

**ADELAIDE'S
BLOOD BOWL
MAGAZINE**

**City of Casualties:
BB in Adelaide**

**Fallout from
SSB2018**

**Xmas in
Bretonnia**

**Adelaide Open
Season 4 Finals**



SOUTHERN STRIKE

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DECEMBER 2018

SSB WRAP UP!

Hello again to the incredible Blood Bowl coaches, players and fans in Adelaide (and beyond). I write this just a few days after the eleventh (can you believe it?) Southern Shrike Bowl has been run and won.

As we explained in the last issue, SSB is South Australia's biggest tournament, and it is widely regarded as one of the best in the country, for a whole host of reasons. Adam and Casper outdid themselves once again in putting on an incredible show for the 38 coaches who competed, from the spectacular pulled pork rolls, to the overflowing prize table and the fun mini games (even if they did cheat with the dice bucket!).

However, I may be slightly biased this year in my praise because, suprisingly even to myself, I went on to win the whole shebang. It was doubly special because I did it with a renewed version of the team that I played in the very first Shrike Bowl, back in 2008! Le Coq, originally played as a human team (from Bretonnia), had a whole back story and gave their name to the Coq Fancier's Trophy, which is awarded each year to the Best Painted Team. As this year was the eleventh year (Nuffle's sacred number, praise be His name) of SSB I wanted to bring them back, this time as a proper Bretonnian team (it wasn't a legal option in 2008). To mark the occasion I went back and updated the back story to account for what had happened in the intervening years (suffice to say they have been wandering north, but I've included both the original and new stories later in this issue for you to read). I also painted up a brand new Greebo knights team and constructed a custom dugout and display for them. To cap off an incredible tournament, they also won their own trophy again, taking out Best Painted Team.

Their path to winning wasn't always smooth though. They started well, with a 5-1 win against Thomas' Asgard Patriots (Norse) but then ran

into a roadblock in the form of Johnno's Midnight Grooves (dark elf), who inflicted their only loss for the tournament (2-1). The final match for day one saw the first of a series of Bretonnian mirror matches (all of the Bretonnian coaches present played each other), with Le Coq defeating Peter's Spamalot 2-1.

Le Coq picked up Nerves of Steel in the draft, which went to Sir Tainne (an AG4 knight), and they met the other Bretonnian team, Chris' Loric Hippogriffs for a 1-0 win first up on day two. It was interesting that all three Bretonnian teams were built differently. This put me in a position where I thought I was in with a chance. Game five would be played on table three against JoeKano's humans, the Skye Knights, while the other two key contenders played off on table one. Johnno had gone on to crush all comers and was facing off against Jayson's Cleavehand Browns (skaven). A win for the dark elves would give them a handy lead. But Jayson managed to win it, which left me facing him in the final round needing a win against the rats, and also needing Johnno to draw or lose against Adam's necromantic team, to get to the top spot.

The game is explained in all its glory later in this issue, but it ended in a 2-1 win for Le Coq. As this happened it looked likely that Adam would beat Johnno, but halfway through the second half, anything could have happened. As it turned out, they tied, leaving Le Coq clear at the top. Thanks again to everyone, and see you next year.

SINISTERDEXTER

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NEWS & EVENTS

ADELAIDE OPEN S5

The latest season of the Adelaide Open (season 5) has begun (on 1 December). Teams can enter at any time, and coaches are free to organise games when and wherever they like. Season 5 will run until the end of March 2019.

The Adelaide Open is moderated through the OBBLM website provided by the NAF. You don't need to be a NAF member to join (although it is polite).

If you need any help getting started visit the website (www.adeleague.weebly.com), the Facebook page (search for Adeleague), or email the Commission at southernstrikeeditor@gmail.com

DEADLY ARRIVAL

The next instalment in the Games Workshop range of miniatures is the undead team. Watch out for them soon from GW, along with the associated *Spike! Magazine Journal*.



CROWDSOURCED

Looking for a new team? What about a stadium or some fan and staff miniatures? The following teams and extras are currently being crowdsourced through Kickstarter.

- [Croc Blockers](#) - Lizardmen (Warploque)
- [Death Bringers](#) - Undead (Raffaele Stumpo)
- [Zenobian Zeniths](#) - Amazon (Exit 23 Games)
- [Battle Ball Field](#) - Stadium (C. S. Herbert)
- [Underground Support](#) - Fans and Extras (GamesMiniatures)

NAF UPDATE

The NAF released the [2018 rules update](#) recently. Since the release of Blood Bowl 2016 (BB16) the NAF releases yearly updates to determine which elements of the many different rule versions will be considered 'legal' for NAF sanctioned events.

The current version has authorised most of BB16 as official and kept the unofficial teams (Bretonnians, Khorne and Slaan) along with star players from both versions. This is in line with the review last year.

With a new *Almanac* and *Spike! Journals* this December, there will certainly be plenty more to review next year.

24 HOUR IRONMAN

The seventh 24 Hour Ironman Challenge is quickly approaching and the tournament is already shaping up as the biggest one yet. The Ironman Challenge is being held at the Flagstaff Hill Scout Hall from 11.30am Saturday 19 to midday on Sunday 20 January 2019.

The Ironman Challenge was devised during the golden era of Australian Blood Bowl with the goal in mind to introduce a unique style of tournament the like we had never seen before. At the time, Australia had multiple large tournaments across most states and territories, so the desire to add another wasn't all that great, but a chance discussion between Adam Marafioti, Brett Whittaker and myself led to the insane notion that was to become the 24 Hour Ironman Challenge.



