to you this small sampling from Coach M'kee's original work. Coach M'kee was a philosopher, statistician and blacksmith. Foremost, however, he was a Blood Bowl coach, and among the finest of all High Elven coaches of all time, being voted nine times 'Old World Coach Of The Year' by the Ulthuan press.

Adapting Coach M'kee's original text into an easily digestible format is no small task. Coach M'kee spoke on many subjects across his seventeen-volume work, including such topics as diet, sleeping arrangements, and fingernail care. His treatise on which brand of polish best prevents stains in your armour covers half a volume by itself.

While we cannot dispute the importance of such topics - indeed, their proper understanding could easily make the difference between a winning team and a championship team - we will instead attempt to limit the following discussion to matters which directly impact, or are impacted by, action on the Blood Bowl pitch.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PLAYERS

It is imperative that all coaches properly understand their players. Winning and losing starts with appreciating what your players can and cannot accomplish. Luckily, you are coaching a High Elf squad, and there is very little, if anything, that a High Elf cannot accomplish.

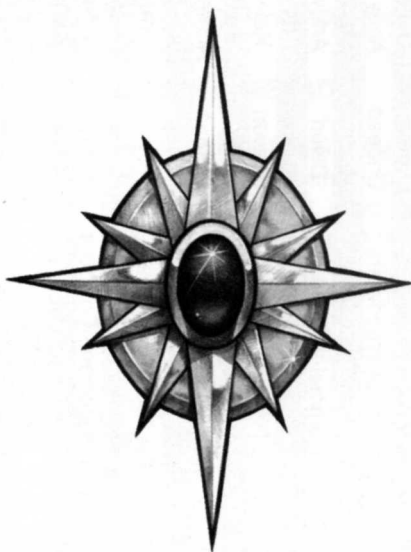
Looking at your team in general terms, you will no doubt discover that your team is easily one of the most adaptable squads available. You may have heard that Blood Bowl High Elves rely on the so-called 'passing' game. It is our fervent wish that you do not buy into this propaganda. To put it simply, High Elves are blessed with versatility rivaled only by the hated Dark Elves and surpassed, if even that, only by the short lived Humans.

To start, your linemen – with their adequate movement, strength and armour, plus their exceptional agility – are most likely the best in the game. It is their agility that allows the linemen to assume a larger role than most linemen would on other squads. This agility not only gives them a natural dodging ability - which allows your players to remove themselves from contact with their opponents – but also allows any High Elf lineman to handle the ball as needed.

It is certainly true that many other teams are envious of the Elven lineman's natural abilities, which often rival the abilities of their so-called 'position' players! When needed, any lineman is a scoring threat.

Continuing, we will discuss your Phoenix Warriors. Though you are limited to two only, you may find that this will more than suffice. Their natural agility, plus their Passing abilities make them formidable throwers – quite possibly the best in the game.

Next are the Dragon Warriors. With their superior movement and skill at Blocking, these two players could easily become the workhorses of your team. With enough determination, there is little a Dragon Warrior cannot accomplish.



Finally, we have the Lion Warriors. Quite simply, these are the best catchers in all of Blood Bowl. Not only are they blessed with exceptional movement, they also possess a Strength higher than most other catchers in the game, while retaining the same amount of armour. Where a single opposing player can easily bring down most catchers, your opponent will need to allot two players to accomplish the same task against your Lion Warriors.

It is also important not to succumb to the stereotype that Lion Warriors are catchers and catchers only. With their movement and strength, they can easily adapt to a defensive role, without sacrificing any of their offensive capabilities.

PURCHASING YOUR TEAM

Selecting your starting roster is no simple task. Remember, High Elf players, even linemen, are among the best players in the game. Rightly so, you will be required to pay them their worth. With a starting budget of 1,000,000 gold pieces, you will not be able to afford all the players, coaching staff, and re-rolls you would like. You will be required to make many choices, each with its own distinctive advantages and risks.

To begin, you should first decide if you desire a deep bench. The deepest bench you can acquire is 13 players – but that will leave you with precious little funds for coaching staff, marketing or training. Obviously, you are required to purchase at least 11 players. With that in mind, why not budget for eleven linemen and then decide on how you wish to spend the remaining 230 gold pieces.

Many a successful High Elf team was created from a linemen-only starting roster. The advantage of this method is simple – this arrangement maximizes the amount of cash available for off-pitch purchases. Also, by fielding only linemen, it will force you as a coach to invest time in developing skills in these linemen, making them as effective as a position player on another team. It has been said that the greatest teams are those with the most skilled linemen. Developing your linemen early is a key in establishing your team as a powerhouse. The drawback, naturally, is that your team will be lacking in natural skill and will be relying on their higher ability.

If your team is joining an established league, this tactic may be cause for early setbacks, as you will lack the skilled players needed to compensate for the other teams' long period for growth.

With the above in mind, you should decide if you are willing to start a team with only 11 members. Remember, in an established league, you may be facing many players who are skilled at causing injury – even death – to your players. It could be very likely that you will play some early matches short handed until you collect enough gate receipts to extend your bench. On the other hand, however, each additional player will cost you an additional 70,000 gold pieces.

You must think long and hard whether or not an additional player is worth a third of your remaining budget.

At this time, you should also decide if your team requires additional skill in the form of position players. As stated previously, it may



be of benefit to purchase skilled players if joining an established league, in the hope that these skills can help offset the other team's growth through the many games they have already played. If joining a newly formed league, the skills of position players – combined with the natural agility of all elves – could give your team the edge it needs for early success. Upgrading a position from lineman to a position player will cost you anywhere from 10,000 to 30,000 gold pieces. As such, you must decide on how much of your remaining budget you will allocate on additional skills.

There are several schools of thought on which position players you should acquire first. One school suggests purchasing Lion Warriors early, in an effort to increase your team's scoring threat. Certainly, this is a persuasive argument. However, it does tend to leave a coach reliant on his Lion Warriors for the bulk of the offence, which could leave the remainder of his team undeveloped.

A second school suggests purchasing Dragon Warriors before other position players, in an effort to establish a physical presence with skills in blocking. Again, this is a persuasive argument, and one in which we can find no fault.

The final school recommends purchasing Phoenix Warriors first. The reasoning is this – early development of the throwing position will soon lead to a player who literally laughs at throwing an accurate long bomb. Also, by limiting the traditional 'offensive' positions – that being the Lion and Dragon Warriors – from the starting roster, the coach will be forced to develop his linemen, which, as stated previously, is the cornerstone of all championship teams.

With your lineup now decided, you now need to consider the three remaining items of your roster – that being additional coaching staff, training (also known as re-rolls) and marketing (colloquially known as 'Fan Factor').

To invest in training is to allocate money in 50,000 gold piece lots. This decision should be made with your starting lineup in mind. If you are investing in many skilled players, your need for these re-rolls may be less than if you are fielding a team of all linemen. Regardless of its nature, no team should take the field without at least one re-roll to their credit. Your final choice is whether or not to purchase an Apothecary.

There is no easy answer to this dilemma. If you forego the Apothecary, in the hopes that you can purchase one at the end of the first match, you will be able to afford additional training in the form of a re-roll, but you are taking a sizable gamble.

Should you be in need of an Apothecary's service for the first match – and this is Blood Bowl after all – you run the risk of losing a player who costs more to hire than the Apothecary in the first place. However, it is tempting to take advantage of the cheaper training costs before your first game in the league. Naturally, your decision will be based partly on whether or not you are joining an established league – where many players may be more skilled at causing injury than an all rookie league would be.

Finally, any money left over will be allocated to marketing – or Fan Factor as it is known. You may wish to tweak your earlier decisions based on the amount left over for Fan Factor. A higher initial Fan Factor usually translates to more gate receipts, which could be necessary for a starting High Elf squad to hire expensive position players. If joining an established league, this may not be as important, as you could ride the coat tails of your more established opponents for larger gates and greater income. Once again, a decision needs to be made, with the trade-off being a more reliable stream of income in the future versus an additional re-roll or skilled player at the start.

PLAYING THE GAME

High Elves are such natural Blood Bowl players that they almost coach themselves to victory, if only a few points are remembered.



