

# DEADBALL™

The Futuristic Sports Game







# DREADBALL™

A game by Jake Thornton

*“Look at him go! He dodges past one, slides round another and he’s in the zone! Strike! 3 points!  
And that, Jim, is Partenza’s victory dance.”*

*“No time for that, Jake. The ball’s out again! 200 miles an hour and it’s just a silver streak! It’s  
Riggit now, for the Manglers. He’s going for the ball, but Barton’s in the way!”*

*“Not for long! Gorag’s clearing a path, and they aren’t called the Manglers for nothing. Ouch! That’s  
gonna smart.”*

*“And Riggit’s there, but can he grab the ball? I can’t watch!”*

*“He’s fumbled it! Must’ve had his eyes closed too, and now they’re in real trouble.”*

*“Partenza again, weaving through the mob. He doesn’t break stride as he scoops up the ball and  
dodges through the line. He’s on for another strike! He’s unstoppable!”*

*“Gorag didn’t hear you, Jim. He slams into Partenza and the striker goes down hard. Gorag’s on a  
roll and so is the ball, the anti-grav pulsors making it bounce...”*

*“...straight to Riggit! He picks it up and throws a loooong pass to Laknak who makes it look easy.  
And he’s off, running, weaving through opponents like they were standing still.”*

*“Dying seconds, Jim. He needs 4-points to win.”*

*“It’s going to be close.”*

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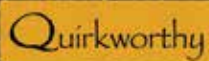


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# DREADBALL™

DreadBall is the hyperkinetic sport of the future, where the action never stops.

Two teams of 6 players face off across a neodurium pitch, each side aiming to score more points than the other by making *Strikes* in one of their opponent's 3 scoring areas.



## INTRODUCTION



The game is played with a small silver ball made of face-hardened, weapons-grade titanium, containing a small anti-gravity pulsor to keep the bounce unpredictable and the action exciting. Launched at over 200 miles an hour by a skilled player, it is as much a weapon as a means of scoring.

From the first moment to the final klaxon, the game flows in a continuous series of *Rushes*, with the initiative changing hands as often as the ball. As soon as one *Strike* is made the ball is launched onto the pitch again, without waiting for players to reposition themselves. In this way the frantic pace of the game is maintained and even when players are sent off or substitutes brought on the action never pauses for a moment.

## Game Terms

In *DreadBall*, the real people playing the game are known as the team's *Coaches*. This distinguishes them from the *Players* who are the individual model playing pieces that make up the teams themselves.

The game is played in a series of turns, called *Rushes*. Within each *Rush* a coach takes *Actions* with his players in an effort to take control of the ball and score points by making a *Strike*. The player with the most points at the end of 14 *Rushes*, or the first to 7 points at any time, wins the match.



## YOUR FIRST GAME

Like every gamer of any age, you'll be keen to dive straight into your first game. The fastest way to do this is to have a friend show you how to play. However, if this isn't convenient then don't worry. All you have to do is follow these 3 easy steps:

1. Lay everything out. Empty the game box onto the table and look at what you've got. Read the following pages for an explanation of what the different models are, what the colours on the board mean, and so on.
2. Read the Example *Rush*. This starts on page 22.
3. Play a game! Now that you understand the markings on the pitch and have an idea of how the actions knit together in a *Rush*, why not have a game? Start on page 29 with the sequence for setting up, and just go for it! You will need to refer to the rules to start with, but you'll find that it all falls into place really quickly and you'll be playing on your own in no time.

# COMPONENTS

In the DreadBall game box you'll find all the models, dice and other pieces that you need to play the game.

Before you start going through the rules, it's worth quickly looking at each component and finding out what the different colours, markings and poses mean. This will make it much easier to understand the rules later.

Throughout the board, counters and dice you will notice a red and white theme. This distinguishes things that belong to the Home team (in white) from the Visiting team (in red). Once you know this it's much easier to see at a glance which team each element belongs to.



