

BLOOD BOWL[®]



SPIKE!

THE FANTASY FOOTBALL JOURNAL

ISSUE
12



SPECTACULAR SHOW-OFFS!
THE IMPERIAL NOBILITY STRUT THEIR STUFF ACROSS THE
PITCHES OF THE OLD WORLD!

CATASTROPHIC CARNAGE!
THE BLACK ORCS HIT THE PITCH - AND ANYONE WHO GETS
IN THEIR WAY!

ISSUE TWELVE!

EVEN MORE OFFICIAL CONTENT FOR THE GAME OF FANTASY FOOTBALL!



GREETINGS SPORTS FANS!

Welcome, dear readers, to the pages of the longest running sports journal in the Old World. Join us this issue as we journey to the top of society within the Empire, and to the stony wilderness of the Badlands, to uncover the secrets of two of the newest sensations in Nuffle's sacred game. Though these teams may be fresh on the scene, they can hold their own against those who have been playing Blood Bowl for years!



In this issue, we have travelled to not one, but two parts of the Old World to get the scoop on two up-and-coming types of teams within the great game of Blood Bowl.

First, we travel to the wealthiest parts of the Empire to go behind the scenes with the Imperial Nobility. Founded and owned by the upper echelons of Empire society who have dreamt of owning, or playing for, their own teams, Imperial Nobility teams have begun to spring up wherever an aspiring noble has enough desire, stubbornness, and, of course, disposable cash at their fingertips!

Next, we journey to the Badlands to discover quite what all the ruckus surrounding these new Black Orc teams is all about. After the mass exodus of Black Orcs from Orc teams following the NAF's collapse, instigated by DUMBO (Da Union of Malcontent Black Orcs) of course, they began to form their own teams – and we here at *Spike! Journal* have all the information you need to know as to just what makes them tick!

Stashed within this issue are details of some of the better-known Imperial Nobility and Black Orc teams,

as well as exposés on the most famous examples: the Bögenhafen Barons and the Thunder Valley Greenskins. We delve into the (short) histories of these two teams, from their founding in the years following the collapse of the NAF, their desire to prove themselves worthy, all the way to their famous showdown in the final of the XL Blood Bowl – which has gone down in the annals of Blood Bowl history as a legendary match!

Though these teams may not have existed for long enough to have cultivated any true stars of their own, they are certainly more than able to buy them for their rosters. We take a look at the careers of two true Blood Bowl legends that have recently joined the ranks of our featured teams: Griff Oberwald and Varag Ghou-Chewer.

As well as these exciting articles, all our regular features are here as well. Hackspit Quillchewer sits down with self-professed 'fitness guru', Gurgnie Shwarzenorc, to delve into his, frankly insane, training regime in Chat with the Rat. Mindy Piewhistle has been investigating rumours that a high-profile noble may not be quite as charitable and good-natured as he may seem. Coffin Corner returns

with more hilarious deaths, maimings and fatalities; and if that wasn't enough, the issue climaxes with Mighty Blow! drawn by 'Highborn' Christian Schwager and written by Nick 'Da Krumpa' Kyme.

So readers, sit down with a nice mug of hot leaf juice, or a tasty cup of Goblin Brew, and enjoy this jam-packed issue of *Spike! Journal*!

**Lord Baltazär Krüssenfalt
Schweiger III**

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HIGHBORN HERALDRY

Blood Bowl isn't just about winning games. It's about improving your social standing, proving your superiority over the lower classes, and generally trying to gather as much wealth as you can – at least, if you listen to the owners of Imperial Nobility teams, that is! In this issue, *Spike! Journal* has been invited to sample the legendary hospitality of the Imperial nobility, and to go behind the scenes of these, relatively new, teams to see how they approach the game of Blood Bowl, and just where all that money their owners have comes from...



Imperial Nobility teams are a rather recent sight on Blood Bowl pitches, having only really come into existence following the collapse of the NAF. Since then, the regulations and restrictions upon owning a Blood Bowl team have been drastically reduced, making it easy for any budding owner to start up their own Blood Bowl team. This has seen numerous contenders sprouting up in recent years, and this is particularly true within the Empire.

Gold talks in the Empire, and with much looser restrictions on team ownerships, wealthy nobles have been able to found their own teams utilising their large reserves of cash. Whilst many of these exist purely as professional outfits, there are plenty of other reasons Imperial nobles desire to have a team of their own. Some simply want to be steeped in glory, their players winning trophies and titles that will be envied across the Old World. To do so they will funnel huge sums of gold into these teams, buying the best equipment and signing top players from elsewhere to lucrative contracts, provided they come good on winning games.

Other nobles see Blood Bowl as nothing more than a good investment opportunity, and a great way to increase their already sizable incomes even further. Shrewd entrepreneurs become owners of under-performing and at risk Blood Bowl teams before giving them a significant cash injection to improve their fortunes. Whilst this is a gamble, and doesn't always pay off (*Just ask the Grenzstadt Granddukes! – Ed*), when this does work out, the nobles will find themselves inundated with investors wanting to provide the team with extra gold in return for some of the profits. Some of these owners are then able to sell successful teams for huge sums of gold, enough to live out the rest of their lives in luxury.

Not all wealthy noblemen of the Empire have accumulated their fortunes through the more *ahem* *traditional* means; in fact some crime lords will use Blood Bowl as a way of hiding their 'hard-earned' cash from the taxmen. There have been numerous instances of an owner moving their finances to and from their team's treasury in order to 'balance' the books. Sometimes, a team that seems to be running low on funds will even sell their stadium to their owner in order to record a profit. Whilst this may not actually break any rules, it is seen by many as a show of poor sportsmanship – not that the noblemen in charge care much about that!

Not all Imperial Nobility teams are formed simply for financial gain. Sometimes, a noble will have been a die-hard fan of the game who simply wanted a team of their own, and they have more than enough gold to make their fantasies a reality. Others want to become Blood Bowl heroes like the players they grew up watching, and so will buy a team just to become a player themselves. Though they may often not be very good, they have enough to pay the very best coaches and bodyguards to help them improve on the pitch, and to make it difficult for opposition players to harm them as they seek to etch their names into the annals of Blood Bowl history!

Though they have only been around for a short time, Imperial Nobility teams have really begun to leave their mark on the Blood Bowl world. After all, being able to buy the best players, stadiums, teams, and even fans, will ensure that a team rises quickly through the leagues and towards glory. The disposable cash these teams have makes sure that they are always able to replace any player that is no longer fit for purpose, and the huge pay cheques they offer to players makes sure that they are never short of new talent.

POSITIONS

IMPERIAL RETAINER LINEMEN

The core of any Imperial Nobility team is made up of its Imperial Retainer Linemen; those brave souls who get paid a large sum of money to stand on the line of scrimmage and take the hits whilst their lords and masters play out their own fantasies as heroes of the gridiron.

That doesn't mean that these players are not talented – far from it! Many Imperial Retainer Linemen are former players that have come out of retirement for one last shot at glory (*Or more likely a rather sizeable pay cheque! – Ed*), whilst others are those young up-and-comers given the chance to prove their mettle by playing alongside the, self-proclaimed, stars of their teams.

Some nobles will even have their sons and daughters play as linemen in order to toughen them up and prove themselves worthy of the households they have been born into. Should they succeed in this regard, then they can look forward to continuing the life of wealth and prosperity they have become accustomed to.



IMPERIAL THROWERS

As you might expect, it is the role of the throwers to distribute the ball to the right players at the right time in order to score a touchdown. This is a very important job in any team and is often given to the star player, and so it should come as little surprise that many noblemen demand that they become their team's first choice thrower in order to accrue as much glory for themselves as they can. This often leads to an inexperienced noble fumbling many passes, hand-offs, and simple catches as they attempt to offload the ball in the most spectacular way possible!

However, if they put in the effort to train and learn the skills needed, some nobles become very adept at throwing the ball. This change is often brought about after the nobles in question have made a public fool of themselves on the pitch with a wildly inaccurate throw that has cost their team a win. With as much time to train as they could ask for, once a noble finally admits that they are not perfect and need to practise, it doesn't take long for them to start to show the skills and natural talent that Imperial Nobility teams are becoming renowned for across the Old World.

NOBLE BLITZERS

Whilst many nobles wish to make themselves the team's star thrower, others prefer to use their sturdy frames and agility for catching the ball and then darting through the opposition's defence for the touchdown. Often the quickest players in an Imperial Nobility team, it is the job of the blitzers to race across the pitch to catch a ball thrown to them, or to tackle any opposition players making a beeline for the end zone.

As it is usually blitzers who score the majority of touchdowns, they soon become fan favourites of Imperial Nobility teams and are heralded as star players by their followers; something that inflates the nobles' ego and sense of self-importance even further! With blitzers being such pivotal players, coaches will instruct the rest of the team to protect them at all costs; for not only are the blitzers instrumental to the team's success, but without them there is a good chance the rest of the team won't get paid at all!

BODYGUARDS

When a nobleman wishes to fulfil their dreams and play Blood Bowl, they will often hire bodyguards to protect them on the pitch.

The sole purpose of the bodyguards is to fend off any opposition player that would stand in between their lord and their dreams of becoming a sporting hero. Bodyguards will throw themselves in front of any such player that comes thundering towards their employer, wrestling them to the ground so that the noble can race through the defence and score a touchdown.

Of course, being a bodyguard is a dangerous business, and these players will often have to stand in front of the likes of Ogres, Trolls and Minotaurs in order to allow their liege to escape with the ball. It doesn't seem to bother them too much though, for players who take on the role of a bodyguard within an Imperial Nobility team are handsomely paid for their services. Nobles have found that, given the right amount of cash, any player can be persuaded to be their Bodyguard. After all, everyone has a price...

OGRES

The Ogres that play for Imperial Nobility teams are unlike those that play in the mountain leagues or as part of full-blown Ogre teams. Instead, they have lived amongst the people of the Empire for many years, learning their customs and enjoying quiet lives. That said, it doesn't take much to persuade these Ogres to take up Blood Bowl; they are rather fond of violence after all, and nobles who desire to recruit them have plenty to offer a talented Ogre.

Kitted out in the very best gear that gold can buy, an Ogre on an Imperial Nobility team is a frightening prospect for any team to face. Much like the team's bodyguards, the Ogre's primary role is to ensure that no opposition player can reach the nobleman who has the ball and is gunning for yet another touchdown; though they are considerably better at it than the rest of the team. That isn't to say that Ogres are the brightest of creatures; far from it. In fact there have been instances where an Imperial Ogre has momentarily forgotten which side they are on and allowed their noble to eat a crunching tackle from the opposition – something that will usually result in the docking of a month's extra food rations!



QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS & TRAITS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-12	Imperial Retainer Linemen	45,000	6	3	4+	4+	8+	Fend	G	AS
0-2	Imperial Throwers	75,000	6	3	3+	3+	9+	Pass, Running Pass	GP	AS
0-2	Noble Blitzers	105,000	7	3	3+	4+	9+	Block, Catch	AG	PS
0-4	Bodyguards	90,000	6	3	3+	5+	9+	Stand Firm, Wrestle	GS	A
0-1	Ogre	140,000	5	5	4+	5+	10+	Bone Head, Loner (4+), Mighty Blow (+1), Thick Skull, Throw Team-mate	S	AG
0-8 team re-rolls: 70,000 gold pieces each									Tier: 2	
Special Rules: Old World Classic									Apothecary: YES	

ELIGIBLE STAR PLAYERS



Deeproot
Strongbranch



Frank 'N' Stein



Grak



Crumbleberry



Griff Oberwald



Grim Ironjaw



Grombrindal,
the White Dwarf



Helmut Wulf



Karla Von Kill



Mighty Zug



Morg 'N' Thorg



Rumbelow
Sheepskin

The rules for Griff Oberwald can be found later in this issue. The rules for the other Star Players listed above can be found in other Blood Bowl publications.