In general, you will want to use the High Elf natural agility to your advantage. Always remember that any High Elf player on the pitch is a threat to play the ball with. Also, with their agility, they can easily remove themselves from contact with opposing players. If the opponent cannot hit you, he cannot hurt you. Also, with their agility, it is an easy matter for a High Elf team to gain a numerical advantage on the portion of the pitch where the important action is taking place. Combined with their movement, it is rare that a High Elf player is out of play for any length of time.

On offence, you can use your agility to move through your enemy's line – with the judicious use of a block or blitz – to bring two or more players within scoring position. Pour as many players as you can through the seam to set up a screen of Tackle Zones on your intended receivers. However, keep in mind that you will

still require protection for your thrower – as such, you should leave a few players back to form a pocket. When the time is right, your thrower will step out of the pocket and launch a pin-point pass to a receiver, who will run it in for the score.

Another tactic to facilitate a quick score is to utilize a hand-off and pass in the same turn. This will allow your team to move the ball the entire length of the field if necessary, and could be the game winning play. Simply keep your ball carrier far back in your own zone – hopefully out of reach of the oncoming opposing rush – and one or more players in scoring position. To conclude the play, run the ball carrier as far up field as possible, and hand off (or pass) to a waiting player near the line of scrimmage. This player will then carry the ball and pass (or hand off) to the waiting player, who will take the ball in for the score.



On defence, you should be thinking 'offence'. That is, whenever your opponent is in possession of the ball, you should be thinking 'What needs to be accomplished in order for me to score now, or next turn'. Usually, this requires that you keep a player or two in a 'scoring position' at all times. Should the ball bounce loose, your team always has an excellent chance of gathering and delivering it to one of these players for the quick score. You may be of the impression that these players will be "out of position", but that is not necessarily the case. Typically, these players will be those who rush the ball carrier after the kick-off. As such, they are most likely to already be deep in the opposing team's side of the pitch.

DEVELOPING YOUR PLAYERS

All successful High Elf teams have as their foundation solid skill development. To achieve this, it is imperative that you develop your linemen into solid players that can rival most position players from other rosters.

High Elf linemen are of a rare breed that can learn both the art of the Block and the art of the Dodge. If possible, a player skilled in Guard will help keep your line strong. A Dauntless player may help manage any opposing Big Guys, while the added inspiration of a Leader will always be welcome.

Phoenix Warriors should invariably become Accurate, and if possible, develop a Strong Arm. A Phoenix Warrior able to Dump Off in a hurry could expand your offence with the inclusion of an 'option play'.

Dragon Warriors and Lion Warriors, though ostensibly different positions, can be developed using techniques indistinguishable



from one another. Both are adept at scoring, and both can be well used on defence. It is recommended that at least two of these players be developed as defensive players. You need not fear – even a defensive Lion Warrior is a greater scoring threat than most any other player is.

For defensive skill development, you may wish to instruct your players in the arts of Shadowing, Strip Ball, and Tackle. If your league sees large use of the passing play, the art of the Pass Block could be essential to your success. These defensive players will naturally stay in your backfield, waiting for your opponent to send his receivers deep. At this point, the defensively skilled players will make contact with the receivers, and using their enhanced movement, they will have an excellent chance of Shadowing these players. Combined with the art of Tackle, it is quite possible that the opponent's receivers will be forced to the ground before they can free themselves.





The art of Strip Ball is useful, of course, for knocking the ball free when you cannot knock the opposing player to the pitch. Early in a league, this could be a pivotal play. However, as the league develops more players who are Sure of Hands, the art of Strip Ball will prove to be less useful. As such, it may be an art that produces diminishing returns.

The art of Pass Block, aside from being useful in garnering extra interceptions, is also a handy tool to place your Shadowing players in contact with an intended receiver.

You may be tempted into allowing your players to develop a Leaping offence. The temptation is strong, as the ability to Leap over an opposing line instead of running through it is dramatic, to say the least. However, your normal High Elf has been shown to trip himself up at least one time in three – and seemingly more likely when the game is on the line. As such, this tactic should not be relied upon, and this ability is most useful when developed in an Elf who has shown exceptional agility.

You will perceive that little mention has been given to offensive skills for High Elves. This is for a simple reason – High Elves are naturally offensive in nature, and require little instruction to remain so. As High Elves require little assistance to make the score, the success of a High Elf squad will rest solidly on its defensive play. Investing in abilities designed to turn over the ball will achieve this end, while the offence will naturally take care of itself.

*** Did you know...

The most unusual tactic employed by a High Elf team was that of the Fulathian Filibusters. Taking advantage of their long life spans, they would routinely produce a pre-game show that lasted years – or even decades – when playing against their short lived opponents, who would understandably lose a step or two, as well as many players! This practice ended with the team, when they attempted it against the Champions of Death while playing a friendly match in Bretonnia. Tomalandry waited for most of the crowd to expire, at which time he animated them. The Filibusters have yet to be extracted from the writhing mass.



MISTER COMMISSIONER!

**Veteran Commissioner and coach, Steve Babbage,
gives his advice on running a league.**

By Stephen Babbage

Being a 'commish' is not all fun and games. Which is a shame really, because that's what Blood Bowl is all about. In fact, if it wasn't fun, and wasn't centrally about Blood Bowl games, then there's something wrong. From one commissioner to another Blood Bowl enthusiast, here's some things which should be thought about if you want to take the mantle of being a commissioner and do it well.

BEFORE YOU START A LEAGUE...

Commissioner checklist:

- ★ Costs of the league entry fee for a final prize are decided
- ★ Read 'Tournaments - A Practical Guide' by Matthew Brown (in Blood Bowl Magazine 2)
- ★ Venue located for the Blood Bowl league and costs per coach decided, if any.
- ★ Look into joining the NAF – start by visiting www.bloodbowl.net
- ★ Advertising, including costs clearly described
- ★ 'Break-in week' for new players
- ★ 'House Rulebook' written, with all the requirements of your league, including:
 - 1) The length of the season (with dates)
 - 2) How often will you meet (are there breaks in the season?)
 - 3) Points for the league ladder
 - 4) Format and Scheduling (open or closed)
 - 5) Game summary sheets filled out
 - 6) Fouling rules
 - 7) Ally rules
 - 8) Other rules (painted miniatures, Star player cards, etc)

THINGS TO DO FROM GAME TO GAME

- ★ Write a newsletter
- ★ Show an updated league table with everybody's team on it
- ★ Collect all the summary game sheets
- ★ Update your copies of everyone's team sheet (master copies – prevents problems!)
- ★ Listen to coaches about what they aren't liking about the rules
- ★ Talk to coaches (nicely!) who may have upset other coaches

SOME OF THE POINTS IN MORE DETAIL:

1. NAF

Some time soon you will be able to join the NAF as a league. This will not only give you access to the Commissioners kit, which will help you to run your league, but it will open up your league to a worldwide network of players, and your own players can be ranked against every other coach in the NAF – all over the world. Doing well in your league will help you to rank well in tournaments for Blood Bowl! You can currently join the NAF as a tournament player, but more information on joining a NAF league will be available on the NAF website soon!

2. Time

Don't think that being a Commissioner won't take time. It does, and more of it than you think. Helping to organise a league newsletter, keeping tabs on the league table, working out whose team played whose and who they can still play this week – this is just the day-to-day running of the league, not to mention all the work you put into the initial 'house rulebook' which can help players to work out what the rules are for your particular league. Talking to shop owners, gaming clubs and venues about where to play Blood Bowl and how you can advertise your league all take time too. If you don't have a lot of time to spare, then perhaps being a commissioner is not for you.

One thing I see when I'm travelling from one Blood Bowl league to another and talking to gamers is it is often the 'hoarding' commissioner syndrome. If you want to be a good commissioner, allow your players to do some of the work for you – writing articles for the newsletter, helping to keep tabs on teams and doing other odd jobs. If they see their role as important (and not just being your hobgoblin slave) then it will help them to 'own' the league and they will be much less likely to 'put it down' and point out it's downsides.

One other time consuming process with being a commissioner is treating players as people. Ringing (or talking to via online chat, or some other way) players every now and then, to make sure that everything is going well can be one of the most rewarding parts of organising a

BB league. While you're not their mum, make sure that your players' voices are heard and if you call them after a week away from the regular gaming time (no show) they might appreciate it if they're going through a rough spot. Just don't give them the heavy 'Why weren't you there? You let other players down' talk. Helping forge a community is a big job for commissioners but that's what makes an 'awesome' commissioner over a 'good' one.