The idea was simple. 24 hours of continuous Blood Bowl gaming with the ultimate goal of pushing everyone to the limit and seeing who could keep their mental edge throughout nine full length games. It was a test of grit and determination and a battle against sleep deprivation and mental stress that, quite honestly, I was

terrified about. But in the end it couldn't have worked out better!

2013 saw the first running of the Ironman with a modest turnout of seven coaches from across SA. Six of those original seven have attended every single year since: Adam Marafioti (Olaf),

Brett Whittaker (SinisterDexter), Brett Winter (Nightwolf), Robert Bushell (Froggy), Mark Forster (Kanga) and myself.

The first two years saw a valiant attempt at using a progression format with the ability to return teams over a two year period. It was an enjoyable ruleset with some fun results from trying to decide on a normal skill for a player after 18 hours of gaming, but the required paperwork and unbalanced teams for new coaches saw the ruleset change to its current incarnation as a resurrection league.

Each team plays eight matches against the other coaches before a Swiss style ranking system decides the final round.

But how on earth do you manage to maintain concentration levels for 24 hours and not nod off in your chair every minute? Well that's simple,

24 HOUR IRONMAN CHAMPIONS:

Adam Marafioti - Olaf the Stout (3 times)
Kane Taylor

Brett Whittaker (SinisterDexter)
Kyle Harper (ksharper)

EVENTS

24H IRONMAN VI

When: 19 Jan 11:30am - 20 Jan 12:00pm

Where: Flagstaff Hill Scout Hall

Cost: \$55 (includes four meals and snacks)

Tickets and Queries: [Facebook Page](#)

just have the amazing Mrs One Eye (Lauretta) bang up some amazing curries for dinner or a full breakfast with bacon, sausage, beans and eggs. Or perhaps you would rather a massive cheese platter for your midnight snack? One thing's for sure, you can get thumped every single match you play but you can guarantee that the food will never disappoint like your team does on the pitch!

What is a tournament without prizes and this is where the 24 Hour Ironman Challenge really does step it up a gear as I personally wanted to offer something unique and eye catching for each of the trophies on offer which led to the huge winners trophy. After a few years of searching for those perfect trophies I decided to bite the bullet and just make them from scratch and so the top three coaches now receive a unique gold, silver and bronze fist trophy (our very own Brett Whittaker's actual fist) and accompanying most touchdown and casualty trophies, which have been updated this year from medals to more impressive representations of glory!

Now I get that 24 hours of Blood Bowl isn't exactly everyone's cup of tea, hell its not even my cup of tea... I can't manage to complete it without a little snooze! But what you are missing out on is an amazingly friendly group of guys who enjoy their Blood Bowl, even at 5am in the morning!

ADELAIDE OPEN V

Season 5 of the Adelaide Open (Adeleague's main tournament) began on 1 December 2018. The playoffs run until 31 March 2019.

Coaches can join at any time before the finals, so get involved at <http://adeleague.weebly.com>.

Check out the 24 Hour Ironman Challenge facebook page or on Ausbowl and you can sign up anytime if you think you have what it takes to survive 24 hours of Blood Bowl madness.

Evan Whittaker (One Eye)



Adam Marafioti: three-time winner and current holder of the Ironman mantle.

Adeleague

The Adeleague finals have wrapped up, and we have a Season 4 champion for the Adelaide Open!

Our finals this season began with the powerhouse necromantic team (featured in last week's issue of *Southern Strike*), the Renaissance Rejects, taking on fourth-placed Norse hopefuls the Well-Oiled Beef Hooks. In what Olaf (Adam) assures us was a horrifying betrayal by Nuffle, the Rejects were summarily rejected by the Beef Hooks to the bench, leading to a 2-1 win to Simork's (Simon's) frosty warriors.

The second semi final was a similarly interesting affair, with second placed high elven team, and late-season additions under Mark Peterson (abominable snowman), Highest of the High meeting the Lilly Lickers, a slaan team coached by Greg Nield (Echalon). Unfortunately for the elves it seemed that someone had let the Lickers' mascot into the changerooms during the pre-match and it had licked all of their boots, because they kept falling at the final hurdle. In the end it was a giant leap for slaankind, and a 4-2 victory for the Lilly Lickers.

For the grand final, we switch to a report from the coach of the Lilly Lickers, Echalon.

"It was a perfect day for the Adeleague Season 4 final. It was obvious the fans turned out to see the Norse - Well Oiled Beef Hooks, the more experienced of the two teams. However, The Lilly Lickers were hoping they could overcome the odds and leap onto the podium using unconventional tactics.

"With the Norse receiving the ball, it was obvious that they intended to grind slowly forward, stomping as many frogs possible. Five turns had passed but only a few frog linemen were sitting

on the bench drinking plenty of water. The Norse cage had now progressed close enough to the end zone for a possible touchdown.

"BOOM! The ball carrier, Bjorn Bad-Touch, and two team mates burst into flames and were now rolling around on the ground half in pain, half trying to put the fire out. Everyone in the crowd looked at Cedric, the local Bright wizard, who just shrugged. Cedric's face was red, but it was unclear whether he was blushing or if that was his natural glow from dabbling in mystical arts. No one noticed the wad of cash hanging out of his back pocket.

"Seizing the chance, Attila (kroixigor), charged across the pitch to clear a path for Napoleon Bonafrog to leap over and pick up the ball. Nuffle had other ideas, Napoleon fumbled the ball but managed to tap it towards Attila, where it stuck to one of his spikes.

"There was not much the Norse team could do to get the ball off the hulking brute, as his Confetti Yetti counterpart was being "entertained" by slann linesmen. Even the small brain of Attila realised that the clock was ticking and it was not possible to for him to run in a touchdown. Reluctantly, Rasputin the mad Frog took the ball from Attila and made a crazy dash to the end zone on his own.