## Rulebook

This is the book you're looking at now. It's split into 4 main sections:

1. **The background and history of the game.** It also covers the pitch, models and so on that you get in the box. Read this to get a solid foundation and understanding of the game.
2. **The rules.** This builds on the background in part 1 and explains how to play DreadBall matches.
3. **DreadBall Leagues.** If you're keen to link your games of DreadBall into a league then this section tells you how.
4. **Reference.** Game values for four different team types are listed here, together with details of eight famous individuals.



## Roster Pad

Before you play you will need to fill out a roster sheet with the values given on pages 68-75 for your chosen team. You might also want to think of a name for your team, and perhaps even names for the individual players.

During a game it's sometimes important to know which player is which, so each one must be allocated a number from 1-14. You will need to mark the models so you can tell which one corresponds to each line of your roster. The models have a space on their backs for you to paint on a number or apply a transfer if you want. If you haven't got round to painting your models yet then you might want to write the player's number underneath his base instead.

| Player | Name | Role (S/J/G) | Experience | Rank | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Abilities |
|--------|------|--------------|------------|------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| 1      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 2      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 3      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 4      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 5      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 6      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 7      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 8      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 9      |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 10     |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 11     |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 12     |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 13     |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |
| 14     |      |              |            |      |      |          |       |       |        |           |

Team name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dice: \_\_\_\_\_ Cards: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Crest \_\_\_\_\_ Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Dice @ 6mc each \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cards @ 10mc each \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total mc (Team Ranking) \_\_\_\_\_

Some of the roster is used for your reference during a game. The rest is for playing DreadBall leagues, when several matches are linked together and players get better as they go on. See pages 51-61 for more details.

One of the things that is not in this box is your imagination, but you should consider it a part of the game nonetheless. It's not just about pushing bits of plastic about the board, it's about seeing the game in your head, hearing the shouts of the players and the roar of the crowd, smelling the sweat and seeing the fear on the face of the Jack as the Orx Guard thunders towards him. Did I say fear? Not for Lucky Logan...

And it's Logan once more with 3 Guards still to beat. It's the big number 9 first - he lunges and grabs the air, Logan's still moving. Rognat's coming in fast - he's not called Ruination for nothing - and he's like a runaway freighter. He hits! Logan's down! Wait... he's rolling... he's up, and Rognat's on the floor. We'll have to watch the slo-play later to see what happened there.

Only one to beat, but this is the Grizzlies' captain and he won't be fooled easily. Logan pauses only for a heartbeat. The rest are closing. No time to waste. Then he's on the move. It's too far for a Strike - what's he playing at? He launches the ball. Straight up! I've never seen anything like it - he's making his run. He's going to slam the Orx!

No! It's a sliding tackle! No, wrong again! He's slides between the Guard's legs and he's up again behind him, catching the ball as it comes back down. The crowd goes berserk! What a play! The Grizzlies don't know what's happened. And Logan runs into the Strike Zone to launch his third Strike of the match.

The box includes two teams of DreadBall players: one of human players called the Trontek 29ers, and another made up of Orx and Goblins called the Greenmoon Smackers.

## THE HUMANS

The Trontek 29ers is made up of three types of player:



GUARD



JACK



STRIKER

## THE MARAUDERS

The Greenmoon Smackers only has two types of player, and each is a different race. These are:



GOBLIN JACK



GOBLIN JACK



ORX GUARD

In both teams, each type of player has a distinctive look. This can be further enhanced with a striking paint scheme if you so choose. Their game roles are explained on page 19.





REFEREE



THE BALL

Every DreadBall game needs a ball.