FAMOUS IMPERIAL NOBILITY TEAMS

THE OSTERMARK DUKES

When the Ostermark Bulls folded following the collapse of the NAF, ownership of the team was bought up by the Hergwig brothers using their family's considerable fortune. However, as is the case with many families, the brothers constantly argued, mainly about how to run the team (*Both wanted to be the star player you see – Ed*). Eventually, the team was split between the two of them forming rival teams: the Ostermark Nobles and the Ostermark Dukes. Whilst both teams enjoyed some success in the Imperial Nobility leagues, it was the Dukes who rose far higher than their rivals. Though trophies are highly sought after by both teams, what is far more important is the yearly Ostermark Derby where both teams play for pride and, more importantly, which of the brothers gets to sit at the head of the table at important family dinners!

THE AVERLAND EARLS

Since their founding in 2496, the Averland Earls have achieved a reputation as a fair and sporting team of men and women who will never stray from the rules and regulations of Nuffle's sacred game. Naturally, this has made them a divisive team within Blood Bowl; some fans enjoy watching the Earls play to the exact letter of the law, whilst others feel that obeying the rules is just not in the spirit of the game at all! Such play doesn't always yield the best results though; there have been numerous games where the Earls have let the opposition score a touchdown just because they felt that they broke a rule accidentally in the previous drive!

THE HOCHLAND HIGHBORNS

Even compared to the pompous attitudes prevalent amongst most of the Imperial nobility, the Hochland Highborns are considered to be one of the most arrogant teams to play Blood Bowl. They believe themselves above the other races that play the game, and flat out refuse to play any team that isn't formed from the upper echelons of the Empire. Quite where their pride and high opinion of themselves stems from isn't quite known, but it certainly can't be from their results on the pitch – they are usually rooted to the bottom of the Imperial Nobility leagues as they will often decide that their opposition is beneath them, and they would rather not play than mingle with the lower classes!

THE WISSENLAND VISCOUNTS

Even in their short history, the Wissenland Viscounts have encountered prosperity as well as near-bankruptcy. In their first season, the Viscounts reached the semi-finals of the Imperial Nobility leagues; however, it was this that led to their sharp downfall. Spending far more gold than he could afford, the Viscounts' owner made a number of seriously bad investments: buying numerous high profile players who ultimately didn't live up to their reputation, and replacing the team's perfectly good equipment with more expensive, but ultimately flawed, versions on a regular basis. This led to continuous losses for the Viscounts, leaving them on the verge of ruin. Yet every storm must pass, and the Viscounts are once more on the rise. The appointment of a new head coach from Lustria may have raised a few eyebrows at first, but its extraordinary methods and tactics are seeing the blue and white clad Viscounts become a force to be reckoned with once more within the Imperial Nobility leagues.



THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS



Though relatively new, Imperial Nobility teams are becoming a staple of competitions across the Old World. Perhaps the most famous of these are the Bögenhafen Barons who have exploded onto the scene since their inception only a few short years ago; and have even managed to reach the final of the prestigious Blood Bowl! So, dear readers, in the wake of the recent truly thrilling final, *Spike! Journal* sits down to recount the tale of this, now famous, team from the very beginning...

With a huge fanbase that many teams can only dream of, and the feverish passion and utter devotion that their fans have, you'd be forgiven for thinking that the Bögenhafen Barons had a rich Blood Bowl provenance, one that stretches back many years. Yes, they have a huge stadium, a roster containing some of the best players that money can buy, and their name is held with high reverence amongst pundits and players alike. So surely they have been around for many years, right? Well, not quite...

The truth is that the team has only existed for six years, however, in that time they have managed to cement themselves as a powerhouse of the Nobility leagues. The Bögenhafen Barons were founded in 2494 by Dietrich Lugendörf, a lifelong Blood Bowl fan who had wanted to own a team ever since his own career was cut short by injury. With the funding of Lugendörf behind them the Barons joined the Nobility leagues, performing admirably in their debut season and catching the eye of a number of potential investors.

Over the next couple of years, results began to steadily improve for the Barons. Whilst other nobles injected their entire fortunes for a quick shot at glory, only to see themselves bankrupted upon failure to regain their spent wealth, Lugendörf had invested wisely into the Barons; hiring quality players at an early stage in their careers at

a low cost, and then allowing them to become the stars of the team rather than simply buying the latest player to shine on a Blood Bowl pitch. This was helped by the Barons' head coach, Tobias Rheinlich; a former blitzter for the Reikland Reavers who had demonstrated a great aptitude for grasping complex tactics and plays.

The stability of the Bögenhafen Barons was rewarded in 2497 when a group of mysterious investors from the east bought a 50% stake in the team. These investors injected huge sums of cash into the team, which was spent improving facilities, buying key players, and spreading the name of the Bögenhafen Barons across the Old World. This investment was an immediate success, with the Barons winning the Imperial Nobility leagues that same year. Their dominance in the Imperial Nobility leagues saw the Barons invited to some of the most prestigious competitions in the sport; including the Chaos Cup and *Spike! Magazine* Trophy. However, with the exception of some minor leagues and cups, the Barons were unable to make waves in these competitions and so Lugendörf set about looking for a solution.

In 2499, the Barons caused the coup of the decade when they signed Griff Oberwald from the Reikland Reavers. Griff had just won the Blood Bowl with the Reavers, and it was fully expected that he would resign with them again. Griff's transfer was the talk of the Old World and was discussed at length on almost every show on Cabalvision for weeks. With Griff as their captain, the Barons were not only invited to compete in the Blood Bowl, but they also won the entire competition; defeating another new team, the Thunder Valley Greenskins, in the final.

Having established themselves as a dominant force within the world of Blood Bowl, and having serious financial backing, the sky's the limit for the Barons; and fans are ready to see if they can repeat their glorious season once more!

TEAM PROFILE: THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS

TEAM COLOURS: Burgundy, white and gold

OWNER: Dietrich Lugendörf and the mysterious eastern investors

HEAD COACH: Tobias Rheinlich

PLAYERS: Imperial Retainer Linemen, Imperial Throwers, Noble Blitzers, Bodyguards, Ogres.

TEAM HONOURS: Nobility League Winners 2497, 2499, 2500; Imperial Invitational Runners-up 2497; Ostland Open Winners 2498; Imperial Invitational Winners 2499; Blood Bowl Winners 2500.

HALL OF FAME: Griff Oberwald, Lietpold Hegunden, Jorge Bergen

SPIKE! TEAM RATING: 141

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

2494 Dietrich Lugendörf founds the Bögenhafen Barons, using money left to him by his father, and the gold he has accumulated from his business selling Accidental Ogre Insurance to Halflings. Showing unusual restraint to not try to be the hero himself, Dietrich Lugendörf hires Tobias Rheinlich as head coach. The team flourishes under Rheinlich's leadership, and they begin racking up wins in the Imperial Nobility leagues. Several pundits and experts begin to take note, and some even claim that the Barons will be the ones to watch in the coming years.

2497 Following a huge investment from a group of mysterious eastern businessmen, the Bögenhafen Barons immediately see the benefits of increased funding; winning the Imperial Nobility leagues the same year. This success attracts a new wave of sponsors wanting to be associated with this new and 'in' team, and deals with the likes of McMurty's Burger Emporium, Air Oberwald, and Blitzer's Best see the Barons' popularity shoot up. Some Barons games even begin to be shown on Cabalvision after its owners have a meeting with the heads of the network, who all seem to leave with heavier pockets than they had before!

2499 The Blood Bowl world is rocked when Reikland Reavers star player Griff Oberwald turns down a new contract and signs with the Bögenhafen Barons instead. Details of Griff's contract are kept a close secret, though there are plenty of rumours about the wages he is being paid. Some pundits claim that the Bögenhafen Barons must have some hold over Griff and blackmailed him to join their team (*perfectly legitimate if you ask me! – Ed*), whilst those close to him claim he simply wants a fresh challenge. Regardless, Griff begins preparing for life as the star player of the Bögenhafen Barons.

2500 Following a hugely successful year, in which they won their third Imperial Nobility leagues title, the Bögenhafen Barons reach the final of the XL Blood Bowl. Having beaten the likes of the Athelorn Avengers, Grudge Bearers and Chaos All-stars en route, the Barons are faced with the Thunder Valley Greenskins, captained by the legendary Varag Ghou-Chewer, in the final. After a close game, the Barons manage to defeat the Greenskins 3-1, with Griff Oberwald scoring twice to lead the Bögenhafen Barons to lift the grandest prize of them all!



HALL OF FAME:

THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS

2499-2500 SQUAD

NAME	POSITION	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS
Griff Oberwald	Star Player	7	4	2+	3+	9+	Block, Consummate Professional*, Dodge, Fend, Loner (3+), Sprint, Sure Feet
Lietpold Hegunden	Noble Blitzzer	7	3	2+	4+	9+	Block, Catch, Dodge
Mikhael Baxöff	Noble Blitzzer	7	3	3+	4+	9+	Block, Catch, Side Step, Sprint
Friedrich Herbenhoff	Imperial Thrower	6	3	3+	3+	9+	Accurate, Leader, Pass, Running Pass, Strong Arm
Jorge Bergen	Bodyguard	6	3	3+	5+	9+	Guard, Stand Firm, Wrestle
Heimlich Klöpff	Bodyguard	6	3	3+	5+	9+	Guard, Mighty Blow (+1), Stand Firm, Wrestle
Türgen Beckenheim	Bodyguard	6	3	3+	5+	9+	Block, Stand Firm, Wrestle
Streya Gürgen	Bodyguard	6	3	3+	5+	9+	Stand Firm, Wrestle
Jurgen Breinhoven	Imperial Retainer Lineman	6	3	4+	4+	8+	Fend, Tackle
Maria Schergen	Imperial Retainer Lineman	6	3	4+	4+	8+	Fend, Strip Ball
Piotr Reikgürden	Imperial Retainer Lineman	6	3	4+	4+	8+	Fend, Tackle
Hanna Drörglich	Imperial Retainer Lineman	6	3	4+	4+	8+	Fend
Dominick Schrünger	Imperial Retainer Lineman	6	4	4+	4+	8+	Fend
Orgrug Kneecapper	Ogre	5	5	4+	5+	10+	Break Tackle, Bone Head, Loner (4+), Mighty Blow (+1), Thick Skull, Throw Team-mate

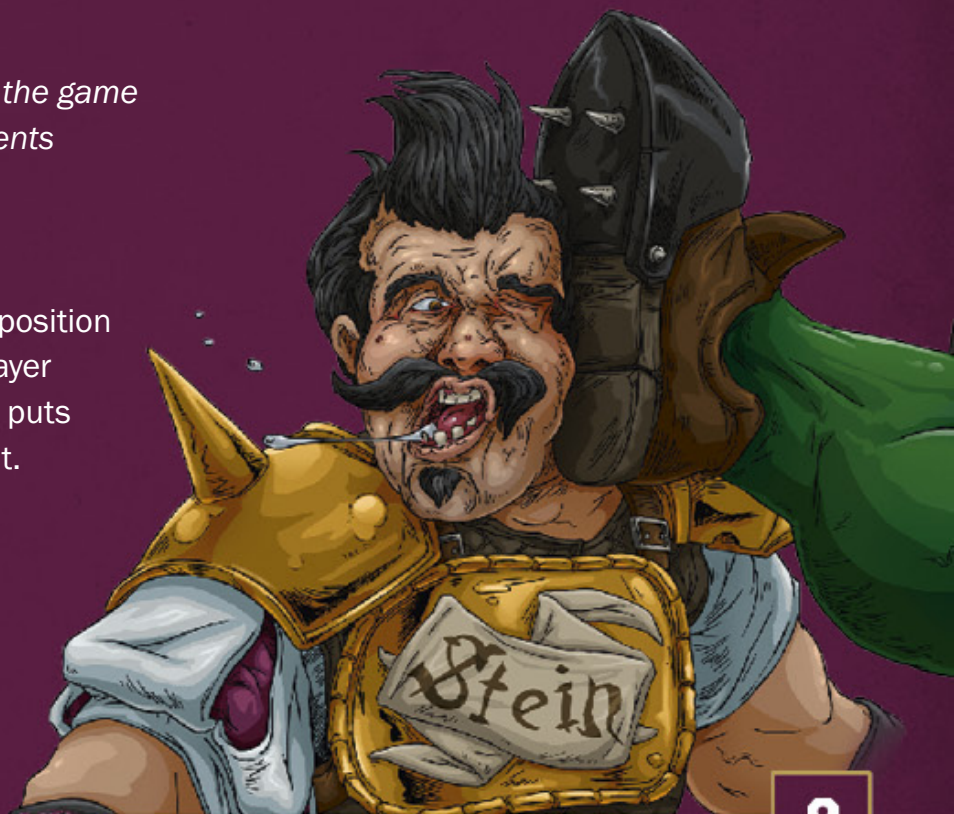
* **CONSUMMATE PROFESSIONAL:** Once per game, Griff may re-roll one dice that was rolled either as a single dice roll or as part of a dice pool (this cannot be a dice that was rolled as part of an Armour, Injury or Casualty roll).