"A howl could be heard over the cheering crowd as Jarl 'Bear' Borg came running towards the lone slann catcher. Jarl's eyes were glowing red, the half man half beast wanted blood. It was not a pretty sight, but the crowd loved it, and the Ref called half time before Rasputin was eaten.

"Half time score 0-0.

"The Lilly Lickers were down in players, but



The ball spills free as Gamakichi pushes it just a little bit too far and the Lilly Lickers fans see their chances for a first championship sink like a frog without legs (Photograph by Gregory Neild - Echalon).

knew that every defense had holes in it. All you needed to do was look up. Genghis Frog got the ball and, with his trusted team mates around him he ran forward, looking to score his fifth touchdown for the season. Standing near the end zone on turn four, a decision had to be made. Genghis Frog was running out of friends, many of them were either being fed grass by the Norse team, or decided that a nap on the sideline was a better idea...

“Genghis Frog took the opportunity and carried the ball over the line. Unsure if this was the right decision as now there was plenty of time for an equalizer to be scored.

“The coach of the slann team was scratching his head on what to do, with less players on the pitch than what he was used to. ‘Operation Meat Shield’ was pulled from of the play book,

as every available frog was to put their life on the line to slow down the advance of the Norse team. It was an all or nothing strategy... Frog after frog was being hit, smashed, squashed. The apothecary managed to bring Napoleon Bon-frog back to life after a near fatal run in with Yolo Rollo, the Norse Blitzter.

“Still on a high after smashing Napoleon, Yollo Rollo took the ball and ran it over the line in the dying seconds of the game. Not ever playing in a final before, both coaches had to have a quick look at rules for what to do for overtime.

“Full time Score 1-1.

“The coin was tossed, Lilly Lickers would receive the ball in sudden death overtime. There was still hope for a win, but with only seven players to set up it was not going to be easy. The ball

was kicked deep, and collected by Silverchair - the only remaining catcher on the pitch.

The horde of crazy northerners were bearing down the pitch, towards Silverchair. Learning from previous mistakes the Norse coach checked his team over the pitch, preventing any easy leaps that would escape the, what seem to be inevitable, sacking of the ball carrier. Silverchair didn't like the idea of being hit, so ran forward shoved the ball into linefrog Gamakichi's hands, then whispered into his ear: "Channel your inner elf, you can do this".

This sparked Gamakichi's courage who ran straight at the Confetti Yeti. Gamakichi planted both legs and bounded over the creatures head, dodged away and continued to run for his dear life.

"The crowd was going nuts. The underdogs were going to pull off an amazing win. Seeing only open space in front of him, Gamakichi knew that an extra effort would be needed to put some distance between himself and the Norse team.

"Just do it.. Yes. Just a little bit more...

"Gamakichi felt his hamstring snap, realising that he was out of luck and had pushed himself too far after leaping over the gigantic brute earlier in the run.

"The next three turns the slann coach does not remember as he had already left for the pub, realising that the game was now over.

"He was told that the Well Oil Beef Hooks were just toying with the three players that remained on the pitch, and when those players refused to stand up, the Norse team just kept kicking them anyway.

"Turn seven of overtime and the game was over

with All-Access Athelstan scoring the winning touchdown."

And there you have it. The Well Oiled Beef Hooks, coached by Simon Caon (Simork) reach the heights of greatness known by Adam Marafioti's Renaissance Rejects, Brett Whittaker's Starwood Hunt and Mark Peterson's Salty Dogs. Congratulations to Simon and the Beef Hooks!

Congratulations, also, to the following players who currently hold records in the league:

Golden Boot (most touchdowns)

- One Eyed Wili (13)
- Runner from the Salty Dogs

Platinum Wings (most completions)

- Faerial Mapledove (25)
- Thrower from Starwood Hunt

Iron Gauntlet (most casualties)

- Bloodbeard the Merciless (22)
- Trollslayer from the Salty Dogs

Silver Coronet (most Star Player Points)

- Bloodbeard the Merciless (49)
- Trollslayer from the Satly Dogs

This means, of course, that Season 5 is upon us. In light of the champions, as has become tradition, it will be known as:

Adelaide Open Season 5: Got Beef?

As this issue goes to print the season should have started (1 December 2018) and games run until 31 March 2019. Coaches can join at any point, so get involved.

If you have any queries or comments about the league, contact Brett (SinDex) at southernstrikeeditor@gmail.com

SOUTHERN SHRIKE BOWL MATCH REPORT: ROOSTERS AND RATS

The final round of the Southern Shrike Bowl took place deep underground, with the threat of an earth tremor at any moment. At the main stadium the Cleavehand Browns, a skaven team coached by Jayson Harwood, faced down the challengers: Le Coq, a Bretonnian team coached by Brett Whittaker. While few Bretonnian fans had been prepared to brave the depths and the odour of the skaven fans (FAME +2), Le Coq won the coin toss and elected to receive. Wary of their opponent's kicker, they drew the ball into the centre before driving down the right wing in a cage, with Doodle the Rooster (Griff Oberwald proxy) in the centre. The rats couldn't crack it open, and Doodle scored for the first touch-down.

As the first drive began, a rumble echoed through the stadium and water gushed from multiple cracks in the ceiling, sending many players slipping on the wet stonework (pouring rain and a tremor). This allowed a glut of skaven to stream through the centre and, though they fell back to attempt to plug the holes, the skaven were able to send a gutter runner in with the score.

Le Coq drove down the right hand side again, but the Browns had found a pipe that led to the pitch and ran a twelfth player onto the field. The rat shot up the pitch to help plug the defensive hole, but slipped and was knocked out, allowing

Le Coq to push through for their second.