# THE REFEREE

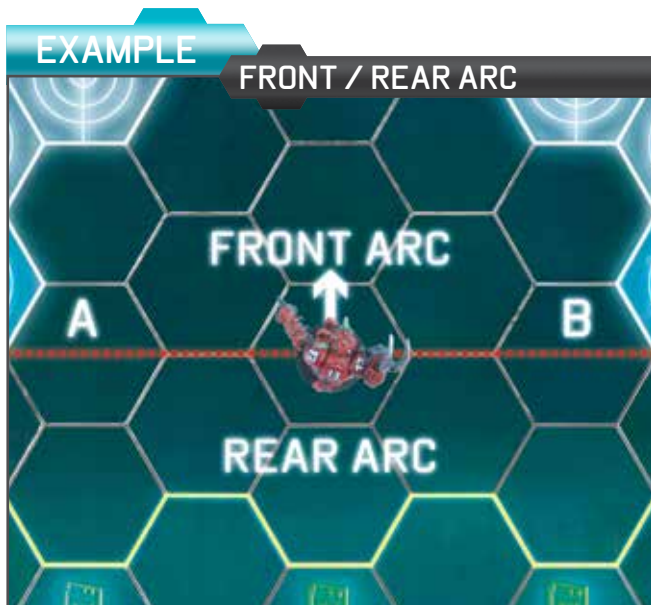
In addition to these model teams, there is a Referee, and a ball. Rules for the Referee can be found on page 43.

# FACING AND THREAT HEXES

All the models have integral round bases to help them stand up.

In the game, all player models (not the Ref or ball) have a facing as long as they are standing up. This simply means that the player they represent is looking in a particular direction. Models that have fallen over do not have a facing. Facing is very important in the game.

Standing player models (not the Ref or ball) also have 3 *Threat Hexes* in front of them. These are important as opponents in these hexes risk being tripped, grabbed or otherwise hindered. Threat Hexes allow a player to exert some influence on the area of the pitch around him. The fact that fallen players do not have Threat Hexes only encourages the Guards to knock them down.



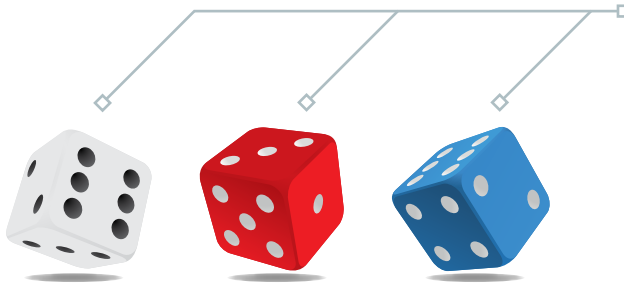
The player is facing in the direction of the arrow.

A player has a front and a rear arc, divided as shown here by drawing an imaginary line through the model at right angles to the direction he is facing. This imaginary line extends to the edges of the board. Each hex on the pitch counts as being in either the front or rear arc of a player. If a hex is divided by this imaginary line (such as hexes A and B here) it always counts as part of the front arc.



The player is facing in the direction of the arrow.

The three adjacent hexes in a player's front arc are called *Threat Hexes* (shown here in red). When an opposing player is standing in one of these hexes they may suffer penalties to their dice rolls. See the later rules for details.



## Dice

There are 3 different colours of dice in DreadBall. The Home team has white dice. This matches the colour of their Subs' Bench, scoring track and so on. Similarly, the Visitors have red dice to match their areas of the pitch.

The final dice are blue. These are used by both players and are called Coaching Dice. The rules for Coaching Dice are on page 28.

Note that the word "dice" is used for any number of the unpredictable little cubes. Normally the singular would be "die", but in a game where people get killed as well this can be a little confusing in places...

## Counters

DreadBall uses a small number of card counters to keep track of things during play.

Each player has 5 Team Action Tokens. These enable you to keep track of how much you've done so far in your Rush. These counters are colour coded for the Home team (white) and the Visitors (red).

The two game tracks on the pitch also need a counter each to keep track of what Rush it is and who is winning.

Some events affect a specific player for a time, and these counters are used to show which player this is.