3 Re-rolls
6 Cheerleaders
4 Assistant Coaches
10 Dedicated Fans

TOTAL COST OF TEAM: 2,000,000 gold pieces

READING THE GAME: Head Coach Rheinlich is an expert at reading the game and instructing his players to capitalise on any mistakes their opponents make, or are about to make.

Bögenhafen Barons players may re-roll the D6 when attempting an Interception. Additionally, if the ball hits the pitch as a result of an opposition player fumbling or dropping the ball, then one Bögenhafen Barons player may move one square closer to the ball, ignoring Tackle Zones. If this puts them in the same square as the ball then they may attempt to catch it.



STAR PLAYER SPOTLIGHT

GRIFF OBERWALD

'CONSUMMATE PROFESSIONAL'

Griff Oberwald is amongst the greatest Human players to ever step onto the gridiron. Certainly, whenever the discussion of 'greatest ever player' crops up (As it does, very often! – Ed), Griff will be one of the players talked about as a top ranking candidate – and it wouldn't be outrageous to suggest that the golden boy of the Reikland Reavers is, perhaps, the greatest of all time.

GRIFF OBERWALD



MA 7

ST 4

AG 2+

PA 3+

AV 9+

GP
280,000

SKILLS & TRAITS

Block, Dodge, Fend, Loner (3+), Sprint, Sure Feet

PLAYS FOR

'Halfing Thimble Cup', or 'Old World Classic'

SPECIAL RULES

Consummate Professional: Once per game, Griff may re-roll one dice that was rolled either as a single dice roll, as part of a multiple dice roll or as part of a dice pool (this cannot be a dice that was rolled as part of an Armour, Injury or Casualty roll).

SPIKE! EXCLUSIVE STAR PLAYER PROFILE

GRIFF OBERWALD

AGE

37

HEIGHT

6' 4"

WEIGHT

168 lbs

ORIGINATING TEAM

Reikland Reavers

POSITION

Blitzer

CAREER TOTALS

201 touchdowns, 7 Interceptions, 79 kills/serious injuries inflicted, 14 sacks.

AWARDS

Bloodweiser Best Newcomers Medal 2484; AFC Player of the Year 2487; Blood Bowl Winners Medal 2485, 2487, 2491, 2499, 2500; Blood Bowl Players Medal 2487, 2499.



This wasn't always the case though. In fact when Griff played his first game for the Reikland Reavers back in 2483, it was noted that Head Coach Helmut Zimmer described him as '*almost above average*' and '*a real trier*', though he never thought that Griff would amount to much. However, it wasn't long before Griff proved his old coach wrong.

The Reavers fans first noticed Griff late in 2483 in an AFC game against the Underworld Creepers. Following a tackling play that saw Griff deliver a crunching blow to the Creepers' star runner, breaking the Skaven's nose and popping both its eardrums in the process, Griff was then sent off for putting the boot in and smashing its kneecap as well! The removal of the Skaven runner meant that the Reavers went on to be victorious in the game, and it was Griff's actions that were credited as the reason for this victory. Driven by the rush of adrenaline he had felt in that moment, coaches began to see a marked improvement in Griff's performances in training, earning him a spot in the starting line-up the following season.

Having been given the opportunity to prove himself, Griff Oberwald never looked back, going from strength to strength with each game. After scoring numerous touchdowns, and causing the odd casualty here and there, Griff was awarded the Bloodweiser Best Newcomers Medal in 2484.

The very next season, Griff was part of the Reikland Reavers team that won the Blood Bowl; scoring the winning touchdown against the Darkside Cowboys in the dying seconds of the game.

In 2487, following the Reavers' triumph in the XXVII Blood Bowl and the fact he had earned the coveted Blood Bowl Players Medal, Griff Oberwald was promoted to team captain. Former coach Helmut Zimmer declared that he had known all along that Griff would be a star, though his comments were dismissed by most mainstream media outlets as the ramblings of an aging madman following his sacking two years prior. For over a decade, Griff captained the Reikland Reavers with his exceptional leadership and grasp of tactics, guiding them to the Blood Bowl title in 2491 and 2499.

However, following the Reavers' victory at the 2499 Blood Bowl, Griff shocked the Old World when he refused to sign a new contract with his boyhood team. Instead, Griff joined the relatively new Bögenhafen Barons in an incredibly lucrative contract that made him one of the best paid players in the game. Though it was said that this move was due to Griff beginning to feel his age and he wanted to wind down his career, Griff has since proved his doubters wrong; guiding the Barons to the XL Blood Bowl final and into the annals of Blood Bowl history...

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

2485 After a stellar season in the AFC, in which he was the division's top scorer, Griff is part of the Reikland Reavers team that takes to the pitch in the Blood Bowl final. Even given the impressive pedigree of their opponents, the Darkside Cowboys, Griff seems unphased on the pitch; scoring early on, as well as running in the match-winning touchdown in the dying seconds of the game to give the Reikland Reavers their third Blood Bowl title since the competition was founded.

2487 Two years after being the hero, Griff once again takes to the pitch in a Blood Bowl final; this time against the Vynheim Valkyries. Throughout the season, Griff's natural talent for the game has shone and he has become a highly rated player by fans and pundits alike. Griff dominates the Blood Bowl final, making numerous important tackles, commanding the flow of the game, and intercepting a wayward pass to run in a touchdown as the Reavers cruise to victory. For his efforts, Griff earns the Blood Bowl Players Medal and is promoted to captain.

2499 Having captained the Reikland Reavers for 12 seasons, Griff Oberwald has become one of the biggest stars in Blood Bowl. Though he is not as spry as he was when he began his career, Griff has replaced that energy with an exceptional grasp of tactics and a grizzled determination; leading the Reavers to Blood Bowl success in 2491 and 2499. However, following the 2499 triumph, Griff elects not to sign a new contract; shocking the world as he joins the relatively new Bögenhafen Barons for the upcoming season!

2500 Following his mega-money move to the Bögenhafen Barons, Griff is immediately made team captain. Thanks to Griff's skill, the Barons dominate the Imperial Nobility leagues, though many pundits claim that Griff must have lost a step to leave the Reavers. Determined to prove he is still the player he was, Griff puts in some of his best performances and the Barons shock the Old World by reaching the XL Blood Bowl final. With an unprecedented fifth Blood Bowl title on the horizon, Griff Oberwald captains the Bögenhafen Barons to a famous victory over the Thunder Valley Greenskins, cementing his legacy as one of the greatest to play the game!



THE EMPIRE'S FINEST

Imperial Nobility teams are a unique challenge for coaches to undertake; blessed as they are with a wealth of different players and abilities to tackle all situations head-on with. However, it takes a well-seasoned coach to know how best to develop their players to best counteract the playstyles of opposing teams in a league. We here at *Spike! Journal* got in contact with the noble Shayne von Hörne and asked him to divulge his expertise on these new additions to the game of Blood Bowl.

Imperial Nobility shine at playing to their opponents' weaknesses. Being jack-of-all-trades may not see you dominate any one facet of the game, but it can certainly provide the opportunities you need to outplay your opponent. The Imperial Nobility roster therefore has a solid set of players and starting skills to cover all bases, relying on astute positioning and a quick wit to succeed. They can do everything within reason, it's all about picking your battles and choosing those key moments to strike.

PLAYERS

IMPERIAL RETAINER LINEMAN

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS & TRAITS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-12	Imperial Retainer Linemen	45,000	6	3	4+	4+	8+	Fend	G	AS

Imperial Retainer Linemen are the humble servants of the team both on and off the pitch. Cheap at 45,000 gold pieces and whilst expendable, the team couldn't function properly without them. Their primary role is to support your other key players in performing their duties, protecting your ball carriers and providing the odd assist. Fend is a fantastic Skill for getting these players free and will often catch a less observant coach off-guard. This makes them great roadblocks in a screen or as part of a cage. Just be aware that with AV 8+ they don't provide the most solid of defences, and should be treated more like a nuisance obstacle than an immovable wall.

IMPERIAL THROWER

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS & TRAITS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-2	Imperial Throwers	75,000	6	3	3+	3+	9+	Pass, Running Pass	GP	AS

Imperial Throwers are the play-makers of the team and will usually be the initial ball carriers. Sporting a healthy PA of 3+ along with the Pass skill, they can reliably get the ball where it's needed, particularly over short distances. This, combined with Running Pass – they are great at off loading the ball to the swifter Noble Blitzers before immediately tying up any potential pursuers. Their Skill access allows for further improvement in such a role, but be cautious that with all these offensive Skills, on defence they are essentially just another body on the pitch.

NOBLE BLITZER

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS & TRAITS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-2	Noble Blitzers	105,000	7	3	3+	4+	9+	Block, Catch	AG	PS

Noble Blitzers will often find themselves taking the glory steps over the goal line. Starting off with MA 7 and Catch makes them great receiving threats to keep in your opponent's back line, whilst AV 9+ and the Block skill mean they are no slouch in a scrap either. Effectively utilising the Blitzers in conjunction with the Imperial Throwers will often be your way out of a sticky situation. Be wary of throwing these guys blindly into a melee however, as their value is often known to your opponents and they may well find a wandering boot to the gut, and at 105,000 gold pieces they are not cheap to replace!

BODYGUARD

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS & TRAITS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-4	Bodyguards	90,000	6	3	3+	5+	9+	Stand Firm, Wrestle	GS	A

These are the workhorses of the team. Defensively, AV 9+ makes them sturdier front line hitters than Retainers and they can absorb the brunt of any blows better too. Add in Stand Firm and they can hold a line where you want them to. On offence, Stand Firm makes them a great part of a cage to support your key players with. Wrestle can make these guys truly shine! With decent movement, they make great sackers, pulling down ball carriers even if they have the Block skill. But on offense, the ability to pull down players to create gaps in the opposing line for your Imperial Throwers and Noble Blitzers to exploit can be invaluable for a team constantly looking for that right time to strike.

OGRE

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS & TRAITS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-1	Ogre	140,000	5	5	4+	5+	10+	Bone Head, Loner (4+), Mighty Blow (+1), Thick Skull, Throw Team-mate	S	AG

Ah... the Ogre, the lovable unreliable walking fist. Their high Strength makes them the main-stay of any Line of Scrimmage and combined with AV 10+ and Thick Skull, they're gonna be there to stay. Mighty Blow (+1) is a nice addition when trying to make a hole in an opponent's defence too. As with all Big Guys, they can be... unreliable. With AG 4+ and MA 5, it can be hard to get them where they're needed, provided they want to move at all with the Bone Head skill! Losing a vital set of Tackle Zones in the midst of a crucial defence can be devastating for a team that doesn't always have the mobility to cover it, and their high cost can be crushing if they go down for good.

STARTING ROSTERS

There are a plethora of possibilities and combinations out there, but they often centre around a core principle: to Ogre or not to Ogre? On the one hand, the Ogre can provide that extra bit of muscle required to break through a line. On the other, they are an unreliable and inflexibly strong part of a team which doesn't rely on out-bashing every opponent as their core strategy, and will often take the place of key players such as Imperial Throwers and Bodyguards who can be more versatile in their function. The jury is still out, but here are a couple of different builds providing you options for both sides of this coin.

