

**ISSUE 05**

# **SPORK!**

**THE FANTASY FOOTBALL ZINE**



**BLAST!**

# WELCOME TO SPORK!

ISSUE 05

## GREETINGS, SPORTS FANS!

**WELCOME TO ISSUE NUMBER FIVE OF SPORK!, THE ONLY ZINE DEDICATED TO THE WORLD'S GREATEST SPORT: BLOOD BOWL.**

We are four match days into the season now: for those eagle-eyed viewers amongst you, that's over halfway!

The **Bashful Binfires** remain top of the table after a fourth consecutive victory and have secured their spot in the play-offs, but the coveted second spot is still within reach of several teams: the **Cromwell Corpse Grinders** have made their intentions clear after defeating the **Synth Valley Renegades**.

CCG's Ghoul Runner Jean-Jacques François Jacques Jean leads the scoring table with a total of five touchdowns across their three games so far; that's a rate of 1.667 TDs per game. Meanwhile, Noble Blitzter Albrecht Panzerblitzen of the **Nula City Ironclads** is the most experienced player in the league with 19 SPP and three touchdowns of his own.

Dates for the remaining league and play-off matches have now been settled, so speak your usual ticket vendor about spectator access to these final games:

- Sunday 16 June 2024
- Sunday 23 June 2024 (*pending review*)

But until next time, merry blitzing!

- Viola Scuttlebutt (Editor)



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South Hampshire Association of Fantasy Football Teams (SHAFFT)

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# THE RUMOUR MILL



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Zombie Lineman Jim of the Cromwell Corpse Grinders rolled the dice and now has skills in Frenzy and Kick - coach Patrick McSweeney gushed the following to our roving reporter:

*"Ever since he nailed one of the Synth Valley Black Orcs, I was sort of honour bound to keep him; he's taken his SPP and made himself useful."*

Good job, Jim!



The **Bashful Binfires** are leading the way in terms of spectator attendance at recent matches: with 4,000 dedicated fans travelling with the team for their last match against **Terrible Lizards** and a 2-0 victory on the scoreboards, the team are clearly doing something right...

After a streak of losses, the Thorsá Blood Eagles are looking for a refund on the "Lucky" Raven Runes that they installed in pre-season preparation and which were found to be faulty. I guess it goes to show that you can never trust a Snotling charm-seller...

Thrower Alvidru of the Bashful Binfires has acquired skills in Dodge, whilst Rat Ogre Big Bite of Pride of Southampton has apparently mastered the art of Standing Firm - if only he could control his animal savagery, the Skaven team might have some better luck on the pitch...

Rumour has it that Heidi Bierflasche of the Nuln City Ironclads is stepping out with hotshot elf catcher Norelhil Youngleaf of SO:BBL Eastern Conference team, the Reikland Meteors... The pair were spotted canoodling in the stands by the Cabal Vision KissCam at a recent off-league match. Might there be some inter-divisional romance in the air?



The Synth Valley Renegades' sick bay is jam-packed with players missing their next game against the Thorsá Blood Eagles - Black Orc Ripper and Goblins Spewtum and Fudd Dunker are all taking some medical leave for a little while. Please address any cards, flowers and well-wishes to St. Nurgle's Hospital, Ward #666.



GOSSIP

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# MATCH REPORT 21/04/2024

## P.O.S. 1 - 2 Nuln City Ironclads



**THE IRON CAGE WARDS OFF STIFF OPPOSITION FROM THE SKAVEN DEFENCE**

### **NOBILITY STALWARTS CLAIM FIRST LEAGUE VICTORY AGAINST A VALIANT SKAVEN ROSTER**

A long kick by Clanrat Lineman Tooth punted the ball deep into Ironclad territory to open the game, to cheers from the crowd. Imperial Thrower Detlef von Sturm (DvS) rushed to collect it and the Nobility team lined up in a wall of iron that began to stoically march up the field, protecting the ball-carrier. The Skaven wisely maintained a spread formation in order to obstruct the advancing Ironclads as best they could, but vermin disorder soon spread amongst the ranks: Rat Ogre Big Bite succumbed to a spell animal savagery and lashed out at Snips, sending him to the ground in a stun. However, the chaos was not

not confined to just the Skaven team: Gundolf Lichtenfels spilled a hand-off and caused a turnover, but Pride also struggled with the greasy ball and it slips away from Varmint before DvS was able to recover it once more. After some minor scuffles trading blow between the teams, the Iron Cage finally broke through the Pride line and, on a sprinting break, Albrecht Panzerblitzen cradled the ball to the first touchdown of the game.