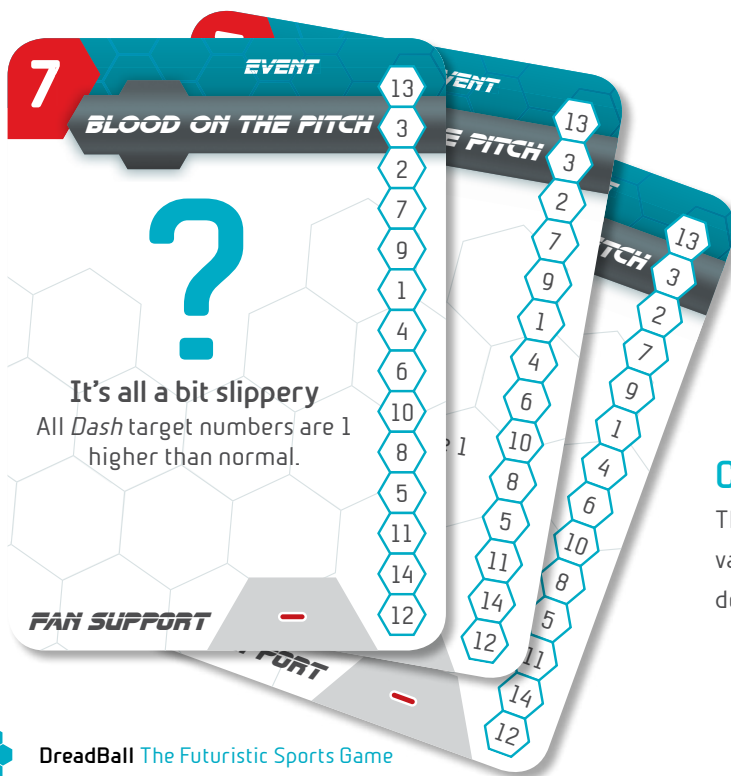


Action Tokens

Track Markers



Card Effect Marker



## Cards

The DreadBall card deck contains 54 cards with various game functions. See page 47 for a full description of the rules and types.



# THE BOARD

The board represents a typical modern DreadBall pitch in one of the specially built arenas of the central planets.