PROTECT MY LIEGE!

NO.	POSITION	COST (GP)	TOTAL (GP)
3	Imperial Retainer Linemen	45,000	135,000
2	Imperial Throwers	75,000	150,000
2	Noble Blitzers	105,000	210,000
4	Bodyguards	90,000	360,000
0	Ogre	140,000	-
2	Re-rolls	70,000	140,000
TOTAL			995,000

This is a great roster for anyone starting out with an Imperial Nobility team as it gives you all your positionals bar the Ogre, plus you can start developing the core of your team immediately. You're not flushed for re-rolls, however you have some built-in safety with the Block, Wrestle and Pass skills, and following some early development such as Sure Hands, Dodge and Guard (which you have easy access to), you'll be well on your way to victory. Just be wary – you only have 11 players with no apothecary, so every loss will hurt and you'll want quick reinforcements.

OGRE EAGER...

NO.	POSITION	COST (GP)	TOTAL (GP)
4	Imperial Retainer Linemen	45,000	180,000
2	Imperial Throwers	75,000	150,000
2	Noble Blitzers	105,000	210,000
2	Bodyguards	90,000	180,000
1	Ogre	140,000	140,000
2	Re-rolls	70,000	140,000
TOTAL			1,000,000

This second roster is a little trickier to get started with, but has a potential pay-off in the long run. You get to start with a strong Line of Scrimmage with two Bodyguards and an Ogre, but at the cost of the other two Bodyguards. This build gives you more punching potential, but reduces your versatility so I would recommend it for more experienced coaches. Additionally, by dropping an Imperial Thrower for a Imperial Retainer Lineman, you can give yourself 30,000 gold pieces in the bank as an early investment toward your next Bodyguard or apothecary if you are so inclined.

DEVELOPMENT

Some say that any player can become a legend in Blood Bowl, that any player can achieve anything they desire (so long as they can survive!). Whilst not untrue even in the Noblest of teams (*I see what you did there!* – Ed), some are born upon a path. Unlike certain other teams, Imperial Nobility players already have well-defined roles, from their titles to their starting stats and skills. The real question is, how best to develop these players down the paths they already tread?

Developing an Imperial Nobility team can be tricky, because whilst player roles are fairly well defined, earning the SPP where it's needed can be a struggle. The Imperial Thrower's role should be enhanced to retrieve and carry the ball, whilst the Noble Blitzers should improve their survivability and mobility for scoring and defending against faster teams. These players will develop naturally from all the passing and scoring they'll likely be doing. The Bodyguards on the other hand, are a different story.

Bodyguards are a crucial asset in supporting your overall playbook, from creating holes in defences to pulling down cages and ball carriers. They should not be overlooked or underestimated. Yet, as the Imperial Nobility is not a damage dealing focused team, natural progression with these players can be slow and thus I would recommend, where play allows, trying to get the odd touchdown or MVP with the Bodyguards to help them along. After only a couple of Skills, they quickly become crucial to allowing your other players to do their jobs much more effectively.

PLAYER	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	STAT-UP CONSIDERATIONS
Support – Imperial Retainer Lineman	Block, Dirty Player (+1), Kick, Tackle	Defensive, Guard	ST
Playmaker – Imperial Thrower	Sure Hands, Block, Accurate, Safe Pass, Leader	Dodge, Safe Pair of Hands	MA, ST, AG, PA
Receiver – Noble Blitzzer	Dodge, Jump Up, Side Step, Sure Feet, Fend, Sprint, Diving Catch	Nerves of Steel	MA, ST, AG
All Rounder – Noble Blitzzer	Dodge, Side Step, Tackle, Defensive, Jump Up, Diving Tackle	Guard	MA, ST, AG
Scrimmage – Bodyguard	Guard, Dauntless, Tackle, Arm Bar, Mighty Blow,	Dodge, Defensive	ST, AG,
Sacker – Bodyguard	Tackle, Strip Ball, Dauntless, Arm Bar, Guard	Dodge, Jump Up, Diving Tackle	MA, ST, AG
Ogre	Guard, Brawler, Arm Bar, Stand Firm, Grab, Multiple Block, Break Tackle	Block, Dodge, Leader, Pro	

DID YOU KNOW?

The Carroburg Counts, actually bankrupted themselves by investing too much in making their stadium look nice rather than trying to improve results on the pitch. Individual comfy chairs, personal vendors and gold-plated toilet rolls may be fancy, but they are pointless when all your supporters have got bored of watching you lose and have gone elsewhere!

SET-UPS

DEFENCE

On this defensive set-up, you've got your higher armoured players on the line to take the initial punches, with the Imperial Retainer Linemen sitting just behind the Bodyguards – this allows you to optionally not use the Stand Firm skill. By doing so, your opponent has to choose whether to follow up (but still be in contact with the Imperial Retainer Lineman for a retaliatory hit) or not (leaving the Bodyguard free to move). Against high Strength teams, you may want to put the Imperial Retainer Linemen and Imperial Throwers back a square to prevent them getting tied up however. The Wide Zones are well-protected by one of each key player who can cover the middle if needed, or go for a quick steal if the opportunity presents itself. Remember that your line isn't the sturdiest, so sometimes the best defence can be a good offence. Just try not to overcommit as your goal should be to stop your opponent scoring, not necessarily score yourself.



OFFENCE

This offensive set-up is quite an aggressive one that can kick-start (see *what I did there!*) your drive. You have two Imperial Throwers ready to jump onto the ball wherever it goes, and if it goes deep they are in range to provide a cheeky assist to your Line of Scrimmage whilst the other retrieves the ball. The wings are covered by Bodyguard-Noble Blitzers looking for opportunities to break into your opponent's back line along with the support of the odd Imperial Retainer Lineman nearby. Additionally, this set-up will defend you against annoying kick-off events such as Blitz, as the combination of Fend and Stand Firm in these positions will mean that it'll take quite a few rolls to pressure your Imperial Throwers early.



SUMMARY

Overall, the best Imperial Nobility coaches will be those who are knowledgeable, observant and patient. More so than other teams, you will want to play to your opponent's weaknesses rather than your own strengths. Evaluate their game plan, adapt and counter it. Offensively, you want to look for a breakaway. Cage up, try to create an opening and then decide whether to force the cage through, or make a quick passing play to a free Noble Blitzers.

Your valuable players will level up quickly, but it will also hurt more when they get injured with so much SPP tied up in them. Try to actively level up your supporting players, particularly the Bodyguards, as just a couple of Skills can really ease the reliance on the Noble Blitzers and Imperial Throwers. The biggest difficulty can be losing your positionals early, as your cheap replacements aren't very mobile nor can they handle the ball too well.

If you're a coach that wants a bit of a challenge and to learn the deeper fundamentals of positioning and countering an opposing team's strategies, the Imperial Nobility might be for you. Have your coffers at the ready – the price of success may be higher than you think!

KEY

- Imperial Retainer Linemen
- Bodyguards
- Noble Blitzers
- Ogre
- Imperial Throwers

IMPERIAL NOBILITY & BLACK ORC BALLS



GEM-ENCRUSTED BALL

To show that they are by far the wealthiest teams in Blood Bowl, many Imperial Nobility teams will encrust their balls in a dazzling display of rubies, sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, and all manner of other precious stones. Whilst this serves no real purpose other than to gloat about their superiority over their opponents, it can often transpire that these balls go 'missing' after the game with the opposition making a quick getaway!

A Gem-encrusted Ball is treated like a normal ball, and therefore is not replaced at the end of drive like other special types of ball.

Instead, when a player scores a touchdown with a Gem-encrusted Ball, roll a D6. On a 5+, that player's team steals the ball to sell on later; their team gains an additional D6x10,000 gold pieces during the post-game sequence. Once this condition has been met, the Gem-encrusted Ball is no longer in use and the rules for normal balls are used for the remainder of the game.

WELDED STEEL BALL

Black Orcs are tough; that's just a given fact, though they still want every other team to know it. To prove how strong they are, many Black Orc teams will use balls welded together from scraps of steel to form heavy spiked balls for their games. This has a few knock-on effects; mainly that these balls are almost impossible to throw far, and smaller players struggle to carry them great lengths!

Players in possession of a Welded Steel Ball may not attempt to make a Long pass or a Long bomb – the ball is simply far too heavy to throw that far! Additionally, if a model fails to catch a Welded Steel Ball following a Pass action, the ball will hit them square on the head. Make an Armour roll for that player. Then scatter the ball from that player's square.

Additionally, players with the Stunty or Titchy traits reduce their Move Allowance by 1 whilst they are in possession of a Welded Steel Ball.

DIRT FROM THE DUGOUT

Mindy Piewhistle is our Halfling on the spot when it comes to digging up the dishy dirt and salacious scandals that our readers have come to know and love. This issue, Mindy explores the rumours that Lord Driego Koloroff, owner of the Persiastadt Princes, may have accumulated the fortune he used to found the team by more nefarious means than we were originally led to believe...



SPIKE!: Hello Mindy! We hope you enjoyed your trip to visit the Imperial nobility; we hear they are rather generous hosts!

MINDY: They certainly know how to look after their guests! Many of them are so concerned with looking better than their peers that they will go to any lengths to make sure they are excellent hosts!

SPIKE!: We imagine they do! Anyway, what did you manage to dig up whilst you were being waited on hand and foot?

MINDY: Well, rumours are starting to surface that the well-respected Lord Driego Koloroff, owner of the Persiastadt Princes, may not be as clean as he appears.

SPIKE!: Really! Well, that would be hugely surprising given that Lord Koloroff is seen as a bit of a goody two shoes. He has even started multiple charities to help Halflings, Humans and even Goblins in desperate need.

MINDY: Well exactly! It would be a huge scandal if there was any truth to these rumours. So I had to find out what was going on.

SPIKE!: Quite right! We need to know if this much-lauded noble is nothing more than a criminal!

MINDY: Well, it turns out that there is no actual record of where Lord Koloroff obtained his fortune. Naturally, we all know the story that he built himself up from nothing by selling snacks at games, before moving onto various other ventures including 'official' team merchandise, pest control and, of course, selling Accidental Injury Insurance.

SPIKE!: Yes of course, the man was a genius! The 'Acts of Nuffle' clause in his insurance meant that many players were unable to claim if their injury was something that Nuffle would approve of.

MINDY: A real masterstroke! However, I met up with accountant, Gorblach Riese, who says that the numbers simply don't add up. Riese claims that, even with all of the income that Lord Koloroff was bringing in, there is no way that he would have had enough to even start the Persiastadt Princes! Riese also alluded to the fact that in the years where Koloroff was making his fortune, several nobles across the Empire went missing! He believes that Koloroff was using his business, Pest-B-Gone, as an

assassination service in order to remove problematic personnel – and those who couldn't pay saw their own businesses absorbed into the Koloroff business empire.

SPIKE!: That is quite an accusation! Did Riese have any evidence to back up his theories?

MINDY: Well, he claimed he had some irrefutable proof of Koloroff's indiscretions. However, after I paid a visit to Lord Koloroff himself to see if there was any truth to these 'anonymous' accusations, Riese seems to have completely disappeared! Clearly there was nothing going on at all, and Riese was just trying to make a quick bit of gold out of this interview. In fact, the very generous Lord Koloroff showed me the inner workings of his business to prove there was nothing underhanded going on at all. It was all very convincing, I must say!

SPIKE!: Well, that's good! By the way Mindy, I don't think we've ever seen you wear such an exquisite necklace before; the gems seem so genuine! Is it made of real gold?

MINDY: Oh, this old thing? It's a family heirloom that I only realised I had when I got back, it's nothing really...



SMARTER THAN YOUR AVERAGE ORC!

Orcs are as thick as they are green, or so the old adage says anyway – though Black Orcs seem to be the exception that proves the rule!