Up to this point in the competition the armour of the Browns, sealed with arcane incantations on the thirteenth night of the month under a full Morrslieb, had remained inviolable. But with the Lady of the Lake's blessing shining from the fists of the valiant knights, they finally started to fall. The knights weren't immune either, however, and, as the second half progressed, the numbers on both sides dwindled alarmingly.

The final drive saw the knights desperately attempt to plug holes in the line as the Browns tried to find a way around them. After dancing across the pitch sideways a few times they finally broke through, but a desperate blitz from Doodle scattered the ball free and Sir Tainne scooped up the loose ball after the crowd threw it back in. He brought it back up the extreme left wing slowly, with Doodle and Sir Tyfiabelle in support.

In the last play of the game a lone gutter runner braved the odds to dodge between the three players and lay an all-or-nothing blitz on Sir Tainne that sent him into the crowd (three dice uphill). The ball came to rest near the centre line and a linerat dodged away to grab it. He eyed one of his blitzers downfield and sent the pass on its way. But the yeoman Antoine Malouet saw it coming and, with surprising grace, snatched it out of the air, ending the Browns' chances.



THE CHALLENGE

The following is a story I wrote in 2008 to issue a grudge match challenge to my brother, Evan Whittaker, for the first Southern Shrike Bowl. It was a bit of fun that set the scene for that team and was accompanied by a lot of other similarly characterful challenges issued in [THIS](#) AusBowl thread. The team went on to implode spectacularly, barely registering a mention in the annals of history except that they won the Best Painted Team award and eventually gave their name to the trophy for that award. For the eleventh Shrike Bowl I decided that Le Coq needed to return, and a new story was needed to explain where they had been for a decade, so I wrote one called "Eleven Years". The rest, as they say, is history. With Le Coq going on to win not only Le Coq Fancier's Trophy, but also the Southern Shrike Bowl Championship Shield in 2018, the stories work together really well as a team backstory (keep in mind that Doodle the Rooster was used as a Griff Oberwald proxy during the tournament). I hope you enjoy the stories and are encouraged to do similar yourselves.

Brett Whittaker (SinDex)

In a busy market square just outside the SSB Stadium a lone figure moved purposefully through the crowd. No-one would have noticed except for the outrageously gaudy crest atop his gleaming helmet as it meandered along above the heads of all, a golden rooster prancing across a veritable sea of humanity. A closer inspection of the lone figure revealed a suit of clanking armour to match the helmet, covered in a spotless tunic of crimson and white silk, cinched at the waist with a sturdy leather belt. In his gauntleted hands, clutched to his breastplate, was a wooden crate. Upon reaching the dead centre of the square this figure gently bent down, his armour gliding effortlessly on well-oiled hinges, and placed the crate on the ground before straightening up and stepping quickly upon it. Raising his hands to gain the attention of the crowd he began to speak...

"Mmph hmph pht rmph... mmm... hurumph!"

His shoulders sagged, the head tilted slightly to one side, as he slapped the side of the helmet with his steel gauntlet. The sound rang out around the square, inadvertently silencing the crowd which, to this point, had paid him not the slightest notice. He slowly brought a hand to the bottom of his faceplate and raised it. In the sudden silence even the well-oiled "swoosh" it made could be heard. The face beneath was

manicured and noble, a long moustach swept from his upper lip down both sides to be lost in his chainmail hood. His eyes glinted with resignation and his brow furrowed, confused at the unwarranted and eerie attention he was now being paid.

"Ah... err... as I was sayeeng" His accent was thick, obviously Bretonnian. It rolled from his tongue like the oil he used to slick back his mo.

"Ah am Sir Breton de Whiteacre, le coach of le most fabulous Blood Bowl team evoir to grace le field"

"Blood Bowl!" It was one of the stall owners, a coarse man who had at some point obviously run up a bill with the tooth fairy, for she had come to collect.

"Ah, pardone moi?" said Sir Whiteacre.

"It's called Blood Bowl," the merchant said it slowly, patronisingly, and Sir Whiteacre's lip curled almost instinctively, "not Blood Bowl, my sister has blood bowel." The crowd chuckled and Breton could tell he was about to lose them.

"Yes, yes, alright... well, as ah was saying,

mah team..."

"What are they called?" It was the same man. The Bretonnian stared open mouthed at this pestilent, gap-toothed merchant who insisted on interrupting him. Then he realised he had not yet told them his team's name.

"Ah... yes... they are..." he drew himself up to deliver the name in a deep and resounding baritone, "Le Coq!"

The crowd fell about itself in laughter, the sudden sound perforating what little self control Sir Whiteacre had left. He stared about them, his mouth working like one of the goldfish his daughter kept in the pond back at his chalet in Brionne. The colour rose in his cheeks as he tried to understand what was so funny about a team called "the roosters". It was, after all, a fine animal. Proud, vigorous, colourful and, when required, vicious. And yet they laughed. Something snapped in his head.

He strode off his crate, pushing through ranks of teary-eyed Imperial citizens, drew his sword and ran the offending merchant through. Instantly the crowd became silent. He stalked slowly back to the crate and mounted it once more, the blood dripping from his sword punctuating his words.

"Le Coq..." The faint titter of a young girl cut off sharply as Whiteacre glowered at her "...shell be competing in le Southern Strike Bowl and shall be veectorious!

"But before zey do ah hev a challenge to issue. Zat good for notheeng, zon-of-a-chaos-troll, eeleeterate, feelthy, green-bellied gobleen-peess One Eye and hees team, Da Skummee Geetz must die! I challenge you, One Eye, to a duel. Your team, mah team, first round!

Accept or foreveir be known as a cow-herd!"