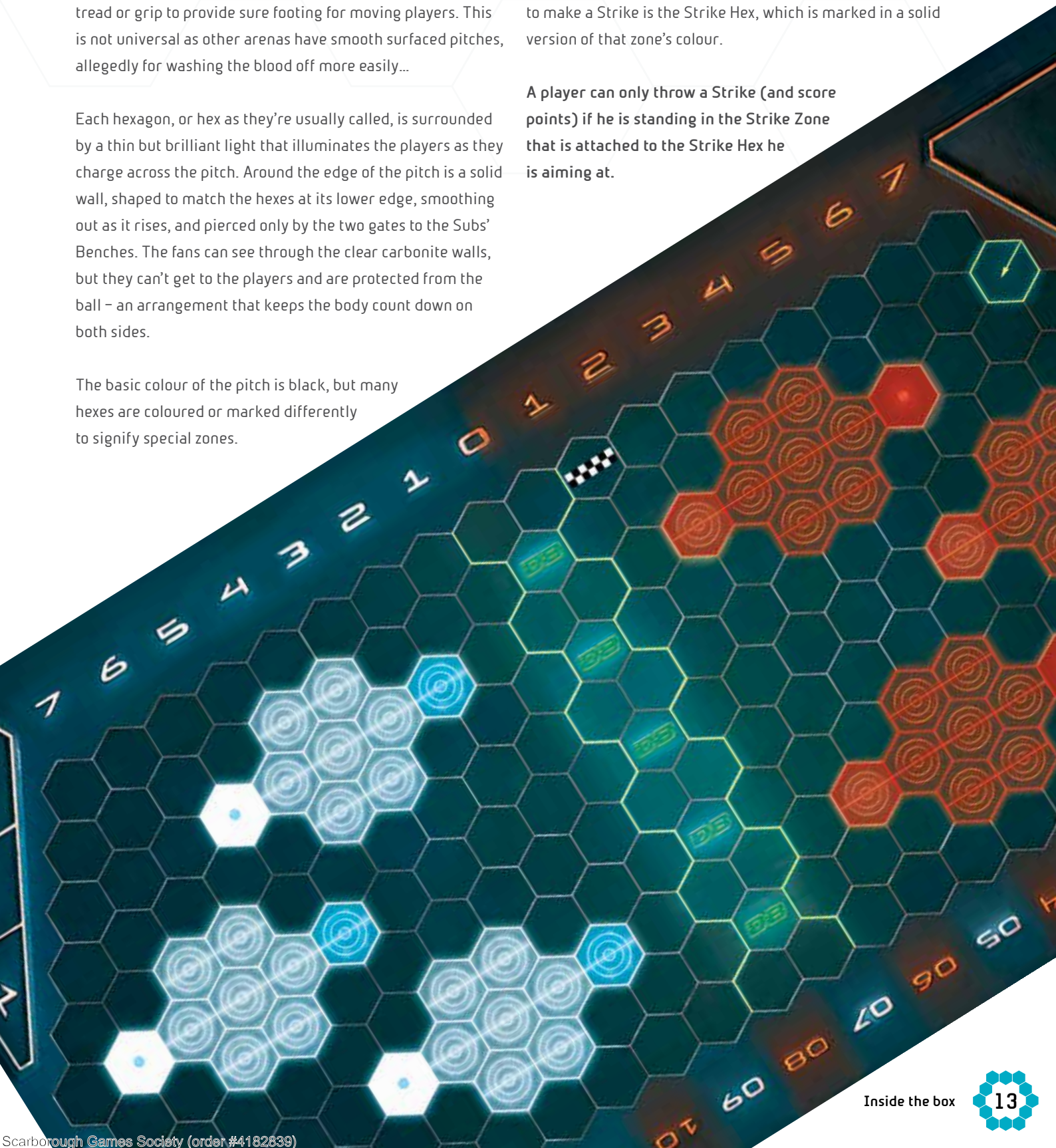
The pitch is divided into hexagons, each formed from a high-impact neodurium compound that is sometimes shaped into a tread or grip to provide sure footing for moving players. This is not universal as other arenas have smooth surfaced pitches, allegedly for washing the blood off more easily...

Each hexagon, or hex as they're usually called, is surrounded by a thin but brilliant light that illuminates the players as they charge across the pitch. Around the edge of the pitch is a solid wall, shaped to match the hexes at its lower edge, smoothing out as it rises, and pierced only by the two gates to the Subs' Benches. The fans can see through the clear carbonite walls, but they can't get to the players and are protected from the ball - an arrangement that keeps the body count down on both sides.

The basic colour of the pitch is black, but many hexes are coloured or marked differently to signify special zones.

The most important of these are the *Strike Zones*. There are 6 Strike Zones on the pitch, 3 red and 3 white. Each is made up of 8 hexes attached to a single *Strike Hex*. The red and white hexes that make up these zones are all marked with concentric circles, like bulls' eyes. The target you try to hit to make a Strike is the Strike Hex, which is marked in a solid version of that zone's colour.

**A player can only throw a Strike (and score points) if he is standing in the Strike Zone that is attached to the Strike Hex he is aiming at.**



# THE BOARD (CONTINUED)

Each player defends the Strike Zones/Hexes in his own colour and tries to score in the Strike Hexes in his opponent's colour. Of the three Strike Hexes you can score in, the two nearer ones are worth 1 point each, and the further one is worth 3 per Strike because it's harder to get to.