*(Why was the ball so slippery, I hear you ask? Rumour has it that it was discarded grease from the pitchside McMurty's stand after P.O.S. conducted a pre-match snack raid on the poor food seller, but there's little but cheese crumbs to be left as evidence...)*

With three rats previously in the knockout box, all but one returned for a restart which saw a touchback issued to the Skaven team due to a wayward kick by DvS: the Ironclad captain later blamed this error on a bootlace malfunction, although critics speculate that his eye was distracted by a particularly buxom Norse Valkyrie hovering by the sidelines. In the dying moments of the first half, the ball was assigned to renowned Gutter Runner Snips (who had, by now, regained composure and



**THE POWERFUL BIG BITE-SNIPS COMBO LINES UP TOGETHER TO RATTLE THE NOBILITY DEFENCES**



was performing muscular hindleg stretches), but there was insufficient time to progress anywhere up the field before the half-time whistle was blown.

After a rallying team talk by the Skaven coach, the Pride team came out, chests pumping, for the second half with renewed fire. The rats immediately issue the ball to Thrower Varmint who, after some excellent ball safety play, elegantly passed to Gutter Runner Rippa who was able to make an escape and scamper in the direction of the Ironclads' endzone. As a last-gasp attempt, Noble Blitzzer Otto Schädelbrecher managed to escape Big Bite's manic, flailing tail to make a desperate tackle which knocked the ball into the crowd: however, the throw-in from the crowd landed in Pride's favour, with the ball settling near an encircled Snips. In a show of athleticism which delighted the crowd, the Gutter Runner dodged past two Nobility defenders to pick up the ball and scamper into the endzone with two Go For It rushes. At one-all, it was all square between the two teams.



**P.O.S. GUTTER RUNNERS SNIPS AND SKAB FIND THEMSELVES IN AN IRON SANDWICH**

With half of the second half remaining and a potential final scoring opportunity, the Ironclads defaulted to their trademark, slow-moving play for their drive: the Iron Cage was again deployed and made meaningful (but slow) progression into the Pride half but any strong advance was thwarted by the Skaven defence. The Nobility team eventually saw the battle of attrition swing their way, though, as Pride found their defensive formation scattered and impaired by several stunned players recovering on the grass.



**PRIDE'S LUCK FALTERS YET AGAIN**

As the final minutes of the match ticked by, a 1-1 draw felt inevitable as the Nobility couldn't quite progress quickly enough, but the stands erupted when a blitzing bodyguard was able to create a hole in the rodent line. The Nobility cage handed off the ball to Albrecht Panzerblitzen and the Noble Blitzzer was able to dodge-rush through the defence to score the winner in the final minutes.

A narrow victory for the Ironclads, then: a match that could have gone either way, but which saw the Skaven team finding the Nobility armour slightly too tough to employ their usual, blood-soaked savagery to maximum effect.

# MATCH REPORT 21/04/2024

## Corpse Grinders 2 - 0 Renegades

### CROMWELL CORPSE GRINDERS SINK TWO OVER THE SYNTH VALLEY RENEGADES' BLACK ORCS

The Corpse Grinders opened with a quick snap; gathering the ball up and leaving the Renegades stood in the starting blocks. The Black Orc defence, which had the considerable weight advantage, showed almost no interest in the fast-moving Necromantic attack which was hurtling towards their endzone. A few goblins pulled together a hurried response, but it was no match for the Grinders and several goblins found the dugout. Now in a strong position in the enemy half, the Horrors started playing for time: as pressure gradually mounted, famed Ghoul Runner JJ Frankie JJ eventually ran in the touchdown to give the CCGs a one-nil advantage.

On the restart, Synth Valley struggled to collect a kick which had fallen very deep into their half. Their ensuing assault looked robust, but the advance was slow: the Cromwells screened effectively to keep them at bay and, ultimately, halted the ball around the halfway line. For the second half, the Corpse Grinders' kick strategy changed dramatically and the ball landed very centrally. A goblin gathered the ball into a loose cage, but, no sooner had they done so, the Corpse Grinders' defensive strategy became apparent: Jim sent Ripper a dummy at the Line of Scrimmage, sending the Black Orc to the dugout and leaving the Renegades wide open. Undead troops flooded through into the Renegades' half and, once again, the flimsy goblin defence was found lacking. JJ Frankie JJ wasted no time in gathering the spilled ball and ran it into the end zone for his second touchdown of the match.

The match ended scrappily with neither team showing much interest in the ball as they both attempted to pack more of the opposition into the casualty box. Overall, it was a very physical match, but it would be unfair to say it was hotly contested. The Renegades never really looked like scoring; barely entering Cromwell's half with ball in hand, but also struggling to make the punches count at the Line of Scrimmage. The match ended with the CCGs as 2-0 victors, and with a significant advantage in player numbers by the end.