The crowd shrank from the fervour of his words, stung by the passion in this gaudy Bretonnian's voice and impressed by the assertiveness of his right sword arm. But one voice near the back could be heard in the still air, plaintively whining to his buddy.

"Cow herd, what's a cow herd got to do with anything? Why would anyone be known as a cow herd..."

Sir Whiteacre rolled his eyes and rubbed at his temples with his forefinger and thumb in consternation. He drew a deep breath, stepped calmly down from his crate, picked it up and carried it - his back rigid as the crowd parted silently for him - away into the city.

With a collective sigh of amused confusion the crowd resumed its mid-day activities, but the challenge had been recorded and already the runners of the Southern Shrike Commission were relaying word of it to One Eye and his Skummi Gitz. Would they accept? Or would they be forever known as...

...cow herds?



ELEVEN YEARS

This is the sequel, a decade later, to “The Challenge”. In the interim an official team list for Bretonnians was developed, and the team played its heart out, defeating the Cleavehand Browns to take the championship (see the match report in this issue). I hope you like it.

Brett Whittaker (SinDex)

Breton gaped. There it was, finally, after eleven years, the Southern Shrike Bowl stadium. Eleven years. Nuffle’s sacred number. Fitting. But so much had happened during that time...

He had waltzed into the tournament eleven years ago feeling as if his noble warriors would do no wrong. He thought that they would be hailed by the crowds as heroes and, eventually, champions. How naive he had been. The crowds had ridiculed them. ‘Le Coq’, it turned out, had a second meaning in the Empire, a less than salubrious one. His team had imploded under the pressure and, if he was being honest, he wasn’t the coach he had thought himself. They left, poor and disheartened, anything but champions.

It had taken some time to decide what to do. Breton had prayed to the Lady of the Lake, to the Old Gods, to... other Gods. It was ultimately not gods that decided their course, but the lure of gold. Never much, and rarely for matches. They followed a trail of small jobs that would keep them fed and together. An ogre under a bridge here, a caravan escort there, an exhibition match every now and again. Each pathway led slightly ever further north.

As the weather became colder, the snow thicker, the path started to seem more certain. Breton began to dream, sometimes just for one night, sometimes for weeks in a row, of a subterranean stadium filled with gibbering horrors and a golden chalice, presided over by a red-capped figure. Over time he came to understand that



*Left (over):
Doodle le
Coq (before
and after).*

*Right:
The SSB
Champion's
Trophy*

*Left (over):
Sir Tainne
& Antoine
Malouet*

*Below:
Le Coq on
their dis-
play base.*



the chalice was the Grail itself, and that entry to the stadium was far to the north. So, ever northward they went.

The jobs became stranger - hunting mutated creatures, delivering cowed strangers between tribes, playing against teams with more and more mutations - and the terrain harsher. But ever further northward they needed to go.

The years blurred somewhere in there. The 'Red Coach' and his golden cup remained elusive. Team members started exhibiting small marks of exposure to chaos. Sir Napoleon Tainne, hid something unusual beneath his robes, while Sir Maximilien Tyfiabelle could often be found talking to himself in two distinctly different voices. And then there was Doodle.

The team mascot had always been there, somehow a reminder of the team's purpose, which allowed the scrawny rooster to avoid becoming dinner on those lean nights. But, under the light of the three moons on a clear evening, Doodle suddenly changed. One second a small rooster pecked at the frigid ground, and the next a seven-foot tall beastman with the head of a cockerel stood in his place.

Doodle stayed with the team, sometimes even taking the field as a particularly violent and effective player. But most of the time he was content to peck at seeds and roost on the wagons like some grotesque, comical gargoyle.

Years blurred into a decade, and still the red stadium eluded him. Guided by visions and dreams he knew that they had started heading south again. And now, here they were.

Eleven years. Breton de White-acre and Le Coq had returned. And they no longer cared whether the crowd would love them. They only cared if their opponents feared them!

SPOTLIGHT:

CITY OF CASUALTIES

There's a lot of water under the bridge in the Blood Bowl world. There's the bigger picture story of Games Workshop's on again, off again, relationship with its specialist games, and then there's the local impacts of those larger patterns. Here's Adelaide's story.

Once upon a time there was a gaming store called Tactics. I remember it as a dark place, full of wonder and mystery, and it inhabited the space under Southern Cross Arcade that is now a Cheap As Chips. As a child I would marvel at the miniatures, buy some when I could afford it (Inquisition - such terrible quality), and watch the older guys play in the members only area. They often played this thing called Blood Bowl, and I was fascinated. I even think the Guild Arcane, a club operating from the basement of the original Game Quest, used to run a league that I briefly flirted with, but the gaming community was a small clique, and games went in and out of fashion quickly. Most people played like I did, with an established group of mates in their homes. I bought Kerrunch (an entry-level version of the game), and second edition, and we had a league of about six players.

Games Workshop came to Adelaide in 1996 when it opened the first Australian store outside of Sydney in Citi Centre Arcade. I was employed as a casual, then as a full time redshirt, and eventually helped to establish and then manage the Marion store. It was during this time that 3rd edition was re-released into Games Workshop stores. It quickly took off, and we loved it in store. We started a league, dubbed the Marienburg Blood Bowl League (MBBL) that ran even past my tenure at GW, into the early 2000s.

This was a brief point of light, however, as GW quickly lost interest and moved on. But a flare had been sent up globally and, as players moved back into their own group leagues in Adelaide,

a lot was happening elsewhere. FUMBBL, an on-line Java platform for BB, had established itself, and fans were not about to just let the game fall into obscurity. A zealous group of players in Europe organised and formed the Blood Bowl Rules Committee (BBRC). With the blessing of GW and Jervis Johnson (the game's creator), they accumulated data and set out a strategy for development of the Living Rulebook. This document was based on the third edition rules, but was periodically modified to improve the game in subtle but important ways. It became the bible of the Blood Bowl world.