In recent years, Black Orcs have begun distancing themselves from the more ‘traditional’ Orc teams in favour of setting up their own; and in this issue of *Spike! Journal* we have delved deep into the murky truths of just why the Black Orcs took it upon themselves to separate from other Orcs – and how they utilise their Goblins so effectively!



Traditionally, Black Orcs played their part as blockers for Orc teams, plying their trade as hired muscle to take the fight to opposition blitzers and big guys to allow their team-mates to run through and score. This often made them the butt of many jokes within the locker rooms of Orc teams as they were used to absorb the hits from Ogres, Mummies, Deathrollers, and all manner of other particularly large opponents, all whilst the other Orcs scored the touchdowns and covered themselves in glory.

Naturally, this led to the more-intelligent Black Orcs becoming increasingly frustrated with the other Orcs they played alongside. The constant squabbles of their team-mates, and their distinct lack of ability to grasp any form of tactics, often being the catalyst for an Orc team being defeated in a game that they really should have won. However, there was little that the Black Orcs could do, as they couldn't just go off and form their own teams on a whim.

That was until the collapse of the NAF, which removed regulations on how a team could be formed. This, along with the ever-increasing tensions between players, led to the mass exodus of the Black Orcs from the rosters of almost all Orc teams. At the height of this move, representatives of DUMBO (*Da Union of Malcontent Black Orcs – Ed*) gave a public statement on Cabalvision explaining that their Black Orc clients were sick of the way they had been treated and had decided to set up their own teams; ones where they would not be looked down on (*Well, technically most Orcs would look up at Black Orcs, but I get your point! – Ed*) and could enjoy the beautiful game without having to play alongside other Orcs, whom they regarded as amateur, stubborn and unprofessional!

Yet Black Orcs are not as stupid as they seem, and they knew far better than to try to simply form teams of their own kind. Whilst other Orcs may disregard speed and agility as pointless, and getting in the way of important krumpin, Black Orcs are more than aware of the importance of these traits for actually winning a game of Blood Bowl. They are also conscious that they themselves do not possess the required levels of speed and agility needed to reliably score touchdowns. Yes, a lucky Black Orc may find themselves with the ball in the end zone, but it is often because they haven't realised they have got it when they charge an opposition player!

To help solve the problem of lack of speed and agility, Black Orc teams have enlisted the services of Goblins, which they use to great effect. In fact, unlike the Goblins that play for regular Orc teams, those that have been signed to play for Black Orc teams are far better thought of by their team-mates. Black Orcs often become quite fond of their diminutive allies, treating them as favourite pets and training them to become tough and grizzled (*At least for a Goblin! – Ed*) by applying frequent clonks on the head with their huge fists!

The combination of the strength of the Black Orcs, their relative agility, and the swiftness of the Goblins makes a Black Orc team a surprisingly adept opponent when it takes to the gridiron. The Black Orcs are more than happy to take the fight to the tougher players on the pitch, thus protecting their Goblin team-mates, who are then able to sneak through the legs of the opposition, or scamper over them should the Black Orcs punch them to the floor.

It should come as little surprise then that since their introduction to this great game, Black Orc teams have made a huge impact upon Blood Bowl. Many have also recently developed huge followings of feverishly dedicated fans who will travel across the Old World just to see their favourite players bash together the heads of opposition players – and if a Goblin manages to sneak in a touchdown or two, well, that just puts the icing on the proverbial cake!

POSITIONS

GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMEN

The Goblins that take to the pitch in a Black Orc team line-up are of a different calibre to those that play as part of a regular Orc, or even Goblin team. In fact, these Goblins are handpicked for the required level of speed and agility for play by the Black Orcs themselves – a novelty that is still rather odd to the likes of regular Orc teams, and often many of their fans as well!

Goblin Bruisers, in particular, are treated far better than those in other teams. Many essentially become like pets to their larger colleagues, who will look out for them on the pitch and sneak them extra grog during the inevitable post-game frivolities!

These Goblins are no slouch on the pitch either, having been toughened up in training with regular clubs to the head to get them used to the kind of hits they will face during play – either from the opposition, or perhaps a particularly peeved Troll!

DID YOU KNOW?

The Rock-tribe Limbrippas actually hold the record for causing the most lost teeth in a game. When playing against the Rexalotl Razordons, the Black Orcs made it their mission to teach the team's Kroxigor a lesson; pinning it down and removing each of its teeth one by one. The Limbrippas may have lost the game, but they have a lovely Kroxigor tooth necklace on show in the team's trophy room!



BLACK ORCS

Though they are not actually black in colour, Black Orcs get their name from the darker green skin tone they possess; though some claim it is more down to their more morbid sense of humour (*though this has never been proven – Ed*). Unlike most other Orcs, Black Orcs really do possess some form of intelligence, and are able to grasp tactics and play-styles rather than simply arguing with their team-mates about who has got ‘da biggest krumpa’ or who has ‘da ‘ardest skull’.

Surrounded by such incompetence (*and that’s saying something coming from an Orc! – Ed*), it soon became apparent that Black Orcs were getting tired of having to play alongside such amateurs. However, it wasn’t until the NAF folded that they were able to finally do something about the situation they had found themselves in for so many years.

Since setting up their own teams, Black Orcs have been able to really come into their own in Nuffle’s sacred game. No more do they have to play alongside inferior Orcs who would rather squabble than play, instead Black Orcs can showcase their own skills at Blood Bowl and at last be the stars they always should have been.

TRAINED TROLL

Sometimes, there are just some jobs that even a Black Orc isn’t strong enough to deal with; and for those times a Trained Troll is just the requirement! Need to punch a huge hole in the opposition’s defence? Troll. Need to take on that troublesome Ogre? Troll. Need to launch an overly-excited Goblin down the pitch to score? Troll. Need to cover a referee in vomit so they don’t see you fouling? Troll. The applications are endless!

This is exactly what Black Orc teams were lacking when they first formed; that little bit of extra ‘umph’ where needed, and with Trolls they found their answer.

Of course, they needed training first. They couldn’t just snack on their Goblin team-mates as they had done in previous teams – oh no! Those Goblins were for throwing, not for eating – though in many cases it did take quite a while to get this message into the very dense skulls of these beasts (*If it actually sunk in at all! – Ed*). Regardless, the introduction of Trolls into Black Orc team line-ups soon saw them become mainstays of the various Badlands Brawl cups and leagues, and for good reason. There are few who can hope to tackle a Troll head-on and come out unscathed, or undigested!

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS & TRAITS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-12	Goblin Bruiser Linemen	45,000	6	2	3+	4+	8+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Stunty, Thick Skull	A	GPS
0-6	Black Orcs	90,000	4	4	4+	5+	10+	Brawler, Grab	GS	AP
0-1	Trained Troll	115,000	4	5	5+	5+	10+	Always Hungry, Loner (3+), Mighty Blow (+1), Projectile Vomit, Really Stupid, Regeneration, Throw Team-mate	S	AGP
0-8 team re-rolls: 60,000 gold pieces each									Tier: 2	
Special Rules: Badlands Brawl, Bribery and Corruption									Apothecary: YES	

ELIGIBLE STAR PLAYERS



The Black Gobbo



Grak



Crumbleberry



Helmut Wulf



Morg 'N' Thorg



Varag Ghou-Chewer

The rules for Varag Ghou-Chewer can be found later in this issue. The rules for the other Star Players listed above can be found in other Blood Bowl publications.



FAMOUS BLACK ORC TEAMS

THE ORCLAND RAIDERS

O riginally known as the Severed Heads, the Orcland Raiders are amongst some of the most famous teams in the game – they are three times Blood Bowl Champions after all! The Raiders used to be a team composed of all manner of Orcs, though their constant squabbles began to have a bad impact on results. This changed drastically in 2495 when a new owner bought out the team in the hope of rekindling the dominance the team used to have. Overnight, many of those on the roster were released from their contracts (*The team Troll was well-fed apparently! – Ed*) and replaced with a new cohort of tougher and meaner Black Orcs. Though the change didn't immediately go down well with fans, this new-look Raiders team soon started racking up the victories in the Badlands Leagues as they sought to reclaim the glories of old.

THE IRON-ROK BONEBREAKERS

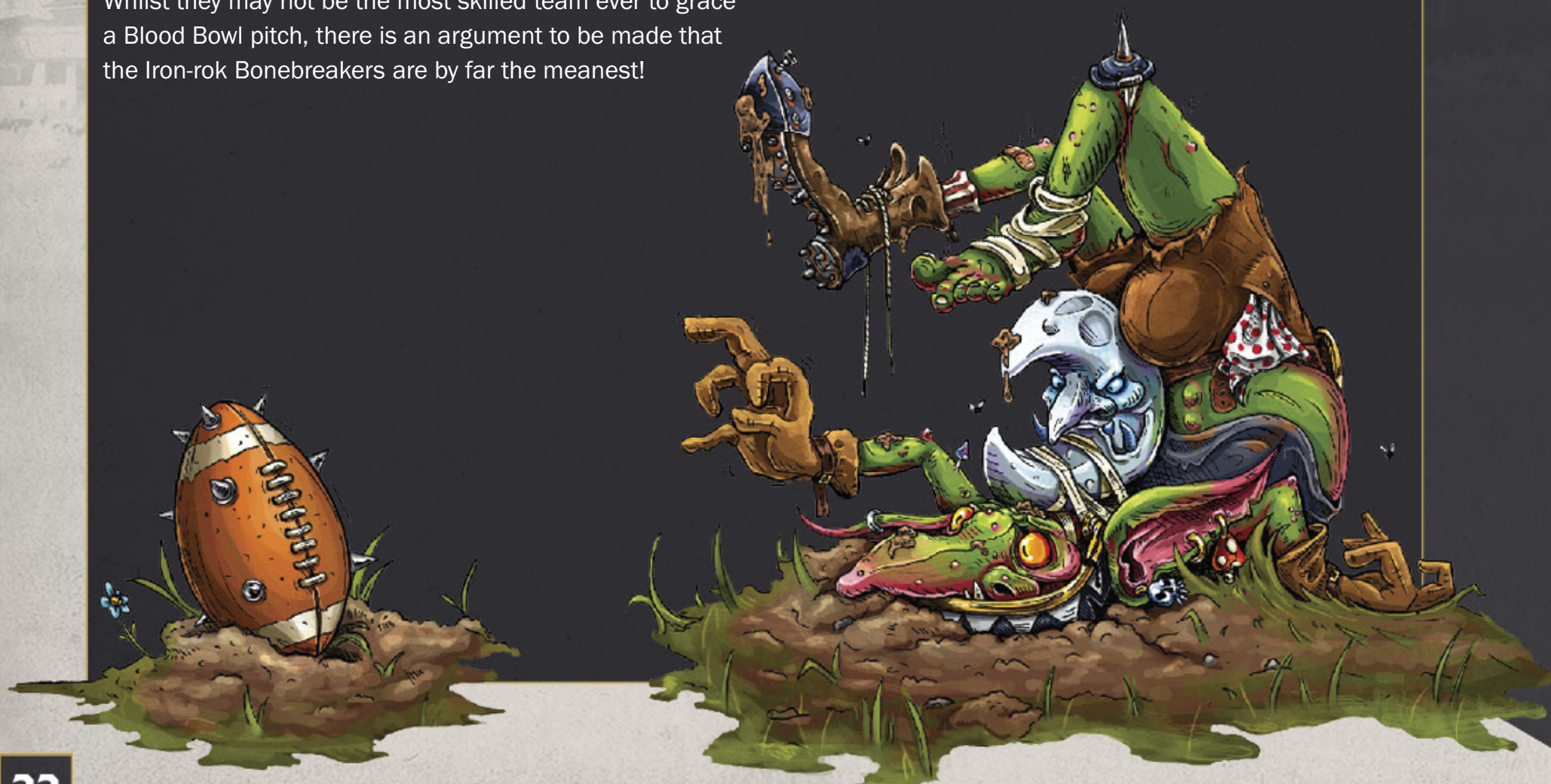
T he Orcs of Iron-rok are a vicious tribe, even by the standards of Greenskins. Only the biggest and toughest Orcs are signed to the tribe's Blood Bowl team, though they refuse to hire any players not from within their own ranks. This unique style of recruitment is unusual, and yields mixed results on the pitch with no outside players coming in to freshen up the team's tactics. Then again, for the Bonebreakers, the game is more about how many opposing players' limbs they can snap than the actual score. In fact, games played in the Iron-rok tribe don't score touchdowns; instead they track the number of shattered bones and cracked skulls caused by each team! Whilst they may not be the most skilled team ever to grace a Blood Bowl pitch, there is an argument to be made that the Iron-rok Bonebreakers are by far the meanest!