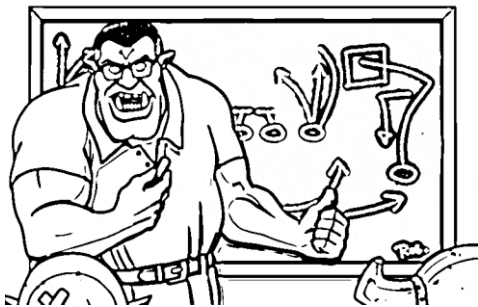


UNDEAD MEET GREENSKINS HEAD-ON AT THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE



MATCH REPORT

MATCH REPORTER: LAURA MOHR

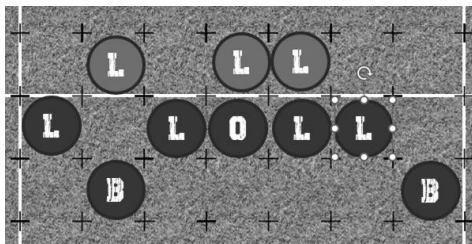


# TALKING TACTICS

WITH BRUISER

RECEIVING THE BALL AT THE BEGINNING OF A DRIVE OFFERS SEVERAL ADVANTAGES. FIRSTLY, YOU SET UP AFTER YOUR OPPONENT SO CAN REACT TO THEIR FORMATION OR STRATEGY; AND SECONDLY, YOU GET TO MOVE FIRST AFTER THE KICK AND POTENTIALLY GET THE JUMP ON YOUR ENEMIES. AS SUCH, WHEN PLAYING OFFENCE, COACHES WILL OFTEN QUESTION "HOW MANY OPPOSITION PLAYERS CAN I HIT, AND HOW MANY TIMES CAN I HIT THEM?"; HOWEVER, OPTIMAL SETUPS LIKELY HAVE A FEW MORE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH INDIVIDUAL COACHES OR TEAMS MAY NEED TO FACTOR IN.

## OFFENCE



Firstly, the kicking team will have placed at least three players on the Line of Scrimmage (LoS): these present excellent targets for initial punches, ideally by players with Block and/or Mighty Blow. If the defence is bunched up tight (three players in a side-by-side formation), they can often be surrounded and pinned in place. If they are set up wider apart, you may be able to employ a formation which enables blocking any of them twice if the first results in a pushback.

However, when placing offensive players on the LoS, a coach must also be conscious that such players will be vulnerable to counter-blocking, should any defending players remain standing after the initial brawl. If there are opposition players on the LoS that present formidable barriers (e.g. Big Guys and players with high Strength and/or Armour Values), keep in mind that these may be tricky to put down and so could move on the counter: you may wish to consider placing one sacrificial Lineman to mark them in order to keep them tied up.

Other considerations should be: 1) Where is the ball likely to land, and how can I protect it (and the prospective ball-carrier) from the kicking team when it is their turn? 2) Are there opportunities to move players into the opposition half to potentially receive the ball and get into a scoring position? 3) How can I slow or prevent the opposition from moving forward (likely towards where the ball will be) on their activation? 4) Where are my most valuable/vulnerable players, and where might the defensive team attempt to block or blitz?

Whichever approach you choose, be sure to make it count!

# LEAGUE STANDINGS

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SO:BBL - CENTRAL CONFERENCE

	CLUB	PTS	P	W	D	L	TDF	TDA	CAS
1	BASHFUL BINFIRES	12	4	4	0	0	8	4	4
2	CROMWELL CORPSE GRINDERS	7	3	2	1	0	5	1	5
3	NULN CITY IRONCLADS	5	4	1	2	1	5	5	3
4	TERRIBLE LIZARDS	4	4	1	1	2	5	5	5
5	SYNTH VALLEY RENEGADES	4	3	1	1	1	3	3	5
6	PRIDE OF SOUTHAMPTON (P.O.S.)	1	3	0	1	2	3	5	5
7	THORSA BLOOD EAGLES	0	3	0	0	3	1	7	2

**BASHFUL BINFIRES** CONTINUE THEIR WINNING STREAK TO MATHEMATICALLY SECURE THEMSELVES A PLACE IN THE FINAL, WHILST **NULN CITY IRONCLADS** TAKE THEIR FIRST WIN OF THE SEASON. WITH A DECISIVE VICTORY OVER THE **SYNTH VALLEY RENEGADES**, THE **CROMWELL CORPSE GRINDERS** EDGE INTO SECOND PLACE AND STAMP THEIR INTENTION TO JOIN THE BINFIRES IN THE PLAYOFFS, BUT **TERRIBLE LIZARDS** SLIP DOWN THE ORDER AFTER A SECOND CONSECUTIVE DEFEAT.

## LEAGUE TABLE KEY:

<b>PTS</b>	LEAGUE POINTS
<b>P</b>	MATCHES PLAYED
<b>W</b>	WINS
<b>D</b>	DRAWS
<b>L</b>	LOSSES
<b>TDF</b>	TOUCHDOWNS FOR
<b>TDA</b>	TOUCHDOWNS AGAINST
<b>CAS</b>	CASUALTIES INFLICTED



## CASUALTY CORNER

NO DEATHS ... THIS TIME!