During the same period the NAF was born as a global organisation devoted to supporting coaches. They accumulated the tournament data that supported the decisions of the BBRC and kept people in contact with one another.

But trouble was brewing. A small resurgence in interest through the specialist games division had led GW to release the Competition Rules Pack (CRP or, sometimes, CRaP). It turned out that this was a stripped down version of the Living Rulebook developed by the BBRC and, especially, Tom Anders (Galak Skyscraper), without acknowledgement of their efforts.

Meanwhile, back in Adelaide, things remained fairly quiet. A couple of interstate communities had connected with the global network, and CanCon and Eucalyptus Bowl started in the mid 2000s as they began to organise. The influence of Doubleskulls, one of the BBRC members, was instrumental in Sydney's scene at this time I believe.

Then came Michael Speirings (Sperioz). In 2007 he lit a fire underneath the local community, reaching out to SA coaches and organising get-togethers to play. I'm not even certain how he managed to do it, but somehow he brought

together a knot of people who would go on to build something new. He organised and ran the first Southern Shrike Bowl in 2008, which Adam Marafioti would go on to win.

At the same time we were linked in with the larger Australian community via the AusBowl forum. Facebook and other forms of social media seem to have largely replaced it, but AusBowl still exists, and its influence cannot be overstated. Everyone, from Brisbane to Albany, used AusBowl. We could log on and discuss the current state of the BRAWL in WA (at one point the largest BB league in Australia) and the last EucBowl, as well as organise our own leagues and tournaments, and just shoot the breeze with coaches in all of the other states.

Pretty soon a few things had happened. First, three leagues sprang up. The City of Churches King's United Prize (CCKUP) was the largest, but the AFOUL and the SABBL, respectively based in the north and south, built player bases too. Second, Speiroz entered into talks with interstate coaches about a State of Origin style competition. Sadly this generated a bit of heat amongst some quarters of the community here and in Sydney which may have contributed to Speiroz's decision to hang up his coach's cap and walk away. But, with determined efforts from Adam (Olaf the Stout) and James (Rabid Bogscum), amongst others, the first AusBowl State Championship was held in Sydney in 2011.

For our part, South Australia was represented by the SA Steelballs at the AusBowl, which pitted six-coach teams from six states or territories against each other. The first Steelballs team comprised of Adam (Olaf the Stout), Evan Whitaker (One Eye), Casper Fertier (Vain), Matthew Weiss, Ben Makepeace (BenSquig), and myself (SinisterDexter). We came a cool third behind eventual surprise winners ACT (the Premiers), and runners-up NSW (the Bluebloods).

Two years later, being one of the most pivotal groups in the organisation of the AusBowl, SA was chosen to run the second tournament. This took place at the German Club and was a resounding success, although the Steelballs couldn't muster a podium finish.

This period, between 2008 and 2015, is what I would consider to be the 'golden age' of Blood Bowl in Adelaide. BLITZ magazine was produced from here, tournament and league numbers were high and coaches were excited. People travelled to interstate tournaments and came to SSB from afar. Several other tournaments were also run here, including the Breast Cancer Beach Bowl (a sevens "Beach Bowl" format), the Adelaide Dungeon Bowl Cup (a crazy Dungeonbowl tournament that finished with a four-finalist crawl through a multi-tiered 3D dungeon), and the 24 Hour Ironman Challenge (a tournament run across a full 24 hour period, with nine matches and a midnight speed painting competition).

While many of the elements of this era are ongoing (SSB and the Ironman, in particular, continue to provide some of the best Blood Bowl experiences in this state), others have sadly been lost. Of the three leagues, only AFOUL continues (and has only recently been re-established in the Games Room up north), although the Adeleague has been established as a replacement after a few lean years. The AusBowl forum has lost its former glory, replaced by Facebook groups, and the AusBowl State Championship is on a bit of a hiatus due to the World Cup in 2019 (although it will return in 2020, hosted by New Zealand).

The present is exciting, however. The fourth edition (BB16) has brought in a number of new players, and dragged back many of the old guard. With SSB 2018 attracting almost 40 coaches, the future looks bright. Maybe the Steelballs can even put in a good show in 2020!

NOBLESSE OBLIGE

Bretonnians on a Blood Bowl field have been a subject of some debate for many years. Left out of the 'original' set of rosters when Third Ed. was released, Bretonnian teams have always enjoyed fan support, with a range of house-ruled rosters trekking through the internet like a Knight Errant on a quest for the Grail. But, since the adoption by the Blood Bowl II computer game of these noble sirs, they have been granted a relatively stable roster that achieved official NAF sanctioning recently, allowing tournaments to field Bretonnian teams. As noted earlier in this issue, I coached a Bretonnian team to a win in Southern Shrike Bowl, and would like to share some of my (limited) insights about the team.

The team that I took to SSB consisted of three knights, two yeomen, five linemen and "Doodle le Coq" (a proxy for Griff Oberwald). This is probably an unusual list for a 'normal' Bretonnian team, but it was certainly effective in the SSB format. Having said this, however, I was fortunate enough to play against both of the other Bretonnian teams present at the tournament, giving me an extended perspective into the team.

Bretonnians have a few specific pros, chief of which are the calibre of the knights, and the Fend skill on all of the linemen. Wrestle as standard on the yeomen is also helpful.

