

RED CARDS & RULEKEEPERS

As the ultimate arbiters on the Blood Bowl pitch, Referees have the last say when it comes to sending off misbehaving players. Here we present new rules for using Blood Bowl Referee models in your own games. Lace up your boots and prepare for kick-off!



Referees. Depending on your particular stance, they are either the stalwart and noble lawkeepers of the sacred rules of Nuffle or a monumental pain in the backside who can't help sticking their nose in whenever a player 'gets a bit rough'. Blood Bowl Referees have the thankless task of trying to keep the game within their own loose interpretation of the rules (some Refs have looser interpretations than others, of course) before it inevitably descends into the usual mix of violence, bloodshed and sheer madness. Poor Refs!

Of course, each Referee has their own unique take on the organised mayhem that is Blood Bowl. Some like to follow the sacred writings of Nuffle to the very letter, implementing the rules as they are written to the extreme and pointing out each section and clause whenever they make a ruling. Others like to call the game as they believe the Blood Bowl laws were intended, tweaking the rules to suit their own style or simply to make sure the crowd gets the best value for entertainment. And then there are those

Refs who see their profession as a get-rich-quick scheme and will happily take bribes from any coach or player that wants to see a particular call go their way – or for the Ref to turn a blind eye to some of the more *ahem* questionable tackles that happen on the pitch!

There are currently some wonderfully characterful models for Blood Bowl Referees, though no actual rules exist for using them within your own games. Until now! Over the next few pages, you will find optional rules for using your Referee models in your Blood Bowl games, as well as rules for some of the more well-known Referees to grace the pitch and uphold Nuffle's laws. League commissioners and tournament organisers are free to use these in their own events if they wish.

So, sit back, grab yourself a cup of tea (or bottle of Bloodweiser), have your favourite red card at hand, and get ready to learn all about how to use Referees in your own games of Blood Bowl!

REFEREE RULES

The rules presented in this article are designed to give coaches an alternative way to represent the various Referees and officials that oversee a game of Blood Bowl. If you decide to use the rules presented here, then the rules for being Sent-off for committing a Foul action (as per page 63 of the Blood Bowl rulebook) will be replaced by an alternative version found later on in this article.

CHOOSING A REF

When using these rules, coaches will need to choose which Referee they are going to use. This should be agreed on by both players or rolled for randomly. At the end of this article, you will find rules for two unique Referees, Redkur Forgebeard and Elnos Lawkeeper, each with their own set of characteristics, Skills, Traits and special rules. However, if you wish to use a generic Referee in your game, then use the following characteristics instead:

Characteristic	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV
Referee	5	2	3+	-	8+

Generic Referees have no additional Skills, Traits or special rules.

DEPLOYING THE REF

When setting up for a Drive, the Referee is always deployed after both teams have set up but before the kick-off. The Referee is deployed in the kicking team's half and must be placed adjacent to a Sideline and as close to the Line of Scrimmage as possible. The coach of the kicking team may decide which Sideline the Referee is deployed adjacent to.

MOVING THE REF

The Referee will always move after both teams have taken a turn – for example, initially, the Referee would move after the receiving team and the kicking team have both had their turn 1, and then again after the receiving team and the kicking team have had their turn 2, and so on.

When the Referee has their turn, they will try to move towards where the action is thickest. To move the Referee, place the Throw-in template over the Referee, pointing towards either Sideline or End Zone, in a direction towards the ball. Then, roll a D6 and move the Referee one square in that direction. Repeat this process a number of times equal to the Referee's MA. If a Referee would move into a square containing a player or the ball, then they do not move into that square and their turn will immediately end. The Referee will ignore all Tackle Zones when they move, and they do not have a Tackle Zone themselves.

Referees never provide assists of any kind, and if the ball would land in the square they occupy, then it will automatically scatter from that square.

BEING SENT-OFF

As we mentioned earlier, being Sent-off for committing a Foul action works slightly differently when there is a Referee physically on the pitch. Essentially, a Foul action committed whilst the Referee is nearby will be much easier for them to spot. Conversely, Foul actions committed further away from the Referee will be less likely to be spotted, if noticed at all. A particularly sneaky player might be able to get away with a number of devious Fouls if the Referee is elsewhere on the pitch!