3. Advertising

A Blood Bowl league or tournament is not likely to be the huge success it should be without people knowing about it. And not just anybody, but the right kinds of people. There's not much point advertising in the local women's gardening guide, unless that's the kind of people you're wanting in your Blood Bowl gaming group. The most successful way to advertise is to talk to your local hobby shop or Games Workshop store manager, and see if you can advertise in the store. There might be a local gaming group which you can attend to tell everyone about the competition. If there is a local gaming or store publication, see if you can get an advertisement in it. One of the most successful methods of advertising I have found is the humble poster. An A3 colour poster in a hobby store several weeks before the competition starts, for me, attracts a lot of attention. Whatever you do, make sure that if you want others to know about it that they have ways to find out about it. It is amazing how many Blood Bowl coaches are in the community and don't know about leagues in their own neighbourhood. Keep your advertising costs low, and free if at all possible, so that your coaches don't have to carry the burden of letting others know about your group.

4. Meeting Place

Where a Blood Bowl community meets will change the type of games you are likely to see. If your tournament is held in your basement, it is less likely you will play many people who you don't know. Allowing coaches to play each other by phoning up and visiting each other and playing in the living room is possible for friends, but by doing it this way it is difficult to make sure everyone is doing everything properly. If you can, look into playing on a late night shopping evening in a gaming store. This is the best way to attract new players to the game, and people who aren't even interested will still stop to

admire your fantastic looking players and devious field tactics. It is also good publicity for your gaming store. Even organising a one-off game or your final to be played at that venue will make your league more 'professional'. Another place worth investigating is a public place, such as a scout hall, school or room in a club. Normally there is a cost involved in running a group from there, but if all your coaches are prepared to chip in a small fee for it each week it should cover the cost of hiring the venue. It also makes it easy for new players to join the group. Transport and food requirements should be considered when thinking about a venue. Playing at the same time as a local gaming group might also be a way to play the games at a public place while keeping the cost down, plus advertising provides opportunities for the league at the same time!

5. Commish to play or not to play?

This depends how serious the league is. If it is a tournament with significant prize money and prestige, then it might be better if you don't play and just monitor the games in progress. However, it's much more fun if you can play as well as be the commissioner (it's all about playing Blood Bowl, isn't it?). If it's possible logistically, and coaches will not accuse you of cheating or being biased, then by all means join in and play! Just be aware of the ever scrutinising eye of your players. Make sure that if a call needs to be made about the rules, swing the rule against your own team if there seems no legal precedent – or at least 'dice for it'. Many commissioners are perceived as power brokers, always slanting the playing field so that their own team is playing downhill in comparison to everyone else. Make sure you have more integrity than that.



6. 'Tight' versus 'loose' style of league

There are many ways you can run a set league, and each has their advantages and disadvantages. Here are some of the considerations you need to decide between for how your league will be run. Make sure that whatever you decide is in your 'house rulebook'

Closed Schedule Who you will play each round is determined in advance.

Open Schedule You organise who you are going to play each week, sometimes once you see who has turned up!

Closed Format You can only play a set number of games in a set time frame.

Open Format You can play as many matches as you like, when you like.

A Closed schedule is good as you can organise your team in preparation for who you will be playing in future weeks, and exciting match-ups can be advertised in advance. It also prevents some teams avoiding other teams voluntarily.

An Open schedule is good as it allows for coaches who cannot make a particular week. It also allows coaches to pick their opponents, and for Challenges to still exist in the game.

A Closed format makes sure that some teams don't play all their games early and rush ahead in Team Rating. It can also help to make sure that all games are played at a proper venue and can be watched to make sure no underhanded tactics are employed. People able to make game rulings will also be on hand.

An Open format allows coaches to play games when they can, as often as they like.

Personally, our league prefers an Open Schedule, but a Closed Format, so that we work out who we are playing each week, however we can only play one game per week, and we can only play each opponent once.

A 'tight' league (Closed schedule, Closed format) makes for an exciting structure to your league and simulates many professional sport leagues. However, your coaches need to be reliable to show up every time you play Blood Bowl.

A 'loose' league (Open schedule, Open format) is great as people can play whenever they want, however it is easily unbalanced as teams streak ahead of others, and it can be difficult to monitor teams.



7. The Mood / Style of the league

This can be set as early as the poster design before the league has even begun. If all your coaches wear Black T-shirts saying 'Die Elf Scum, Die!' and sport tattoos saying 'Who cares about da' stinkin' ball!' then it is quite likely that your league will have several dominant Chaos, Undead and Orc teams. Whichever teams you do see in your league, it is important that you think carefully about the rules you have in your league and what impact they will have on the various teams. Careful decision making about fouling rules, allies and how points are calculated for positions in the league ladder are very important. The rules decisions before the league begins will influence which teams are taken in the competition, and the attitude taken by coaches in the league. If a particular rule is really abused by a team or several coaches, then it might be best to change that rule for the next season. Of course, thinking carefully about which rules are included and which aren't before the league begins will help to minimise this problem.



Will there be a real world prize to be won for winning the tournament you are organising? Having a real world prize such as some miniatures, bought with a small entry fee, or donated by a sponsoring store or company can be a way to motivate players to take their Blood Bowl games seriously. Make sure that your coaches know what the rules are for the league before making up their team, as if there is to be no fouling at all and all injuries are automatically apothecaried by mystical fairies in your league, then there will likely be more Elven, Amazon and Skaven teams.

8. Gauging the pulse of the Players

On a similar tack to the above point, it is important to listen to the players in your league. If all they ever talk about is that some teams are completely 'broken' because of the ability for them all to ally Skaven Gutter Runners – then it might be time to look seriously at your ally rules. In my own league, there are three other players who help out the job I have as commissioner as they report back what other coaches are saying and thinking. They also have a say on which rules should be included and which shouldn't each season. Of course, I still have the power of veto as commissioner.

9. Breaking up the league

Every now and then it might be a good idea to have a break from Blood Bowl, to give people the opportunity to do other important things, like visit their distant relatives for Christmas. Believe it or not, by having a break from Blood Bowl every now and then makes people keen to play again and rejuvenates players to do better. After a play-off and final, we often have a break before beginning the next 'season' of Blood Bowl. Sometimes this means that we start over with completely new teams. Our seasons normally coincide with the school and university terms, and our breaks coincide with the holidays.



Before any season begins, it is often worthwhile having a 'break-in week' where coaches can compare teams they are planning to bring into the season. New players can have a 'friendly' game where experienced coaches can teach them the game, and other coaches can play each other to see how their new team will go. If your seasons are long, it might be a good idea to have a week off every now and then. You can break up a league but still meet, by having a week of miniatures painting (often needed to paint up all the new players to the team!). You can have a one week celebrity game (good teams versus evil teams where the highest SPP players from each team participate in two 'teams') or other diversions from the otherwise grueling weeks of the league. Some tournaments organise 'byes' for some teams so that they get a break from the game.

10. Rules to prevent abuse

Some rules are open to abuse, and people will use them to their own advantage. It is worth noting that it is part of the Commissioner's job to prevent rules abuse, so that the fun from the game can be enjoyed by all. A few of the rules which are most open to abuse include:

Points calculation. How do teams get to the top of the league ladder? Can it be abused? Think about it carefully. In our league, we make sure every game the coaches play counts toward points calculation to encourage

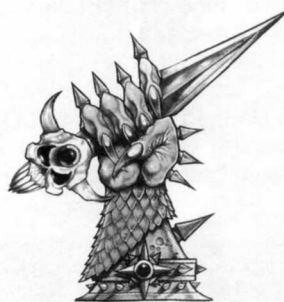
consistent wins of all different types of opponents rather than a few complete slaughters of other teams.

Team Development. Believe it or not, the most common place coach 'error' occurs in maintaining the team sheet. It is worth while, but time consuming, to keep tabs on how much money each team gains, what their skill rolls were and what they purchased. Developing a brief game summary sheet which coaches can fill in, sign and return to you will go a long way for you as a commissioner to keep tabs on what is legal. A Wight with Strength 5 will be easily found to be an 'accidental mistake' when the Wight should have a Movement Allowance of 5 instead if you keep tabs on Star Player Point rolls.