THE STEEL-TOOF SMASHAS

M any Black Orc teams like to adorn their kit with teeth, bones and various sharp rocks. However, those that play for the Steel-toof Smashas go one step further, actually welding huge metal teeth to their lower jaws to give them a fearsome appearance to opposing players. Before their games start, the Smashas like to further intimidate their opponents by crushing rocks, bones and skulls with their metal teeth. Yet for all their posturing, the Steel-toof Smashas are not known for their ability on the pitch; with many players often leaving the gridiron complaining of toothache following their bizarre pre-game antics!

THE GRIMFANG GOUGERS

L ike many other Black Orc teams, the Grimfang Gougiers were formed following the collapse of the NAF and the subsequent mass exodus of fed-up Black Orcs from standard Orc teams. Whilst many teams took a while to find their feet, the Gougiers hit the ground running far quicker than most. This was down in part to their head coach having the quick wits to hire a Troll almost immediately. The added hitting power, and odd acidic vomit on an opposing player, soon saw the Gougiers become a force within the Badlands Leagues. However, Trolls are not the easiest of creatures to control on the pitch, and many of the original Black Orcs that formed the team have been forced into early retirement by a particularly potent regurgitation of a Troll's lunch!



TEAM SPOTLIGHT

THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS

Of all the Black Orc teams that cropped up following the DUMBO-led mass exodus of Black Orcs from Orc teams, none have enjoyed the same levels of success as the Thunder Valley Greenskins. Dominating the Badlands Leagues since their formation in 2491, the Greenskins have become a true force on the pitch; even reaching the XL Blood Bowl final! Much like the Imperial Nobility earlier in this issue, we at *Spike! Journal* have decided that, following that epic final, we'd tell the tale of this now infamous team, from their inception.



When the NAF collapsed and the many disgruntled Black Orcs quit their various teams, no one foresaw that they would start their own. As would be expected, those that were formed overnight didn't have much success; the Black Orcs were unused to having so much freedom on the pitch, and soon fell back into their old role as blockers – and with no other players to score touchdowns, wins were hard to come by for these teams at first.

However, some savvy entrepreneurs saw the huge potential in Black Orcs, and began laying the groundwork to start their own teams – and it was the Thunder Valley Greenskins that led the way. Instead of simply signing any willing Black Orc, the Greenskins' owner and coach, Furgog Ragtoof, had been scouting the most talented Black Orcs to join the team. Ragtoof had also come up with a solution to the common problem of these teams not scoring enough touchdowns; this was the introduction of Goblins

to the starting line-ups. Though this made many Orc coaches scoff at Ragtoof's idea, they were soon made to eat a huge slice of humble pie after the Greenskins began to take to the gridiron.

The Thunder Valley Greenskins played their debut game in 2491 against another Black Orc team – the 'Ardened 'Eadkrackers. What followed was a dominant display by the Greenskins, outplaying the opposition in every aspect of the game and securing a 4-0 thumping of the 'Eadkrackers. Joining the Badlands Leagues in 2492, the Greenskins soon became a top team within the divisions. Ragtoof's unique style of actually playing with the ball was proving hard for other teams to deal with, and soon many others were utilising Goblins in order to improve results.

Ragtoof's intense training regimes paid off, and in 2498 the Thunder Valley Greenskins held aloft the *Spike! Magazine* Trophy, defeating the Elfheim Eagles in the

final. It was this high profile victory that was the catalyst for the sharp increase in fortunes of the team in the past two years. Coverage of the Greenskins' win was splashed across *Spike! Magazine* for months, and soon everyone in the Old World was talking about this new up and coming team. This played its part in what happened next – the signing of the legendary Varag Ghou-Chewer in 2499.

It had been well-documented that Varag had had a falling out with the head coach of the Gougged Eye, and this was the reason given as to why he left – the fact that Griff Oberwald had just joined the Bögenhafen Barons in what was being called the coup of the decade had nothing to do with it, honest! With Varag at the helm, the Greenskins entered the XL Blood Bowl, where they shocked the Old World as they made it all the way to the prestigious final. Though they may have come up short, the Thunder Valley Greenskins certainly proved that they will be a dominant force in the coming years!

TEAM PROFILE: THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS

TEAM COLOURS: Black and white

OWNER: Furgog Ragtoof

HEAD COACH: Also Furgog Ragtoof

PLAYERS: Goblin Bruiser Linemen, Black Orcs and Trained Trolls.

TEAM HONOURS: Badlands League Winners 2493-2497; Black Orc Tribal Cup Winners 2494, 2496, 2497; *Spike!* Magazine Trophy Winners 2498; Blood Bowl runners-up 2500.

HALL OF FAME: Varag Ghoul-Chewer, Zukerv da Puncha, Burgg Grobleg

SPIKE! TEAM RATING: 139

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

2493 After two years of playing 'friendly' games, the Thunder Valley Greenskins enter the Badlands Leagues for the first time. Head Coach Ragtoof's tactics prove to be too much for the other Black Orc teams to contend with, and the Greenskins storm to victory in their first season. Thus begins their dominance of the Badlands League, where the Greenskins win the league five years on the trot.

2498 Having begun to participate in more recognised competitions in recent years, the Greenskins have vastly improved their game. This is especially noticed in the *Spike! Magazine* Trophy where the Greenskins even manage to knock out the Champions of Death in the semi-finals before going on to defeat the Elfheim Eagles, the pre-tournament favourites, 2-0 in what was a particularly brutal final game!

2499 With Griff Oberwald having transferred only weeks previously, Varag Ghoul-Chewer also makes waves within the Blood Bowl world; signing for the Thunder Valley Greenskins as they prepare to enter the XL Blood Bowl. Though he denies that Griff's move influenced him in any way, it is suspected that Varag simply didn't want his rival to upstage him. Regardless, the Thunder Valley Greenskins are now captained by a true legend of the game and are ready to prove their mettle in the grandest tournament of them all!

2500 The Greenskins put all of their efforts into training for the Blood Bowl, ignoring the Badlands Leagues and other tournaments. This proves to be a smart move as the Greenskins make it all the way to the final; beating the likes of the Darkside Cowboys, Wolfenburg Crypt-stealers, and Varag's former team, the Gouged Eye. Although they put in a great performance, the Greenskins ultimately fall to a 3-1 defeat to the Bögenhafen Barons; though Varag does claim the Blood Bowl Players Medal.



HALL OF FAME:

THE THUNDER VALLEY

GREENSKINS 2499-2500 SQUAD

NAME	POSITION	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS
Varag Ghou-Chewer	Star Player	6	5	3+	5+	10+	Block, Crushing Blow*, Jump Up, Loner (4+), Mighty Blow (+1), Thick Skull
Zukerv da Puncha	Black Orc	4	4	4+	5+	10+	Block, Brawler, Grab, Mighty Blow (+1), Stand Firm
Dorgrub Bonestompa	Black Orc	4	4	4+	5+	10+	Block, Brawler, Grab, Tackle
Gurgurz Irontoof	Black Orc	3	4	4+	5+	10+	Block, Brawler, Grab
Vorlug da Rippa	Black Orc	4	4	4+	5+	10+	Brawler, Grab, Guard
Krundarz Rockjaw	Black Orc	4	4	4+	5+	10+	Brawler, Grab, Guard, Pro
Wagdrak Steelfist	Black Orc	4	5	4+	5+	10+	Brawler, Grab
Strok	Goblin Bruiser Lineman	7	2	2+	4+	8+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Sprint, Stunty, Thick Skull
Zraccik	Goblin Bruiser Lineman	6	2	3+	4+	8+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Sprint, Stunty, Sure Feet, Thick Skull
Stikz	Goblin Bruiser Lineman	6	2	3+	4+	8+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Sneaky Git, Stunty, Tackle, Thick Skull
Skrum	Goblin Bruiser Lineman	6	2	3+	4+	8+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Sidestep, Stunty, Thick Skull
Grivler	Goblin Bruiser Lineman	6	2	3+	4+	7+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Stunty, Thick Skull, Wrestle
Tirk	Goblin Bruiser Lineman	5	2	3+	4+	8+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Stunty, Thick Skull
Burrgg Grobleg	Trained Troll	4	5	5+	5+	10+	Always Hungry, Block, Loner (3+), Mighty Blow (+1), Multiple Block, Projectile Vomit, Really Stupid, Regeneration, Throw Team-mate

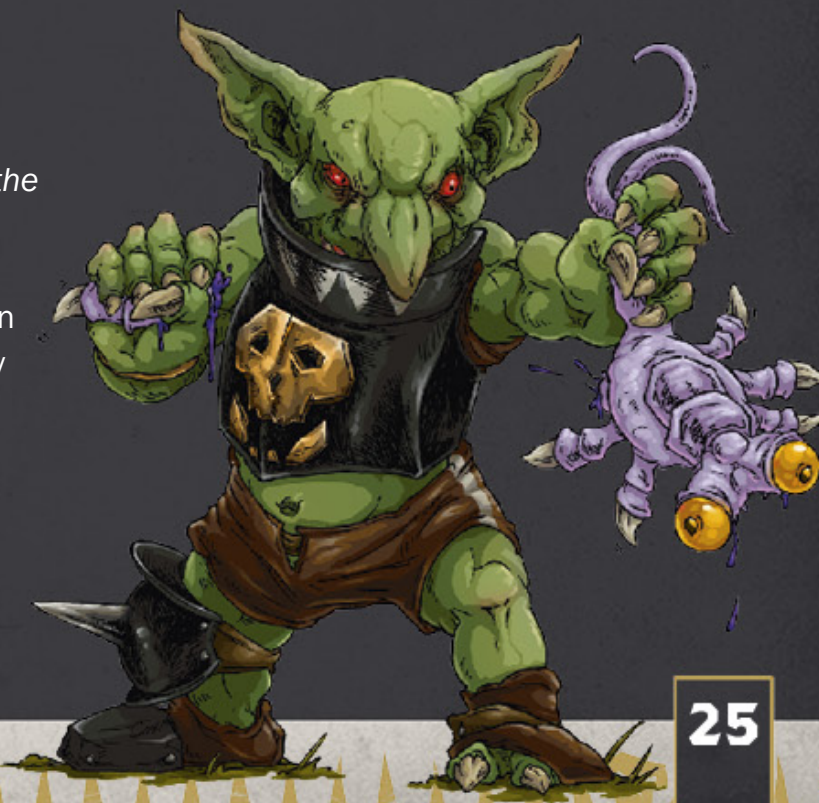
***CRUSHING BLOW:** Once per game, when an opposition player is Knocked Down as the result of a Block action performed by Varag, you may apply an additional +1 modifier to the Armour roll. This modifier may be applied after the roll has been made.

3 Re-rolls
4 Cheerleaders
3 Assistant Coaches
5 Dedicated Fans

TOTAL COST OF TEAM: 1,995,000 gold pieces

HIT AND MOVE: The Thunder Valley Greenskins work together seamlessly; the Black Orcs hitting opposing players whilst the Goblin Bruisers dart into the spaces created.

Once per team turn, when a Black Orc performs a Block action or Blitz action that does not result in a turnover, a single open Goblin Bruiser Lineman may move up to three squares. This does not count as that player's activation, and so they can still be activated, and therefore move, later in the turn.