Whenever a player makes a Foul action, they will not be Sent-off if they roll a double for the Armour roll or a double for the Injury roll. Instead, after the Foul action has been made, count the number of squares between the player committing the Foul action and the Referee, and roll a D6. The chart below states what score on the D6 will result in the player being Sent-off by the Referee. As you might expect, the closer the Foul was to the Referee, the more likely the player will be Sent-off!

Squares to the Referee	Score to be Sent-off
1	2+
2-3	3+
4-5	4+
6-7	5+
8-9	6+

If the Foul action was committed 10 or more squares away from the Referee, then the player will not be Sent-off at all – the Referee is clearly too preoccupied with what is going on around them!

Players that are Sent-off in this manner may still Argue the Call as normal.



BLOCKING THE REF

Naturally, some players don't take too kindly to the Referee 'interfering' with the more violent aspects of the game. In fact, they take issue with some rulekeeper telling them who they can and can't punch and that it's not fair to step on a downed opponent. It's not uncommon for such players to 'mistime' a tackle and instead take down the Ref, which itself often leads to an all-out brawl when the rest of the players realise there is no longer a killjoy Referee to get in the way of some proper, bone-crunching plays!

Players from either team may declare a Block action on the Referee in the same manner as they would against an opposition player, which may result in the Referee being Stunned, KO'd or even killed! Openly blocking a Referee isn't without risk, however; a player that does so may find that the Referee hits back. Regardless, brazenly breaking the rules and putting the boot in on the Referee will undoubtedly result in a red card – if the Referee is still standing to show one, of course!

Any player that makes a Block action, Foul action, Stab Special action or Chainsaw Attack Special action against a Referee will automatically be Sent-off if the action does not result in a Stunned, KO'd or Casualty! result on the Referee. Players Sent-off in this way may never Argue the Call.

If a Referee is pushed into the crowd, then they do not risk Injury by the Crowd like a normal player – though you should still make an Armour roll to see if the Referee is affected by the initial Block action, if required. Instead, if the Referee has not been Stunned, KO'd or removed as a Casualty, then they will re-enter the pitch from a Sideline as close to the Line of Scrimmage as possible, in a place chosen by the coach whose team did not push the Referee off the pitch. If the Referee's armour was not broken when they were pushed off the pitch, then the player that pushed them off will be Sent-off as normal. This does not apply if the Referee was pushed off the pitch as the result of a Chain Push.

Whilst a Referee is off the pitch, Stunned, KO'd or removed as a Casualty, players cannot be Sent-off for any reason until the Referee is back on the pitch. This may even mean that players with the Secret Weapon trait are not Sent-off at the end of a drive!

REFEREE PROFILES

Much like Star Players, some Referees have become synonymous with the game of Blood Bowl and can be just as well known as some players for their antics or sometimes 'questionable' refereeing style.

Here we present the rules for two unique Referees (one Elf and one Dwarf) you can use in your games.

Characteristic	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV
Elnos Lawkeeper	6	2	3+	-	7+

Skills & Traits: Dodge

Special Rules:

"Err, I think you'll find ..." – Players that are Sent-off by Elnos Lawkeeper cannot Argue the Call under any circumstances.

Characteristic	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV
Redkur Forgebeard	4	3	3+	-	8+

Skills & Traits: Block

Special Rules:

By the Book – Players that commit a Foul action suffer a -1 penalty to the D6 when rolling to see if they are Sent-off for being near Redkur Forgebeard.



Elnos Lawkeeper



Redkur Forgebeard



Hopefully, this article has given you some extra ways to get the most from your games of Blood Bowl and provided you with another exciting option to use in your leagues. Referees can certainly add that extra level of depth and strategy to your game and overall are a lot of fun! Will you choose to follow the rules (at least while the Ref is watching), or will you try to take them out of the game so that your players can wreak carnage on the pitch without risk of reprisal? For your gaming convenience, the rules for Elnos Lawkeeper and Redkur Forgebeard can also be found on the tear-out card included with this issue.