11. Dealing with the 'big cheese'

Occasionally, you may have to address the coach who is acting in an unsportsman like way with their team, conduct or game play. It is important to realise when dealing with difficult people that you are all there to have fun. If someone is jeopardising that fun, then you as a commissioner may have to do something. Whatever you decide to do (hopefully it is as simple as talking to the player in question) make sure that you keep things polite. Dealing with difficult people is probably the most undesirable part of being a commissioner.

By having very good rules in your league, and being tough on those rules, such as enforcing all players, rolls to take place where you can observe them, will help to keep most coaches in check and still be a part of your league.



I hope that this will give you some insight into being a commissioner in a league setting. If you need more information about how to be an effective commissioner, then the best thing to do is look into joining the NAF, or an online BB community where lots of Blood Bowl coaches from all over the world discuss issues. I personally use www.talkbloodbowl.com. There are many others, however. And at the end of the day, have fun – it is after all a hobby, not a career!

Stephen Babbage

RUMBLE IN INDY

Tom Anders reports the results of the official GW tournament for the 2003 GenCon Bowl in the United States.

Formula: Take the largest gaming convention in the United States and move it to the home city of the owner of the most hit Blood Bowl fansite on the Internet for a result of... the largest Blood Bowl tournament ever held in North America in the history of Blood Bowl.

The GenCon Bowl 2003 held at GenCon in Indianapolis, Indiana on July 24th and 25th opened the big official GW gaming areas' doors to 60 coaches. This number would prove impressive later when GW confirmed that it was even more players than participated in the Warhammer Fantasy Battles tournament at GenCon.

The tournament used the rules for the 2003 Blood Bowl except for a revision that Star Players could not use team re-rolls. Also Star Players without secret weapons cost their LRB cost + their LRB cost over 100k to have as a team member. With these rules, stars like Morg and Count Luthor showed up to play at GenCon, but they were not factors. In fact for every race at GenCon (other than Humans with Zug), a team without any Star Players placed higher than ones that had one. We also changed and used the scoring method used by the Underworld Cup in the USA and the Orion Cup in Canada.

There was a nice mix of teams for the tournament: 1 Amazon, 4 Chaos, 2 Chaos Dwarf, 3 Dark Elf, 8 Dwarf, 3 Goblin, 1 High Elf, 7 Human, 2 Lizardman, 2 Norse, 12 Orc, 5 Skaven, 6 Undead, and 4 Wood Elf. All races were represented except the poor Halflings – they could have been contenders, I'm sure!

Spirits were high for the tournament. Andy Hall at Fanatic and Tim Hucklebery with Games Workshop had donated a various amount of miniatures for prizes and custom trophies had been made for each major

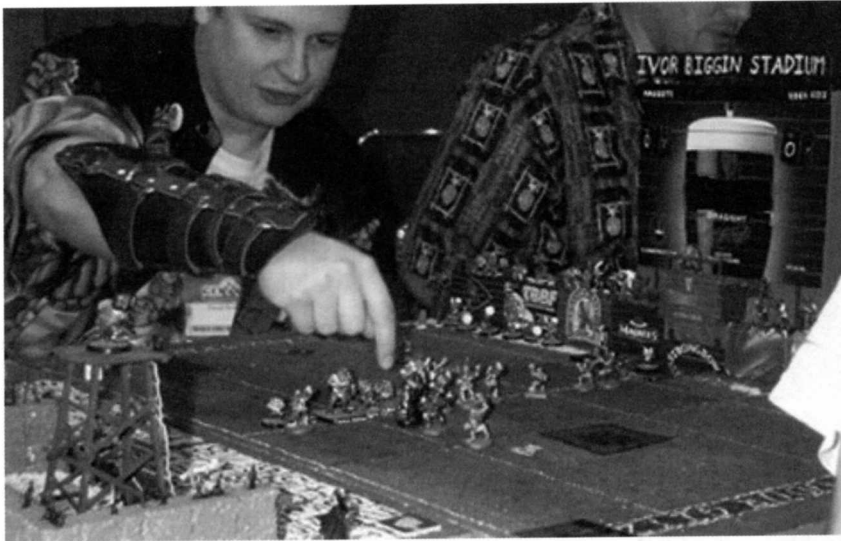
award. Rumours during the tournament were that some rosters had been changed a week before in order to take home the Most Casualties trophy that had been displayed on talkbloodbowl.com and blood-bowl.net.

The first three games were played on day 1, and the battles were fairly brutal. After the first three games, the top six teams were averaging three casualties inflicted per game. Now you would think that with one-third of the tournament being Dwarfs and Orcs, this would mean they were leading the pack after the first day... not true. The end of the first day saw only four undefeated coaches out of the 60 in the tournament: Bryan Mitchell (USA) with his Zug – led Humans, Apocalypse; Wolfgang Eigl (Austria) coaching the Undead Death Raiders; Ben Rheame (Canada) running his incredibly fast Skaven Fur Down Under; and Dennis

Anders (USA and my brother) with his Lizardmen Slashers.

Because GenCon is such a massive gaming convention, discussions with attendees had led to a decision that the tournament would only run four games to allow time for other events and shopping. So when the doors opened on the second





day's morning; everyone knew the one game played that day would decide everything.

All wandering eyes focused on the four games at the head tables that would decide the winners.

Bryan Mitchell's Humans drew David Sutton's Goblins (Canada). Now before you start laughing, David is the second highest ranked Goblin coach in the world by the NAF. This match would be anything but a gimme and as the picture shows David's custom made pitch was definitely a home field advantage. Zug pounded, Fungus spun, and small green objects hurled through the air. In the end, David's Goblins would pull off the 2-1 victory to knock Bryan's Humans out of contention for the awards. David's Goblins finished 10th and Bryan's team would finish 32nd.

Dennis Anders' Lizardmen drew Ethan Rippon's Count Luthor von Drakenborg led Undead Thumpasaurus Corpses (USA). Dennis had made the unusual decision to go with Guard on his Kroxigor, which meant both teams could effectively field three ST 5 players on the line of scrimmage. This would prove a seesaw battle between the two teams. In the closing turns of the second half, certain victory loomed for Ethan. But the Line of Death claimed another victim as Ethan's Ghoul failed a GFI into the end zone for the game-winning touchdown. The game ended tied 2-2. Because of his low margins of victory and his team's lack of casualties, this tie took Dennis out of the trophy race. Ethan would finish 9th and Dennis finished 11th.

Because of impressive victories with superior margins in both touchdowns and casualties, two teams with two wins and a tie were very much in the running for the top three coaches (both USA). Matt Thompson's Cat Killers (Skaven) and the Matthew Bogart's Malt Liquor

Marauders (Human) were both in contention for Most TDs AND Most CAS going into the fourth game. A decisive win could mean a trophy for one of these coaches. Both coaches wanted the win, which led to an old-fashioned slugfest/street fight (not terms you would normally use for Skaven vs. Humans, eh?). Matt's Skaven fouled frequently and Matthew's Human found several holes in the low Skaven armour. However, this day would

find the boot mightier than the fist. Matt's Skaven would pull off an impressive 2-0 victory including six (!) casualties inflicted compared to the Humans' three. This was made more impressive by the fact that Matthew's Humans would take home the Most Casualties inflicted trophy when awards were presented. Matthew's Humans were placed 17th overall.

The top match at the head table saw Ben's undefeated Skaven face-off against Wolfgang's Undead. Despite both being undefeated, Wolfgang was ahead on game points since Ben's team had inflicted only one casualty in his first three games. He would need to win big (two or more TDs) or win and get more casualties in order to catch Wolfgang's points. This match came down to raw speed just being too much for the Undead to handle. Ben's Skaven hosted four Gutter Runners who were able to stay ahead of the Undead just enough to bring home a 2 to 1 victory. However, this was truly a case of winning the battle but losing the war. Wolfgang had lost by only one TD and had scored more casualties than Ben. Ben and Wolfgang had tied for total tournament game points.