In addition, you can gain an extra point per Strike if you make it from the bonus hex, because it is a harder throw. This is the hex in the Strike Zone that is furthest from the Strike Hex and is marked in an intermediate shade of red or white for clarity. A bonus Strike is therefore worth either 2 or 4 points depending on which Strike Hex you target.

As well as the Strike Zones and Strike Hexes, there are some other markings on the board.

The hex in which the Referee begins each match is marked with a line of black and white checks. Simply place the model here at the start of a game.

At each end of the pitch is a single yellow-bordered entry hex. These are the entry points for players moving onto the pitch from the Subs' Bench, or off the pitch into it. You can only move onto and off the pitch if this hex is not blocked by a player from either side. When you move on you count this yellow hex as the first hex in your move. When you move a player off the pitch they must do so from the yellow hex.

Note that you only need to move players off in this way if you choose to retire them from play yourself. If they are injured

or sent off for fouling then they are immediately placed in the appropriate area of the Sin Bin – they do not need to move off as described.

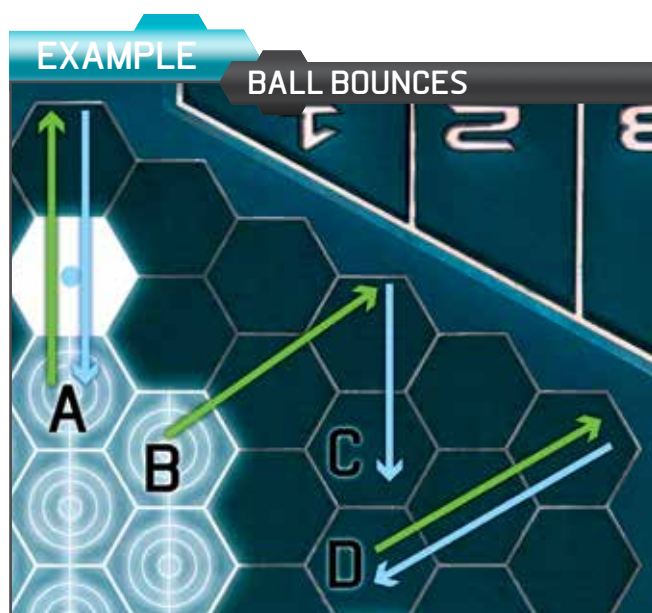
In the centre of the pitch are a series of five hexes containing a green DB logo. These mark the path of the ball when it is launched into play.

The two yellowy lines along the hex edges across the centre of the pitch mark the forward starting line for each team, with a small area between them in which no player from either side may set up. These only matter during the initial Face Off set up before a match starts. Once the match is underway the action never pauses!

## Placing and Moving Models on the Board

Each model player occupies one hex and you should position each one so that it is clear which hex they are in and which of the six edges they are facing. If a model is knocked down then it still occupies a single hex.

The ball is the only model that can share a hex with another model (and only when it has been picked up and is being carried). A ball may also be thrown over a model that is lying on the floor. No other model may move through a hex with another model in, whether it is friendly or opposing, standing or on the floor. This restriction also stops a model from being pushed back into a hex containing another model.



### EXAMPLE

### BALL BOUNCES

When a ball hits the edge of the pitch it will bounce off the wall. Depending on which wall it hits, the undulating surface will cause it to bounce in one of two ways. The following examples look at the direction the ball will bounce in (ignoring the distance it will go for now).

The most common situation is when a ball hits an angled part of the wall, shown here as moving from hex B to C. This works both ways round, so a ball moving from the direction of hex C would bounce back towards B. Most of the edge of the pitch is like this.

The other possible situation only happens from 6 specific directions on the pitch and is illustrated here by directions A & D. In these cases the ball comes straight back in the direction it went.



The unusual shape of the sides can make the ball bounce dramatically. When a ball scatters into the edge of the pitch and hits the wall it will ricochet one of two ways, depending on which bit of wall it hits.

Measuring distance is very simple. You don't count the hex you start in, but you do count the hex you end in.