STAR PLAYER SPOTLIGHT

VARAG GHOUL-CHEWER

'THE MEAN GREEN MACHINE'

When the conversation of greatest Orcs to play Nuffle's sacred game crops up, as it so often does in the various taverns in the Badlands, there is one name that is always mentioned within the first few suggestions (*After those round the table have all said themselves of course!* – Ed), which is, naturally, that of the now legendary Varag Ghou-Chewer.

VARAG GHOUL-CHEWER



MA 6

ST 5

AG 3+

PA 5+

AV 10+

GP
280,000

SKILLS & TRAITS

Block, Jump Up, Loner (4+), Mighty Blow (+1), Thick Skull

PLAYS FOR

'Badlands Brawl', or 'Underworld Challenge'

SPECIAL RULES

Crushing Blow: Once per game, when an opposition player is Knocked Down as the result of a Block action performed by Varag, you may apply an additional +1 modifier to the Armour roll. This modifier may be applied after the roll has been made.

SPIKE! EXCLUSIVE STAR PLAYER PROFILE

VARAG GHOUL-CHEWER

AGE 36 HEIGHT 6' 5" WEIGHT 188 lbs

ORIGINATING TEAM
The Gouged Eye

POSITION
Blitzer

CAREER TOTALS
71 touchdowns, 2 interceptions, 314 kills/serious injuries inflicted, 21 Referees clobbered, 27 sacks.

AWARDS
Chaos Cup Winners Medal 2477, 2482, 2483; Blood Bowl Players Medal 2478, 2500; AFC Player of the Year 2485; Orcworld Magazine Orc of the Year 2485; Blood Bowl Winners Medal, 2495; Services to Organ Transplants Medal 2498.





However, Varag nearly never played the great game at all. In fact, back in 2471, Varag was the foreman of the Wolfleg lead mines in Drakwald Forest; leading a simple life on his own terms. That was until a slaver raid from the Gougged Eye tribe captured Varag, and many of his workers, forcing them to perform manual labour for their Blood Bowl team.

For over a year, Varag worked tirelessly for his new masters; that was until one slaver pushed him a bit too far and Varag snapped – crushing the skull of the slaver with a blow from his massive fists. Fortunately for Varag, the head coach of the Gougged Eye, Gort Sever-limb, had witnessed his outburst, and was rather impressed. Instead of being punished, Varag was offered the chance to train with the Gougged Eye to see if he had what it took to play. Varag accepted and immediately began learning the glorious game; though he wouldn't get his first chance to play on the gridiron until 2474.

The final of Blood Bowl XIV in 2474 saw the Gougged Eye take on the Vynheim Valkyries in what would become an infamous game. During the second half, with the score tied at 0-0, a Valkyries player by the name of 'Axeface' Manglsson went on a bloodcrazed rampage, butchering numerous Gougged Eye's players in a blind fury. This massacre saw the Gougged Eye soundly defeated, though Varag managed to survive the bloodbath after coming on as a substitute late on.

With the team crippled, Coach Sever-limb needed to rebuild it. So he made Varag the team captain in 2475 following his vast improvement on the pitch, and the violent streak that had developed since the previous year's final. Varag began by drilling the team to prepare them for greater competitions, accepting no sign of weakness and leading each drive from the front, getting stuck into any opposition player that dared to face him down. Varag's leadership led to the Gougged Eye winning the Chaos Cup in 2477, and Coach Sever-limb's realisation that he may have a true star within the ranks of his players.

For over 20 years, Varag captained the Gougged Eye fearlessly, leading them to the final of the 2478 Blood Bowl, back-to-back Chaos Cup victories in 2482 and 2483, and the prestigious Blood Bowl title in 2495. However, all good things must come to an end, and in the year 2499 Varag caused great controversy when, following an unprecedented argument with head coach Sever-limb (*The details of which are still unclear – Ed*), Varag left the Gougged Eye to join the on-the-rise Black Orc team, the Thunder Valley Greenskins. Whilst many said that Varag alone couldn't help the Greenskins' fortunes, he proved the pundits wrong; leading the team in numerous violent displays as they made history to reach the XL Blood Bowl final on their first attempt!

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

2475 With most of the team slaughtered in the Blood Bowl XIV final, Varag is made team captain by Coach Sever-limb. This proves to be just the opportunity that Varag needs, and soon he is commanding his fellow players as if he had been captain for years. This yields great results, and the Gougged Eye begin to rebuild following the previous year's incident. During a 'friendly' game between the Gougged Eye and the Champions of Death, Varag earns his famous nickname after taking a chunk out of the opposing team's star Ghoul!

2478 Having regained much of their former infamy, the Gougged Eye make the Blood Bowl XVIII final against the Skavenblight Scramblers. Although the Scramblers claim victory, Ghoul-Chewer earns the coveted Blood Bowl Players Medal following his impressive display of viciousness where he crippled three Linerats, one Gutter Runner, and killed the Scramblers' Rat Ogre after he took umbrage with the creature trying to gnaw at his leg!

2495 Twenty years after being made captain, Varag once more leads the Gougged Eye to the final of the Blood Bowl; this time against the Elfheim Eagles. After a gritty encounter with neither team being able to get an edge, Varag masterminds a play to trick the Elves into thinking he has the ball. This cunning ploy distracts the Elves just long enough for the Gougged Eye's team Goblin to sneak through the lines with the ball and run in for the winning touchdown! Varag finally wins the trophy that has eluded him for 20 years.

2500 One year after his controversial transfer to the Thunder Valley Greenskins, Varag once more features in the final of the Blood Bowl Championships. Though Varag puts in one of the best games of the season, and in fact his whole career, it is not enough to prevent defeat at the hands of the Bögenhafen Barons. Yet Varag's exceptional performance, which included a touchdown, saw him awarded the Blood Bowl Players Medal. If there was ever any doubt about who is the greatest Orc of all time, after this game there is only one name on any pundit's lips!

Unlike standard Orc teams which feature many different types of Orcs, Black Orc teams rely solely on the brutish Black Orcs and the conniving Goblin Bruisers to make up their rosters – with the odd Troll thrown in for good measure! As such, Black Orc teams prove to be a very different challenge for coaches than standard Orc teams, and the same tactics cannot always be used to secure victory. So, to get the lowdown on these new teams, we at *Spike! Journal* got in contact with experienced Orc coach Samson Da Guy to share his wisdom on how best to krump the opposition!

In the spectacular sport of Blood Bowl, there are three paths to victory: out-scoring the opposing team using skill and strategy, dominating the opposing team with violence to tip the balance, or using downright cheap and dirty tactics to steal the win! If the first one sounds too much like hard work, I present to you... Black Orcs!

This team uses an intriguing combination of big strong brutes, in the form of Black Orcs, and agile troublemakers, the Goblin Bruiser Linemen, to bash and bamboozle the enemy team. It's fair to say that some degree of guile and cunning will be needed to keep the weaker members alive while they push the drive up the pitch – sometimes even to score!

This team has the Bribery and Corruption special rule, which allows Black Orc coaches to buy bribes at a discount price of 50,000 gold pieces, and even hire a Biased Referee for 80,000 gold pieces. These Inducement options mean fouls are likely something they can get away with, and Black Orc coaches should embrace that fact – after all, nothing says “*Let me win!*” like “*Let me win or else!*”.

BASH ‘EM AND

SMASH ‘EM!



PLAYERS

GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMAN

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-12	Goblin Bruiser Lineman	45,000	6	2	3+	4+	8+	Dodge, Right Stuff, Stunty, Thick Skull	A	GPS

This is your standard Lineman. As such, they are underwhelming in comparison to other players on the team, but what they may lack in Strength, Armour Value (*and integrity – Ed*), they more than make up for in a low hiring cost, Skills that allow for sneaky movement, and even an increased chance to stay on the pitch when knocked down compared to Goblins from other teams thanks to Thick Skull (*that harsh Black Orc training is paying off! – Ed*). Having the best AG in the team, these guys are your best ball handlers, and Stunty allows them to slip through enemy lines if needed. However, these guys are easy targets for your opponent, who will most likely want to put as many of these Goblins in the Dead and Injured box as possible to limit your ability to do much with the ball later in the match. If your Black Orcs protect them well, your Goblins may even get some touchdowns, and perhaps help to remove some downed opposing players with a cunning foul or two...

BLACK ORC

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-6	Black Orc	90,000	4	4	4+	5+	10+	Brawler, Grab	GS	AP

These burly brutes are the main focus of this team – and as such you can field up to six of them! They excel in the fist-to-face element of Blood Bowl, and are most useful on the Line of Scrimmage, whittling down your opponent's ranks and defending the more vulnerable Goblin Bruisers so they can exploit openings on the field. With an ST value of 4, they outmuscle the average player, and as such will be right at home blocking every turn, with a decent chance of success – especially as they have the Brawler skill, allowing them to re-roll a single Both Down result. These guys are tough and hard-hitting, so they should survive long enough to rack up some precious SPP and develop into truly terrifying killing machines!

TRAINED TROLL

QTY	POSITION	COST	MA	ST	AG	PA	AV	SKILLS	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
0-1	Trained Troll	115,000	4	5	5+	5+	10+	Always Hungry, Loner (3+), Mighty Blow (1+), Projectile Vomit, Really Stupid, Regeneration, Throw Team-mate	S	AGP

As if Black Orcs weren't strong enough, this team has managed to train a Troll to tear across the pitch for gore and glory! Trolls are ideal for assisting the Black Orcs in racking up casualties of opposing players (notably those with lowered Armour Values through their use of acidic vomit!), and also the odd surprise scoring assist using Throw Team-mate. They are also great at protecting other players – a Goblin Bruiser with the ball is well-protected with a Troll and a gang of Black Orcs around them! The notable difference between a Trained Troll and the Untrained variety found in Orc teams is their improved Loner skill, which allows this Troll to use a team re-roll on a 3+ rather than a 4+. This actually makes throwing team-mates slightly more reliable, but should still be considered an extreme method for advancing up the pitch!

STARTING ROSTERS

When it comes to starting one of these teams, the core decision you will face is whether to hire a Trained Troll from day one or wait until later. This question gives rise to two distinct starting rosters:

1 **PLENTY OF HITTING POWER**

6 Black Orcs
1 Trained Troll
5 Goblin Bruiser Linemen
2 Re-rolls
(1,000,000 GP)

2 **ALL THE BLACK ORCS!**

6 Black Orcs
6 Goblin Bruiser Linemen
3 Re-rolls
1 additional Dedicated Fan
(1,000,000 GP)

DEVELOPMENT GOBLIN BRUISERS

Most 'primary' Goblin Bruisers Skill choices would be perfectly viable in this team. For example, Skills such as Diving Tackle and Sidestep would make dealing with your Goblin Bruisers far more difficult for the opposition, allowing them to sneak around the pitch more easily to get in position to aid their team-mates. Similarly, a fouling Goblin Bruiser with Dirty Player and Sneaky Git can be a big risk to the opposing team – the threat of being stomped on once downed might make opponents think twice about engaging in a scrap for fear of what the Goblin Bruisers may do to their Star Players!

Alternatively, a Black Orc coach may decide to pursue an aerial specialist Goblin Bruiser, giving them Skills such as Catch and Sure Feet, so that the tactic of being launched by a Troll, then legging it to the End Zone, becomes a much more viable play, and may cause cautious opponents to sit deeper in their half to prevent any airborne shenanigans!

BLACK ORCS

Black Orcs have a clear purpose and as such should be equipped with Skills that maximise the carnage they can inflict. Skills such as Arm Bar and Tackle make attempting to escape the clutches of these brutes significantly more difficult, allowing your Black Orcs more chances to bash an opposition player's head in! Guard is another excellent choice for a Black Orc. Combined with these players' Grab skill, they can keep opposing players positioned in multiple Tackle Zones, tying those players up and leaving them at the mercy of the Black Orcs. Stand Firm is also worth considering; if opposing players do get a chance to block their way out, they will most likely be looking for pushes to create some distance between themselves and the Black Orcs – but with Stand Firm, they ain't goin' nowhere!

"I don't care if it's bigga dan you; I said hit it!"