Now here is where the virus that causes GW events and publications to have problems comes into play. Remember the incorrect 1st place at Resurrection in 2002; well the 2003 GenCon Bowl had the same problem. One coach's Sportsmanship points were missed and as Murphy or Nuffle would have it; it affected the final outcome. So the awards shown were those presented at GenCon along with the actual places the coaches finished after the missing Sportsmanship points were included.

Matt Thompson's Skaven Cat Killers took home the first place trophy. Matt's impressive TD and CAS record put him 20 game points ahead before painting and sportsmanship compared to



all the rest of the coaches. After revision, Matt came in second.

Ben Rheame's Skaven Fur Down Under placed second. Ben's Skaven also won the Most Touchdowns trophy with 12 TDs scored in four games. After revision, Ben came in third.

Wolfgang Eigl's Undead Death Raiders placed third. After revision though Wolfgang's team placed first by an impressive 10 point margin (one to two points separated second through fourth after revision). Wolfgang is being sent a first place trophy also.

OTHER IMPORTANT AWARDS:

Matthew Bogart would win the Most Casualties trophy with a Human team without Star Players (huh?) racking up 16 casualties in four games.

Wolf Kluger from Austria would win the Best Sportsmanship trophy with a perfect score of 36 points from his four opponents. Wolfgang and Wolf would also share the Farthest Travelled Award for coming from Austria. Wolf's Humans placed fourth overall... beware Team Austria and Team Spain at big tournaments.

Joe Wojtas would win Best Painted team for his sixth place Orc team, Disciples of Waaah!

David Sutton won the Best Original Pitch award for his very impressive Goblin stadium. Chet Zeshonski tallied the highest score on the very difficult Pub Quiz with 16 out of 20 (The average score was 8). Finally, Phillip Yellott, the youngest player at the GenCon Bowl, who's

Dark Elves went 0-4 for the tournament took home the Wooden Spoon award.

Everyone who finished all four games received a Blood Bowl miniature to add to their collection. A lot of lessons were learned, but a great time was had by all the coaches. The spreadsheet has been improved so no more Sportsmanship points will be missed, the points system is being revised to add more points for winning a game, and next year we

hope to break the North American attendance record again for a Blood Bowl tournament (oh and have more players than the WFB tournament again also... grin!)



Finally, the prizes, supplies, and trophies for the GenCon Bowl cost over 600 USD. I could not have run the tournament without my sponsors who I sincerely thank: Andy Hall with Fanatic/Specialist Games, Tim Huckelbery with Games Workshop US, James Woods (aka Deathwing), www.chaosmailorder.com, Jim Lanier and his Bitter Blood Bowl League of Tampa, FL and www.virtualalchemist.com. Also a sincere thanks goes to the following individuals who helped organize and run the 2003 GenCon Bowl: Odd Man Out player Brian St. James, Jim Lanier, Chet and Rita Zeshonski, Indigo from TBB, and John Kipling Lewis.

Full rankings and rules for the tournament can be found at: <http://www.blood-bowl.net/Gencon.html>. Thanks again... next year... bigger and better guys!



GET THAT BOY A HELMET!

House Rules for Purchasing Additional Armour and Equipment By Steve Weissman

One of the most noticeable differences in the game of Blood Bowl since the old Special Play cards were replaced is the absence of that highly sought-after magic helmet. Wood Elf and Skaven coaches (among others) used to pick magic item cards religiously in the hopes of increasing key players' armour. There was nothing better than trotting your untouchable Gutter Runner out onto the pitch, knowing that even if he did take a hit or two, he was no more apt to be carted off to the dugout than your average player. Also, it was comforting to know there might be a chance of repairing that blitzer whose already got three Skill rolls, but lost a point of AV in a nasty entanglement with an irate mummy. While coaches may still roll the occasional statistic increase so far as Movement, Agility, and Strength, the rules no longer provide a means for toughening players up. To that end, the following are rules for purchasing additional armour for your Blood Bowl players.

Blood Bowl coaches have long sought to find blacksmiths skilled enough to fashion armour that would afford their players additional protection from rampaging ogres and the like without compromising the player's speed and agility with the added weight. Needless to say, these expert metal workers are few and far between. Accordingly, buying your players armour is not cheap. Furthermore, adding additional armour to a player who is already laden down pretty heavily requires intensive labour, costing still more.



Smiths also tend to be a proud lot – they enjoy the money they get paid as well as the free advertising they get from well-known players sporting their creations (ever notice that little swoosh on the back of Borak's shoulder pads!). But most blacksmiths won't provide additional armour for a team already purchasing from a rival smith, and just to ensure that no one can accuse them of manufacturing shoddy, mass-produced equipment, they won't provide armour for the whole team. To represent this, no more than three players on a team may sport this additional armour. Furthermore, no more than one player in each skill position (any position allowing a maximum allotment of 4 or less) may have this armour purchased for them.

Coaches may buy additional armour for players that will increase their AV by 1 point (no more than one increase per player). The cost depends on the starting AV, but the player's value is permanently increased by the standard amount of 30,000 crowns. The cost is determined as follows:

Increasing **AV** from 6 to 7: **30,000 crowns**

Increasing **AV** from 7 to 8: **40,000 crowns**

Increasing **AV** from 8 to 9: **50,000 crowns**

Increasing **AV** from 9 to 10: **60,000 crowns**

Armour for a Big Guy (including Bull Centaurs): +10,000 (After all, that's one large order!)

Now for the fun part... just like the experimental secret weapons rules, the armour addition may not be entirely permanent. Every time a player with this additional armour has his or her armour broken (any time an Injury roll is required), the opposing coach will role an additional D6. On a 6, the newly bought armour is cracked! If this happens, the player's AV immediately reverts back to its original value for the rest of the game.

However, all is not lost. The blacksmiths are not keen on players competing publicly in the broken remains of their work for long, and will hastily scramble to repair the armour after



the game. However, repairs are not free. All cracked armour may be restored after the game has ended for a flat fee of 20,000 crowns regardless of the initial price. If the coach decides not to invest in repairs right away, the player's value still remains 30,000 higher, as the repair option remains available.

Finally, players tend to get used to the extra protection afforded by this additional armour, and are not easily convinced to return to their original values unless they have too. Therefore, a coach may not take armour off one player and give it to another, even if the initial fee is paid again. Additional armour (even if cracked) stays with a player until he or she is killed or retired, so choose wisely!

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Of course, the dedicated coach won't stop at purchasing extra armour for his or her players. Armour smiths and metal workers also provide a variety of other useful (if not entirely legal) pieces of equipment – for a price, of course! The following are some other items that can be bought for players. Each piece is listed with its cost and what it does for the player who wears it. Each piece may only be bought for one player on a team, and the owner's value must be adjusted accordingly. The enhancement provided by the equipment must be used whenever it applies, as the new piece replaces the player's old equipment, and is not something extra, like a secret weapon. Immediately after the equipment is used, the coach must roll one dice. On a roll of 1, the equipment has broken from strenuous use. For each piece, there is a penalty associated with playing with the broken item. As the players aren't quite clever enough to bring to the match their old pair of shoes (for example), the penalty remains in effect until the end of the game. It is important to note that since the Breakage roll is made after the

equipment is used, the successful completion of an action using the equipment stands, even if the equipment breaks in the process. Broken equipment never causes a turnover, nor does it cause a player to fall over.

After the match, broken equipment can be repaired for a standard 30,000 crowns fee. Players with broken equipment can wear their old (regular) pieces in subsequent games if they do not pay for repairs, but still count towards the one player limit while owning the broken item. A second piece of the same equipment may not be bought until the original holder is killed or retired. Equipment may not be transferred to a new player after a death occurs, as most Blood Bowl players prefer to be buried in their uniform. Finally, none of the items presented in this article may be bought for Star Players.

AIR OBERWALD'S SHOES OF SPEED

40,000 gcs

After watching several uncoordinated players lumber across the field, falling well short of the goal line, many coaches have come to the only logical conclusion – it's gotta be the shoes. Coaches may purchase a pair of specially designed aerodynamic cleats for players with a MA value of 6 or less. Players with these shoes are considered to have their MA increased by 1. While a player may, of course, choose not to move their full MA, they must use the extra square afforded by these shoes before using Going-for-its. The Breakage roll is made when this additional square is taken. If the roll is failed, the shoes have split from so much continuous use. The player's MA is then reduced by 1 (-1 to the starting MA) for the remainder of the game, after which they dig their smelly old shoes out of the garbage bin.