Your knights are always going to be the mainstay of the team. With a basic profile similar to a human blitzzer (7 3 3 8 Block), that extra point of movement is fantastic. But the addition of Catch and Dauntless makes them very versatile right off the bat as either receivers or offensive players. Despite the fact that they are really just glorified human blitzzers, knights benefit from the enhanced maneuverability of the team as a whole (more on that later) and can go up against stronger opponents without too much worry.

The yeomen on a Bretonnian team also bring something a little extra. Acting almost as a second set of blitzzers (blocker might be a more apt term), their standard issue Wrestle makes them perfect for standing the line and, with the addition of Guard or Tackle, can pose issues for strong or fast teams alike.

Finally, your linemen are surprisingly versatile. Despite being Agility 2 and Armour 7, the Bretonnian lineman comes with Fend. Often seen as a later pick, if at all, I found Fend spammed in this way to have some very interesting effects on the team as a whole.



BRETONNIAN TEAMS

Having Fend in large numbers has two complementary benefits. First, and obviously, it stops opposing players from following in. When placed in front of a grinding cage, this can really halt the advance, forcing the opponent to get creative in bringing the ball down the field. But secondly, it generally means that at least one or two linemen are free of opposing tackle zones in the subsequent turn. This allows a degree of mobility to the team as a whole that isn't apparent when you first consider the roster. When this is combined with the extra point of movement of the knights and the possibility of Wrestling yeomen also having some freedom (albeit



lowered movement), it allows a lot of leeway for responding to quick changes of direction in the opposing play. There were a number of times that I found myself able to shift position to deny my opponent access through an easy play corridor, or to respond to a breakaway.

The key negative to a Bretonnian team is the lack of a dedicated thrower with which to deliver the ball to your knights. This means, effectively, you have to use a knight in that role, which lowers the number you can bring to bear in attack.

My advice, therefore, is to trust your armour (and the cost of linemen) and get your players right up into your opponent's face. Fend and Wrestle will limit their ability to advance, while leaving you free to reposition as needed, especially in defence. Use your knights to blitz strong enemy models and act as your ball handlers.

Another negative for Bretonnians is the expense of rerolls (70k, or 140k during a season). This can be a headache considering the lack of skills that provide a reroll for actions.

Of course, when I played in SSB I had some additional support in the form of Griff and an agility 4 knight (Sir Tainne - who almost took out the MVP). If you are lucky enough to gain an agility increase on a knight (or on anyone really), then that's great, but dedicating one of your knights to that thrower role by giving him some Passing skills (which they can get on a normal skill roll) is necessary. Sure Hands, at least, and possibly even Pass can ensure that expensive rerolls aren't wasted on simple things like picking up the ball.

On the whole, they're a team with a fundamentally different play style, something I wasn't really expecting on face value. Why not take them on your next quest for the Grail?

Brett Whittaker (sinisterdexter)

RIGHT ON THE LEFT

So, up front (well, ok, towards the back really) I want to apologise for the me-heavy content of this issue. My original plan had been to feature the race and coach who won SSB, never expecting that it would actually be me (especially with a Bretonnian team). But, the almost unthinkable happened, and so I decided that I would run with it. I hope you are happy to indulge me. But, given that we're here anyway, I should probably give you some background on who I am.

I've been playing Blood Bowl since my early teens (a looong time ago now) and was lucky enough to be just entering the workforce at about the same time that Games Workshop opened a store in Adelaide. I joined the GW Oz team and went on to become a full-time store boy at Adelaide, eventually helping to open, and then manage, the Marion store. I worked there for four years, until the practices of GW began to grate heavily, and I left in 2000 to work in the Credit Union and, eventually, become a secondary school teacher.

I was also lucky enough to be included in the mix in 2007 when Blood Bowl seemed, all at once, to come alive across Australia. I hadn't really played any GW games since about 2002, but it suddenly seemed as if everyone was talking about Blood Bowl, and I put my foot back in the water with the first SSB.

The rest is history! I've competed at all eleven Shrike Bowls, winning the Best Painted Trophy something like eight times (and giving it the name of my first and eleventh team - Le Coq Fancier's Trophy). I've now won it twice (2015 and 2018) and have also won a season of the CCKUP league, an Ironman 24 Hour Challenge (as well as a second and third in that), and an Adelaide Open flag. Importantly, however, I've contributed to the community, editing Southern Strike and BLITZ magazines, helping to run the second AusBowl State Championship, and

representing SA in the Steelballs at all AusBowl State Championships except for the third one, where I competed in the WA Open instead. My most cherished Blood Bowl award was the MVP Tankard that I was given in 2012. I may have been the last recipient of it (I'm not sure) and it was a massive honour, and a humbling one, to have been chosen to receive it.

Traditionally I have played humans. I can still remember my first few teams: the Hochland Hawks, the Araby Scimitars, and the Drakwald Ravens. This last team I revived recently and enjoyed taking to SSB, despite their lack of success. But, even though humans hold a place in my heart, I have really cut my teeth as a wood elf player. My collection is up to five painted and two unpainted teams, and it was with them that I won my first SSB and both of my league titles. Close behind these, however, are my cherished White Acre Weed Pullers (halfling) and Le Coq (Bretonnian) teams, both of which call to me on occasion.

My biggest piece of advice to any aspiring coach is to approach Blood Bowl both as a competitive game, but also a game with a community. It is ok to be good, and to aspire to be great. But it is also ok to love the wacky stuff and to, sometimes, curse Nuffle's name to the end zone and back for being a motherfluffing curr. But, above all else, remember that Blood Bowl is not the kind of game you can play with just one opponent. The community of coaches is an important part of the game, and you should always aim to give back what you can, whether that's helping to organise tournaments, or just being the best sport you can when you face someone across the dugouts.