Coach Krukog Stonehead telling a Goblin to tackle a Deathroller



SET-UPS

OFFENSIVE

This set-up makes good use of this team's rather intimidating physical presence, guarantees some early chances at maiming opposing Linemen, and keeps a decently wide front line to interfere with sidelane push attempts. The Goblin Bruisers are positioned to receive the kick, or immediately run around the opposition and provide an assist. A Goblin Bruiser that manages to get the Catch or Diving Catch skill on their first level-up would be well suited for the position towards the back of the pitch to collect the ball.

This set-up also has the potential for a one-turn touchdown thanks to the Goblin Bruisers tucked behind the Troll. If the opposing coach leaves their backfield empty, a smart move might be to lob a ball-carrying Goblin Bruiser downfield with the ball to steal a touchdown and upset the half!



DEFENSIVE

This set-up keeps the Goblin Bruisers tucked away behind tougher team-mates. However due to their higher MA, they can keep pace with the Black Orcs if they need to swarm forwards. Having the Goblin Bruisers behind the Black Orcs in this way also protects them from kick-off events such as Quick Snap or Blitz. This set-up keeps some of the Black Orcs off the front line which, though it might seem odd at first, means an opponent cannot tie them all up with their own players from turn one and move round them. You can then use any spare Black Orcs to shift the pressure around the pitch as needed.



SUMMARY

Overall, Black Orc teams are at their best when they are simply trying to pummel an opposing player into the ground, and then trying to score a late touchdown to seal victory. That's not to say that they can't play a scoring game if they want, the Goblins are pretty nippy after all; but it's far easier to score if your opponent has less players on the pitch!

Naturally, the Black Orcs are the stars of these teams, and you will want to invest in them as much as possible so that they can gain new skills quickly. The likes of Guard, Block and Stand Firm early on can be incredibly valuable.

If you are a coach that wants your team to punch things, but also be surprisingly competent at the other aspects of the game, then Black Orcs might just be the team you never knew you needed!

KEY

- Goblin Bruiser Lineman
- Black Orc
- Trained Troll



CHAT WITH THE RAT

Hackspit 'the Scribbler' Quillchewer is our ace Skaven reporter, sniffing around the dark places of the Old World to uncover all the juiciest news right from the sidelines and training rooms. This issue, Hackspit sat down with Gurgnie Shwarzenorc, fan favourite Black Orc of the Grimfang Gougers, to get some insight into his intense, and frankly quite insane, training regime.

QUILLCHEWER: So, Mr Shwarzenorc, the Grimfang Gougers are on a bit of a hot-fire streak in the Badlands Leagues, thanks in a large part to your 'Orc of the Match' worthy performances. In a recent Cabalvision interview, you attributed this success to your own personal training regime. How true would you say that is?

SHWARZENORC: I wud say dats very true! It's dun wonders. I am now bigga and stronga dan eva!

QUILLCHEWER: It's fair to say that some of your *ahem* methods are, shall we say, a bit more unusual than readers may expect.

SHWARZENORC: Well you know wot dey say, 'You gotta get bitten by da Squig if you want to catch da Squig!'

QUILLCHEWER: Yes-yes, though I'm not actually sure what that means. Anyway, tell us about some of the exercises that help you bulk up-up for a game?

SHWARZENORC: Well, Blood Bowl is all about strengf you see, an so I focus on making my muscles as big as I can. I start every day wiv as many reps of BellSquig lifts as I can – not just lots, but lots an lots! Den I go for a run. Da trick ere is to hav a real

threat chasing you to make sure you really push urself. Wot I recommend is to find a big, angry Squig, punt it as far away as you can, and den get ready to run! Don't waste time looking where it lands, just get going – if it catches you den, well, dat's 'ow I lost ma finga!

QUILLCHEWER: So-so, your cardio is kicking a Squig and trying not to get caught by it as it tries to tear you apart? Surely there is a better way of going for a run!

SHWARZENORC: Well, this trick means dat you ave to run as fast as you can – dere's no letting urself off wiv a light workout if ur training buddy wants to rip ur leg off!

QUILLCHEWER: There is some logic to that I guess...

SHWARZENORC: After a run, I grab sum willing Goblins to 'elp wiv da next bit. Tie one of da Goblin's legs to a stick in da ground wiv sum rope. Den wot you do is try an' catch da little pest as quickly as you can. Dem Goblins iz nippy tho, an so it takes a gud bit of agility to catch dem wivout dem wiggling free.

QUILLCHEWER: Yes-yes, I imagine that catching the quick-fast Goblins

can be quite challenging for those who are built more for power than speed.

SHWARZENORC: After a gud bit of Goblin-wrangling, I move onto wot I call krunches. Dis can't always be dun as you needs an employee of da team dat is in da bad books, if you no wot I means! Wot you do is grab one of dere 'ands and squeeze until you ere it krunch; den you grab da over 'and an repeat!

QUILLCHEWER: I can't imagine you get many staff misbehaving if that is what happens to them!

SHWARZENORC: Well, you'd be surprised! An' if dere is no one to 'elp wiv da krunches, den you can always tell da bosses dat some people were misbehaving so you can 'ave anover trainin partner! It's all in my new book – *Da Encyclorcpedia of da Modern Bodybuildin'*.

QUILLCHEWER: All of this, and more, is detailed in your new training book, yes-yes?

SHWARZENORC: Of course! An' it's available from all gud merchant standz wot sell stuff at da Badlands League games – all for only 12 teef!

COFFIN CORNER

In Coffin Corner we remember those players that are no longer with us – because they were trampled into the pitch, torn apart, or possibly even set on fire!

AN EXPENSIVE MISTAKE

We remember Ilyan Vörgeroff, aspiring owner of the Cresswell Cardinals. In an effort to take control of his beloved team, Vörgeroff hired an assassin to remove the team's current owner. When paying the assassin, Vörgeroff wore a mask to conceal his identity, and presented a picture of the target. However, Vörgeroff took the wrong picture out of his coin purse without realising, and instead handed over one with his own face on it! Two days later Vörgeroff was murdered as he watched the Cardinals play, having paid for his own assassination!

CAN'T HOLD HIS LIQUOR!

We remember Terry Keserlich, former blitzer for the Grenzstadt Granddukes. After a routine victory over the Steel-toof Smashas, and being full of bravado, Keserlich challenged any member of the Smashas line-up to a drinking contest with the challenger's choice of beer. This last clause turned out to be a fatal mistake; the challenge was accepted by a Troll, Big Grug, who brought with him a keg of Tasty Goblin. Keserlich got an impressive five mouthfuls in before the beer, which is deadly to humans, ate through his stomach and dissolved him from the inside out!

GRAVY CONSEQUENCES

We remember Snark Spiketongue, Goblin of the Rock-tribe Limbrippas. Snark had the bright idea of covering himself in gravy pre-match, in order to make himself slippery enough to slip through the legs of the opposing players and score. Whilst this worked against the likes of Elves, who didn't want to get their kit dirty, it maybe wasn't the brightest move when the Limbrippas played the Tusk Peak Tyrants. The smell of gravy was too much for the Ogres, and Snark was quickly wolfed down, along with the ball, starting a furious feeding frenzy!

Have you witnessed any memorable deaths on the pitch – because *Spike! Journal* wants to know! Send your outrageous obituaries, funny fouls and mirthful murders to 'Coffin Corner, Spike! Tower, 30 Neustrasse, Altdorf'.



'THE BRUT-IFUL GAME'

BOB: "THING IS, JIM, THE GAME HAS CHANGED SINCE MY DAY. LOT OF GOLD CHANGING HANDS. LOT OF RICH GITS BUYING UP TEAMS, FIXING GAMES..."

"WE, FRITZ. WE ARE GOING TO MAKE SO MUCH MONEY..."

"IT'S AGREED THEN, KLAUS... I AM GOING TO MAKE SO MUCH MONEY FROM THIS GAME."

"TAKE THESE TWO, FOR INSTANCE, JIM. THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS AND THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS. AMONGST THE BEST IN THE LEAGUE, CERTAINLY THE RICHEST..."

"RICH ENOUGH TO TEMPT STAR PLAYERS GRIFF OBERWALD AND VARAG GHOUL-CHEWER, BOB."

"TWO OF THE BEST BLITZERS ON THE CIRCUIT, JIM. BUT ARE THEIR HEARTS STILL IN IT?"

"I THINK WE'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT BOB. HERE COMES THE SCRIMPAGE!"

"OOOH! THAT'S A BAD FUMBLE FROM GRIFF OBERWALD. IS IT JUST ME, BOB, OR DID STEIN TRIP HIM?"

"SOMETHING STINKS WORSE THAN A SNOTLING'S UNDERPANTS, JIM!"

"AND YOU'VE SMELLED A SNOTLING'S UNDERPANTS."

"I HAVE, JIM."



"GRIFF DID NOT LIKE THAT, BOB."

"HE'S LIVED, JIM."

"AND HERE COMES THE KICK! DEADLOCKED AT 0-0, IN WHAT HAS TO BE THE MOST FRUSTRATING GAME OF BLOOD BOWL I'VE EVER WITNESSED. LET'S HOPE THIS GETS ONE TEAM ON THE SCORESHEET, BOB."

"CALAMITY, BOB! GHOUL-CHEWER GOES DOWN! WAS IT A SLIP OR SOMETHING ELSE?"

"SNOTLING'S UNDERPANTS, JIM. THIS GAME STINKS!"

"WORSE THAN AN OGRE WITH THE SQUITS, BOB, AND YOU SHOULD KNOW..."

"IT'S AS IF BOTH SIDES ARE GOING FOR A 0-0 DRAW, JIM. KICK LOOKS GOOD THOUGH..."

"THE CROWD DON'T LIKE IT, BOB..."

"...AND THEY'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES! GRIFF LOOKS LIKE HE'S HAD ENOUGH, JIM!"

"GRIFF OBERWALD HAS BROKEN THE DEADLOCK! LET'S HOPE THAT'S DONE THE TRICK AND WE CAN GET BACK TO WHAT MAKES BLOOD BOWL GREAT, BOB... GOOD, HONEST CARNAGE!"



"WHAT A PASS, BOB! EVER SINCE GRIFF DUNKED HIS OWN PLAYER IN THE CROWD, IT'S REALLY OPENED UP. AT 4-3 TO THE BARONS, IT'S STILL ANYONE'S GAME AND THE CROWD ARE LOVING IT."

"LOOKS LIKE THERE'S ONLY ONE WINNER HERE, BOB, AND THAT'S BLOOD BOWL!"

"NOT EVERYONE IS LOVING IT, JIM..."

"AH, THE BRUT-IFUL GAME, JIM. THE BRUT-IFUL GAME..."



**FRIEDRICH HERBENHOFF
IMPERIAL THROWER,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**PIOTR REIKGÜRDEN
IMPERIAL RETAINER LINEMAN,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**TÜRGEN BECKENHEIM
BODYGUARD,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**STREYA GÜRGEN
BODYGUARD,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**HANNA DRÖRGLICH
IMPERIAL RETAINER LINEMAN,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**ZEIGVALD REIGER
IMPERIAL THROWER,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**JORGE BERGEN
BODYGUARD,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**JURGEN BREINHOVEN
IMPERIAL RETAINER LINEMAN,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**



**LIETPOLD HEGUNDEN
NOBLE BLITZER,
THE BÖGENHAFEN BARONS**

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**GURGURZ IRONTOOF,
BLACK ORC,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**SKRUM,
GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMAN,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**DORGRUB BONESTOMPA,
BLACK ORC,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**TIRK,
GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMAN,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**GRIVLER,
GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMAN,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**ZUKERV DA PUNCHA,
BLACK ORC,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**WAGDRAK STEELFIST,
BLACK ORC,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**ZRACCIK,
GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMAN,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**VORLUG DA RIPPA,
BLACK ORC,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**STIKZ,
GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMAN,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**KRUNDARZ ROCKJAW,
BLACK ORC,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**



**STROK,
GOBLIN BRUISER LINEMAN,
THE THUNDER VALLEY GREENSKINS**