BORAK'S NAUGHTY KNEEPAD

30,000 gcs

No one fouls an opponent like the Despoiler himself. Over the years he's learned every dirty tactic in the book, most important of which is that every little bit of equipment helps! His production company puts out a rather innocuous looking kneepad. Although it appears harmless, it conceals a very nasty, rusty spike that the wearer can thrust into an opponent's side while making a foul. Players wearing this item may add an additional +1 to Injury rolls made following a successful Foul Armour roll (this piece of equipment may not be worn by a player who has the Dirty Player skill, as those guys prefer to use their knees in even more creative ways!). The fouling coach

must make the Breakage roll any time the player makes a foul attempt, even if the armour is not broken. If this roll is failed, the spike pops out for all to see. Not only is the kneepad no longer effective after this, but all of the opposing players are now wise to the dirty tactic! Incensed opposing players will make any subsequent fouls on the offending individual with particular viciousness. For the rest of the match, +1 is added to any Injury rolls made after fouls attempted against the player with the kneepad.

HAKFLEM'S STICKY MITTS

50,000 gcs

Ever wonder how Hakflem Shuttlespike became a star catcher without a Catch re-roll to his name? That crazy mutant wouldn't even think of taking to the pitch without a pair... er... quartet... of his patented gloves, each specially treated with some... well, you don't want to know where it comes from. While wearing the gloves, the player may add +1 to all Catch rolls. The coach must make the Breakage roll any time the player attempts to catch a ball, regardless of whether or not the catch is successful. If a player gets two chances to nab a bouncing ball on the same play, two separate breakage rolls would be made. If the roll is failed, all that good sticky stuff has crusted up, making the gloves useless. Forced to play the remainder of the game without any catching gear at all, the player must modify all subsequent catch rolls with a -1 instead of the +1.

HTHARK'S HEFTY HELMET

40,000 gcs

Rumour has it that the secret to how those Chaos Dwarves manage to be carted off the pitch so rarely is in those ridiculous hats they wear. A slightly modified version is available for their more tender-headed – if not taller – Blood Bowl peers. Players wearing this headgear must roll when KO'ed as if they had the Thick Skull trait (on a 4+, they shake off the effects of the KO and remain on the pitch although, stunned). As always, the Breakage roll is made every time the player is KO'ed, regardless of the success of the Thick Skull roll. Unfortunately, with a broken helmet, the player's bare head is now up for bashing. For the remainder of the match, the player is KO'ed on a 7, 8, or 9 on any Injury roll, not just the standard 8 or 9. These helmets may not be purchased for players who already possess the Thick Skull trait. Any more weight up there, and they'd barely be able to support their heads!

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Although not required, these house rules open the possibility for some interesting conversions. With little effort, a Chaos Dwarf hat may be pinned onto bareheaded figures in need of some protection. Spikes may be taken from spare figures or bits of metal and added to existing kneepads. In some cases, bare hands and feet may be replaced with similarly sized gloves and shoes from other models. Although more difficult, other pieces of armour (shoulder pads, chest plates, etc) may be cannibalized from extra models and fitted onto others to represent additional armour. Send in pictures of any cool conversions you do!



COACH'S CORNER

Do you have an opinion? Write in and let us know what's on your mind. Send them to Fanatic@games-workshop.co.uk (with Coach's Corner in the subject line) or write to: Coach's Corner, Fanatic, Games Workshop, Willow Road, Lenton, Nottingham NG7 2WS, United Kingdom.

A NOTE ON INTERCEPTIONS

Hello BB/Fanatic crew.

I just wanted to share a thought I had about the rules for interceptions in Blood Bowl. Ok, two thoughts! You might have heard them dozens of times before, but I don't think I have read them anywhere so I'll share anyway.

Basically, I just think it feels wrong that a Dwarf or Zombie is just as likely to intercept a thrown ball, and gain possession of it, as someone more agile. I can imagine a Mummy jumping for the ball and knocking it out of the air, but not deftly grabbing hold of it as well.

To amend this, I was thinking that its interception could be changed so it only stops the ball, but doesn't automatically give possession. After successfully intercepting the ball, a player would have to roll to catch it as well, with a normal unmodified Agility roll (no tackle zone minuses as the player is in the air). This rule change would mean that any player has a 1/6 chance of blocking the thrown ball, but only a skilled player has a good chance of catching it while doing so. If the ball is not caught, it would just scatter one square as normal, resulting in a turnover for the throwing team. Why make such a change? Because it is more interesting and more realistic, and since interceptions are pretty rare in my experience it doesn't slow down the game at all.

My second thought was that I don't see any reason not to reinstate the 2nd Edition skill of Intercept. It could either give +1 to interception attempts (maybe +1 to catch it as well, if using the above rule) or simply allow the player to re-roll failed interceptions. It would make a fine General or Agility skill I think, perfect for nimble Elf teams and maybe worth giving to Goblin Pogo Stickas.

Like I said, these ideas may be old and discarded, but if you have the time I'd like to hear the arguments against if there are any others than 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'...

Kind regards, and keep up the good work!

Lars

FEEDBACK!

Hi,

You asked for feedback so here's some!

The new Elf models are beautiful, really nice. But I really don't think there was a need for a whole new Elf team. In the Elf article, Jervis says "I want to return Blood Bowl to... the cyber-fantasy look it used to have". But, in his designer's notes he says, "Blood Bowl doesn't really feel like my game any more!"

Sad to say, Jervis, the latter is true. You are like unto a god to many of us for inventing the most amazing game ever made, but the simple fact of the matter is that from 3rd Ed Blood Bowl took off so much and is so widespread that going back just isn't possible any more, even if it were desirable.

So now we have four Elf teams. I just don't think it's necessary, especially as High Elves are looking less and less worthwhile by comparison, and Dark Elves not far behind. Why was there only one High Elf team in the Blood Bowl tournament this year? Partly because their only Star Player is tripe (PLEASE no Star Players next year, it was amazing fun this year but I never want to see Griff Oberwald ever again in my whole life ever!) and partly because they are one of the most expensive teams and one of the most fragile, and now there's a practically identical team not much more fragile (and slightly cheaper as a result) but with plenty more skills.

On the subject of team balance, how did the Lizardmen rules become official??? My GOD they're unfair. SEVEN Strength 4 or above players – that's more than Chaos or Orcs can muster! But there are no Chaos or Orc players that have Movement 8 and Stunty. You can't run away from the Sauri (Same strength and price as a Black Orc! And you can have six of them) and you can't catch the Skinks, or get to them behind a wall of Saurus and Kroxigor. Far from strength and speed being a 'curious yet challenging blend' (which one of the infinite monkeys came up with THAT one), it's

more of an 'unbeatable blend'. (For the record, no, I don't have Lizardmen, but if the rules remain as they are I fully intend getting some for non-Star-Player tournament play. I've never lost a game when I've borrowed them off a friend, in fact never won by less than three, and I've never beat them when I play against them).

Anyway... hope this doesn't sound negative, I love Blood Bowl to (gore-splattered) pieces, it's the closest thing GW have ever made to a perfect game, I'm just hoping it can be pushed even closer.

Cheers,

Andy P

I don't agree that 'going back' is impossible. In fact it's happening. Over the next few years teams will be re-sculpted to fit in with the style we believe that Blood Bowl should be heading towards, that of the 'fantasy sports' look (I never liked Jervis' term of 'cyber-fantasy').

I also don't agree with your take on Lizardmen. I get equally strong letters suggesting they are rubbish and need to toning up. A quick look on the world player rankings sees that the first Lizardmen coach is 8th. So alarm bells certainly aren't ringing yet.

Cheers

One of the Monkeys.

EVEN MORE FEEDBACK!

Hi Jervis!

Just my two cents worth...

Necromantic: Great team, really playable, no changes needed. Just one question: Why does a Werewolf have the Catch skill? Doesn't really make sense...

(Have you ever seen a dog catch a ball or stick? – Ed.)