Which is where I hope I meet you! Thank you for indulging me this issue and, I promise, you can avoid my self aggrandising for many to come.

Brett Whittaker (sinisterdexter)

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- tournament or league information

Southern Strike is a magazine for all South Australian coaches, so please use it.

Contact the Editor at:

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HORRORSCOPES

FAERIES (Aries)

The stars say that there is a five in six chance that you will fail your next GFI roll. Astrology can be surprisingly accurate sometimes!

GREAT TAURUS (Taurus)

Never look a gift horse in the mouth, but if a minotaur asks, give him whatever he wants!

TWIN-TAILED COMET (Gemini)

You will meet a tall, dark stranger this week. So kick to the groin because that's what the last assassin I saw looked like.

CHAOS STAR (Cancer)

Aren't you over it yet? It doesn't matter what you do, that guy is better than you. No, it doesn't matter which guy. Get it?

LEONCOUR (Leo)

Having come into some money (remember the dwarf?), there's land for sale on Morrsville.

BARAK VARR GO (Virgo)

The lingering effects of Nurgle's Rot can be debilitating. Try not to scratch. And for Nurgle's sake, don't pop the bubos.

GNOBLAR (Libra)

Keep waiting damnit!

GORKIO (Scorpio)

There are 42 different reasons to coach a Blood Bowl team, but you have to ask the right question first.

SLAANGITARIUS (Sagittarius)

Whether you call it a sub, a hero, a hogie, or a sandwich, if you can't handle gluten it's just a slice of ham with a bit of green stuff.

UNICORN (Capricorn)

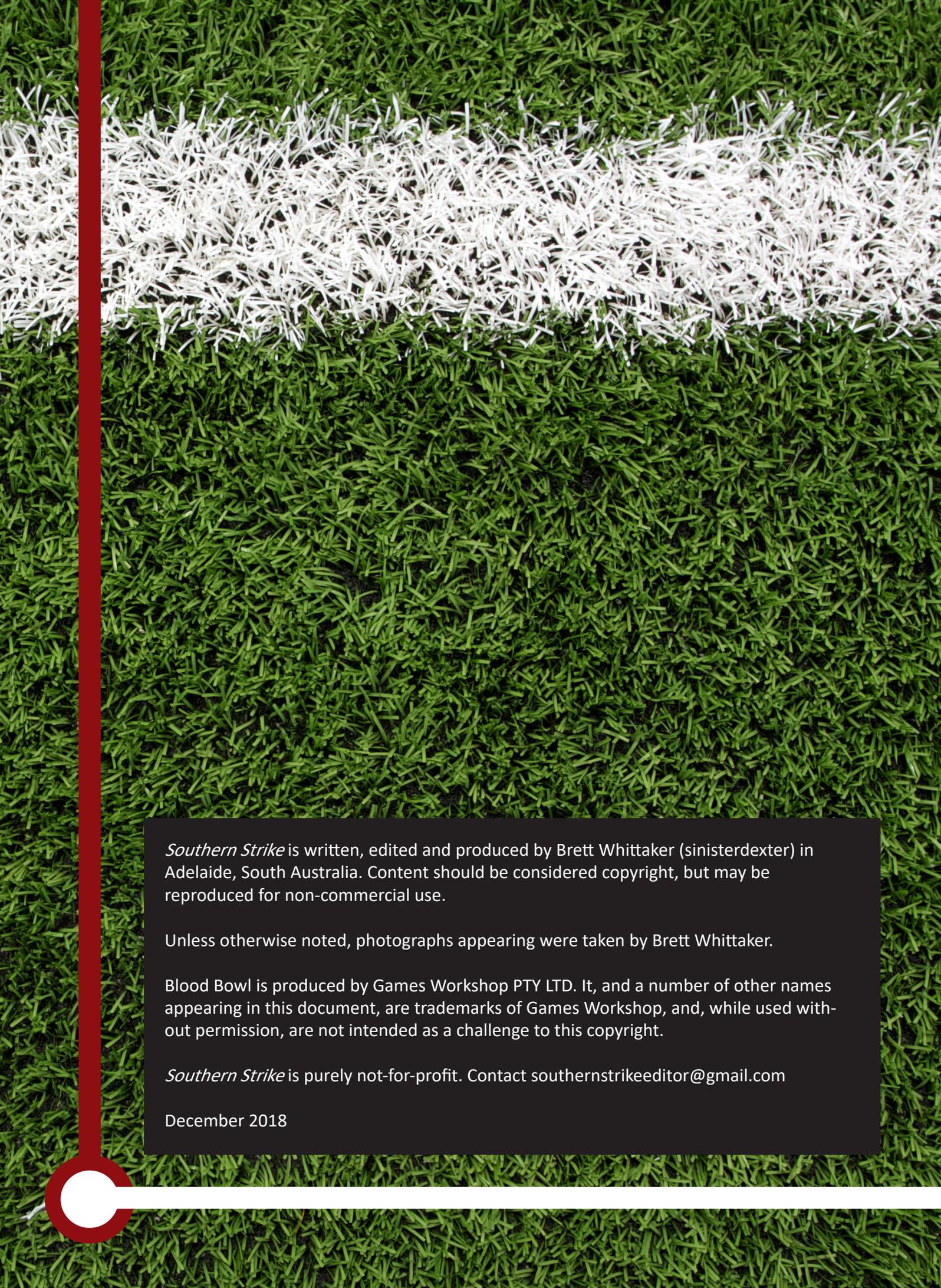
There are four pigs in the main street of Adelaide, and only two balls. Coincidence?

ORCQUARIUS (Aquarius)

You heard me. It's not happening.

PIECES (Pices)

Eight tentacles are better than two hands, but two heads is just an argument waiting to happen.



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