Vampire: Near to unplayable – with just a few bad rolls, one half of your team is slaughtering the other half. The current Off for a Bite rule is just way too bad – change this somewhere. Also, the Vampire Lord is surely too strong as a normal player, but absolutely senseless as a freebooter...

Khemri: Baah, put it away! A team with just two MA6 players (the rest is slower), nothing better than AG2, Thro-Ras with absolutely unnecessary Pass-Skill (who is supposed to catch the ball?) and four S5-Mummies – this is a team for sadists; you can do nothing else than destroy the enemy team – and even if you manage this (quite difficult with MA3-

Mummies and no support-troops – Skeletons have AV7), you'll probably lose...

Ogre: A bad team in the beginning due to BoneHead; but very strong when experienced – it ok.

Rotters: Nice variation on the standard Chaos team – ok!

Experimental Elves: AG4 players for 60k is just too cheap – with AG4, they easily dodge away from the enemy, and so their low AV of 7 doesn't really come into account – just compare Wood Elves, who also have 'just' AV7, but are obviously the best team in Blood Bowl.

Chaos Pact: Three Big Guys, a Norse Blitzer, two S4-Players, 2 Gobbos for fouling – and a due to the surrounding troops near-to-invincible Gutter Runner – that's just way too good! Chaos Pact is supposed to be a bashing-team – and those teams shouldn't have a MA9 AG4 player.

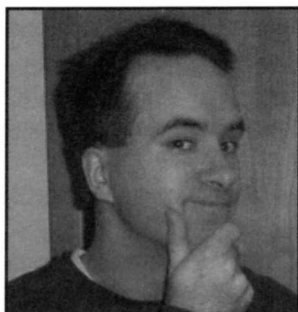
Proposal: No Skaven allies, just two Big Guys; and lower re-rolls to 80k – that would be ok imho.

Old World and Lustria seem better, with Old World noticeable better than Lustria.

On Alliance teams in general: Often players complain over the alliance killer teams – I've played one myself (Lustria) quite a while, and I can't agree. Alliance teams surely get to pick the best players from various races – but they have two main disadvantages: first, their re-rolls are extremely expensive. Second, and much more significant, they cannot make up for lost players in a game! A Skaven team has four Gutter Runners, Norse have four Blitzers, Wood Elves two Wardancers and four Catchers – Alliance teams have just one player on every position! This can prove fatal, especially true for Old World teams who have to rely heavily on their sole Wardancer, but also true for Lustria, who cannot compensate for a Skink, the Saurus or Norse Blitzer gone. Eliminate one important position player, and this position is vacant! It's really annoying if all your position players get niggling injuries due to bashing or ageing – that can destroy your whole match!

To sum it up: alliance teams are (with the noted exception of Chaos Pact) quite balanced and playable – but your success depends on some specific players and positions; you can't make up for their loss – and that's annoying.

Tigger, Germany



MY WORLD

A regular column by Chet Zeshonski

The agenda for the 2003 Rules Review arrived via e-mail earlier this week. By the time you read this, of course, the 2003 Rules Review will have come and gone. In fact, depending on the speed with which Andy publishes this column, the results may already be posted on the Internet.

So why write about an event that will be old news by the time this article hits the stands? Well, as you might imagine, the Rules Review is a large part of 'My World' – or that part of my world that revolves around Blood Bowl, at any rate. Based on my interaction with coaches (both on-line and at GenCon), few non-Rules Committee members know what goes on during the Rules Review. So I'm here to shed a bit of light on it.

As most of you know, the Rules Review takes place each October. What most of you probably don't know is that this means exactly what it says – the process lasts the entire month of October. Contrary to speculation, the seven Rules Committee members don't decide everything in a single-day Internet chat. Instead, we discuss topics back and forth via a private electronic mailing list dedicated exclusively to BBRC content.

Believe it or not, the Rules Review proceeds in a semi-orderly fashion that closely mirrors the format of the published results. We discuss the status of experimental rules one week, changes to the core rules another week, and Q & A on a third pass. As a wrap-up, we discuss general issues (including possible revisions to the Rules Review process) and decide on major topics to carry forward into the next year. These latter issues form the basis of the experimental rules we expect to introduce during the coming year, which will then be added to the discussion in the next Rules Review.

Mind you, events do not always proceed as planned. There are seven BBRC members, so discussion can often become quite intense. We're all enthusiastic coaches and commissioners – and game designers, too, in our own way. Like any group of Blood Bowlers, we have opinions on the way the game 'should' be – opinions that don't always interlock.

Although our discussions occasionally become heated – maybe 'impassioned' is a better word – we do our best to maintain a civil air. And we present a united front on the results that get published to the Blood Bowl Annual. After all, majority rules here: each topic is put to a vote at the end of October. As the game's designer, Jervis has full veto power, but he's only ever put the kibosh on a topic once or twice. (And it was for the best. The man really knows what he's doing!).

Even weeks of hotly debated topics, however, are a picnic these days compared to the first Rules Review, which took place back in 2001. The BBRC had been formed in late April or early May of that year, and the Rules Review began almost immediately – although we hadn't actually established the concept of the 'Rules Review' at that time! Instead, debates raged about the best way to 'fix' Third Edition Blood Bowl. Each of us was running a test league at the time, so myriad options were floated on the water. Some sank; some swam; some hitched up their own outboard motors and raced down the river before they were mercifully torpedoed near Compromise Canal.

In the end, we settled on October as our proper 'Rules Review' month – the better to avoid debating rules all year long! This format has served us well since then, and we have actually become quite proficient at settling our differences and reaching a middle ground when we can (on certain topics, mind you, some of us give no quarter!) We still engage in healthy debates during our 'off months' and we frequently discuss new ideas during the year – especially the status of upcoming or existing experimental rules. But the relegation of 'hard-core' debate to a single month means that we're not nearly as exhausted in 2003 as we were in 2001 and 2002. Consecutively, calm years have seen to that. The importance of this shouldn't be understated, because you really need a fresh eye if you're going to examine the same rules set year after year.

And that's how the Rules Review works!

Chet



Spike!

BLOOD BOWL NEWS AND VIEWS



Here we are again with another issue of Spike! Magazine. Hanging around the player's drinking haunts of Altdorf allows me to get the inside scoop of the state of the game and how players are feeling. I can tell you at the moment there is mutiny in the air. The players are unhappy so talk of a strike is rife. While profits from Blood Bowl increase the players are not seeing any of it. Humans and Dwarfs want more gold, the Elves are demanding more Lynx deodorant varieties, the Vampires are asking for more virgins (although they always ask for more virgins) and the followers of Chaos want more sacrifices. The players union will have it's hands full making these demands and in the meantime it will be the fans that will miss out! More news as it becomes available.

Pierce'd Organ, the Ed-Eater

CRAGGEN COUNTS FEAST ON ELFHEIM EAGLES

Pitch-side report by Uury Rinale

This game had an air of expectation that was almost palatable, in fact some Counts fans and players literally did 'taste' the atmosphere before the game. The two teams had not met very often, and when they had the Eagles have always been outright winners. So it was no surprise that the bookies favourite was the Eagles as the teams prepared for this clash.

The Eagles began by receiving. The ball was easily collected by veteran star thrower Soaren Hightower and passed to Fanafriel Cleardawn before any of the Counts had seemed to move a single yard. The Vampires

were slow to react but they finally did, with Barron Vortias turning into a cloud of bats that then surrounded Cleardawn who not only dropped the ball but also squealed like a girl!

The Vampires soon took full advantage of the Eagles losing possession so quickly in the first half. Vampire Lord, Sir Chistophe Lear took hold of the ball and then, after quenching his first on an unfortunate lineman who had strayed too close to the pitch, proceeded to glide up-field. The mindless thrall linemen stepped into a cage formation around the Lord as he entered the

Eagles' half. The Elven defence was good, and pertinently started to take down Sir Lear's thrall protectors, but a touchdown looked certain, as the Vampire Lord was mere yards from the End Zone. It was then the Elves sprung their first surprise play. An Elfheim mage cast some kind of incantation and a burst of sunlight appeared in front of the Vampire Lord's pale face. In a purple poof of smoke the Lord disintegrated into a small pile of ash as if he'd been farted on by a dragon!



The Elves wasted no time in reclaiming the ball and throwing it down field. This was deftly caught by Cathdrien Waterfall who then ran the ball in for the first touchdown of the match. The Vampire apothecary ran onto the pitch where the pile of ash formally known as Sir Lear sat. After removing a small vial of blood (could have been Rum but I doubt it) he let a few drops drip onto the pile of still smoking ash. As the blood hit the pile there was another small explosion, the smoke cleared the Vampire Lord was standing there brushing what remained of the ash off his cloak.

The Vampires received the ball and play continued, the remainder of the half was unremarkable with the centre of the field turning into a blocking war as the Eagles put up a surprisingly good defence. It was only in the dying minutes of the half that the action took a step up with Count Van Clant charging through the Elf defensive line in an ethereal mist aspect, solidifying just in time to catch an accurate pass thrown by Barron Vortias. The cheeky Elven mage cast the sunlight spell again but this time it had no effect and the Craggen Counts scored the equaliser as the first half whistle blew. The Counts fans went crazy and the Elves looked puzzled. After the game it was found that the Barron was wearing Factor 5000 Sun Block and a pair of jet-black designer shades. The Elves appealed to the forth official but were promptly told that wearing sun cream was not against the rules!

The second half got started after a delightful half time entertainment from the Elfheim Eagle Cheerleaders. It was shame that the squad lost fully half their number, as the Vampires could not contain themselves and happily snacked on them – much to the delight of Counts fans.

The Vampires received the ball. Once more Count Van Clant turned in to mist and floated up field obviously in the hope of repeating last half's play. The ball was thrown but the Eagles had obviously got wise and the infernal touchline mage cast a wind spell blowing the Vampire out of the stadium, even at the time of writing he is yet to be found. The referee finally got wise to the meddling mage and banished him from the touchline. However, this proved to be an unwise move for the ref whose head started to enchantingly grow at a rapid rate. His protestations were greeted by laughter from the crowd as the gas his head filled with gave his voice a 'squeaky' quality. He began to rise until he got twelve foot in the air and then his head went with a satisfying pop. A replacement ref was found and play continued with the Eagles back in control of the game. Soaren Hightower threw the ball once more but it was intercepted by a bat, no doubt Barron Vortais in one of his animal forms. The bat dropped the ball to Sir Lear who dodged and weaved his way into the Elven End Zone to score the second Craggen Counts touchdown. The Vampire Lord feasted on another Elven Cheerleader in celebration.

The Elves attacked, linking together a beautiful play with a string of short and highly accurate passes. The Thralls were confounded as they stumbled from one Elf to the next. It was only the eldritch abilities of Sir Christophe Lear that stopped the Elves from equalising. With a twist of his cloak he multiplied across the pitch and was able to mark every single Elf. The Eagles looked to the ref in exasperation at this clear illegal move but the ref just smiled revealing a set of fangs. Whilst the Elves had been busy with their play the Vampire Lord had sired the ref! The, now Undead, ref declared the spell legal and play continued. This didn't go down well with the Eagle fans and within seconds the ref was perpered with arrows!

The clock was counting down fast now and the Eagles started to look desperate. The final Elven drive was fast and aggressive with only the Barron's icy hypnotic gaze stopping Ibrahim Golddown from scoring. And then the final whistle blew. The game had ended with an historic win for the Craggen Counts!

Elfheim Eagles 1 Craggen Counts 2

A day with Galandril Silverwater

Pin up cheerleader with the Elfheim Eagles



"I wake at dawns first light and do my keep fit routine from my latest CabalVideo, *Silverwater Shows You How*, available in all good shops at a great price!

Then I like to break my fast with a bowl of golden pilo fruits, and a piece of brown toast – keeps me regular. After breakfast I usually meet up with my agent who has all these wonderful offers for me. I have to be careful because there are a lot of naughty minded creatures out there who have some



Photo supplied
courtesy of PlayElf

very strange ideas. These are mainly Goblins but ever since that stalker case I now have a personal bodyguard and never go anywhere without him.

After I have met with my agent I usually meet up with the girls for our daily training session. If it's not a match day we'll go for a light lunch, usually a nice light Elven bread and some starfruit, and then we hit the shops.

The shops can be exhausting so I like to freshen up afterwards before seeing my martial arts trainer. We train in an ancient Elven art, it really mystical and everything I love it!

If I've got time I then answer my fan mail I get so much. My Goblin and Dwarf fans can be very graphic some times but they're still my fans!

I usually go out for dinner, recently I've started eating at Prince Moranion's new restaurant but then I bumped into Lord Borak one time and he was so crude! I told him he's such a bully and he admitted it and now we're great friends!

After I get back home, it's time for bed – I like to climax early so the light goes out and I'm sound asleep."

Galandril's new autobiography, *My Life's Great* by Galandril Silverwater, is available from all good bookshops now.



ASK LORD BORAK!

**Spike! Magazine's very own Agony Uncle
answers your queries**

Dear Lord Borak,

Last week I was playing against a Chaos Dwarf team, and at the sight of their masculine hats I felt a strange glow come over me. I keep having visions of what I might do with a hat like that. My ball boys are beginning to suspect something is up... what should I do?

Prince Moranion

Dear Prince Moron,

A Chaos Dwarf helmet would be a big step down from that conical winged monstrosity you are wearing now. It makes Griff's helmet look normal for a change. My first suggestion is to stop being such a sissy, but since that unlikely you could just cut off your head.

Always here for you,

Borak

Dear Lord Borak

My name is Tom Wart In Tooth, I live next door to you. I have often seen you in the village bakery and have paused to admire your new bicycle on several occasions. I'm writing to complain about the amount of noise your Chaos friends seem to make every Friday night after the local Blood Bowl game has finished, on the way home from the Troll and Broadsword public house.

May I remind you that this is a refined neighbourhood and we are glad to see such a distinguished person as yourself, but I don't think we need your friends honking and bleating through out all hours of the night.

I'm a reasonable Halfling, so I would appreciate that these shenanigans stop promptly.

Tom Wart In Tooth

Dear TWIT,

Refined neighbourhood? I haven't seen a single impaled Elf or road of skulls since I moved into this dump. I have put up with your constant barbeques, gardening, and afternoon teas for two months now and I have yet to see a single virgin sacrifice around here. Furthermore, I don't appreciate your tree growing on my property. It is covered in horrible green things and attracts these strange flying creatures that emit a deafening chirping noise. As for the late night antics, if

you all would sleep during the day like a normal person it would be much livelier around here. If I hear "Good morning Mr. Borak!" while I am passed out on your lawn at 10:30 again I will be very upset.

*Change the I for an A in your name,
Borak*

Dear Lord Borak,

Last week I was playing against a Dwarf team, and couldn't help but laugh at the sight of their large long beards and stubby legs. Do you laugh at Dwarfs as well?

Beardless

Dear Beardless,

Of course I laugh at Dwarfs. They're short people with overly big hands and fingers like sausages.

Don't shave near me,

Borak

Dear Lord Borak,

Our local baker makes a fine selection of pies every morning. I spend ages staring into the shop window trying to decide which flavour pie to buy. Can you help?

Mr Pastry

Dear Mr Pastry,

You should taste them all - try before you buy. There's nothing I like better (well, alright there's killing and maiming but other than that) than sticking my fingers in to hot pie. Once you've stuck your fingers in them all choose the one that tasted best. Warning: this may upset the baker.

I like cherry,

Borak

Feeling the heavy weight of existential malaise? Blinded by rays of happiness and sunshi Can't find anything decent to watch on Channel 5? Then perhaps you need to ask Lord Borak the Despoiler a question of your own! Send your questions to askborak@tbbf.org and he will think about answering your pathetic plea for help in his next column. And don't forget to visit Ask Lord Borak online at: <http://www.tbbf.org/>



The Chaos team, lead by the Minotaur enters the pitch



The three new Undead cheerleaders, which one do you fancy?

BLOOD BOWL™

MINOTAUR

A new Big Guy

THE 'BBB' LEAGUE

Report of the latest Head Office League
by Andy Hall

THE HIGH ELF PLAYBOOK

Team tactics

by Dean Maki

GET THAT BOY A HELMET

Fun House Rules

by Steve Weissman

SPIKE! MAGAZINE

This issue: More Lord Borak!



The Minotaur prepares to sack the Amazon thrower



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