## Ends of the Pitch

Off the hexagonal grid of the pitch itself we have two more vital areas of the board, one at each end: the *Subs' Benches* and *Sin Bins*. Again, these are colour coded with the white end belonging to the Home team and the red to the Visitors.

The Subs' Bench is simply a holding area for healthy players to wait in. With an 8 player roster and 6 players allowed to start on the pitch, a starting team will begin each game with 2 players on their Subs' Bench.

The Sin Bins are where players get sent when they have fouled and been spotted, and we also use this for players who are injured and need medical attention before they can come back into play. The Sin Bin is a collective term for the areas marked 1, 2 & 3 – together they make up the whole Sin Bin.

When a player is sent off for fouling, or because he is injured, he is placed in that team's Sin Bin. The area he is placed in (1-3) denotes the number of his own Rushes he is out of the match for. At the end of each of your team's Rushes, move everyone in the Sin Bin into the next lowest numbered section. Start with those in section 1 and move them into the Subs' Bench, ready for your next Rush. Then move those in section 2 down into section 1, and those in section 3 into section 2.

Note that a player can never move onto the pitch if they are still in the Sin Bin.

## Keeping Track

The board has spaces to track two values: Rush and score.

Along one edge of the board you can see numbers 1-14 to keep track of which Rush is currently being played. Remember that a Rush is DreadBall's term for one side's "turn" and usually consists of several actions (see game terms on page 7 and the rules starting on page 32). The Home team always takes the first Rush, which is why it is in white as are all its other Rushes. The Visitors Rushes are all in red.



Measuring distances is easy. Simply count the number of hexes from the model to the target. Do not count the hex that the model starts in, but do include the target hex.

For example, in this diagram the Goblin in hex A is 3 hexes away from the Strike Hex B. A is 7 hexes away from his teammate in hex C who is 2 hexes away from D.

When you count distance for any reason you must take the shortest route possible. However, you will notice that there is almost always more than one route that is equally short, so which one do you take? The choice is made by the Coach controlling the active player. Many times the exact route is not important, but it can be crucial, for example during a Throw. The diagram shows two possible routes between A and B (blue and green) that are both 3 hexes long. There is a third 3-hex route that is not marked – can you spot it?



DreadBall is a violent game, and it is possible for a team to end up with no players left on the pitch. In this case the team still takes its Rushes as normal, hoping its injured players recover before the opposition scores too many strikes. Of course, in the bizarre history of the game it has been known for teams to win games with nobody left alive to collect the trophy if they racked up a big enough lead in advance.



The opposite side of the board has the scoring track. This is unusual because you track the difference in scores instead of what each team has scored in total. The score marker starts on the 0 space and moves towards the player that scored by the number of points each strike they make is worth. For example, if I have scored a 2 point strike and you have scored

a 4 point strike then the track would show 2 in your favour. This is why there is only one counter for this track.

Again, note that a player's score is in their own colour – white for the Home team and red for the Visitors. So, a red 2 on the score track means that the Visitors are 2 points in the lead.

## WINNING THE GAME

If a match ever reaches 7 points in one player's favour then they win by a landslide immediately. The other team is clearly outclassed and there is no point in continuing their embarrassment.

If the game reaches the end of the 14th Rush without either side gaining a 7 point lead then the team with the higher score wins.

If the score difference is 0 at the end of 14 Rushes then things are clearly well-matched. However, the DreadBall Governing Body doesn't like a draw so you now have a Sudden Death playoff. Carry on the game from where you are at the end of the 14th Rush, moving the marker back to Rush 1 so you can keep track.

In Sudden Death you continue to play as normal with the following exceptions.

- ✦ The first team to score any points wins the match.
- ✦ No player may come onto the pitch. It doesn't matter if they were sent off for a foul, an injury, or moved off through choice. Nobody comes back on.
- ✦ If at any point only one team has players left on the pitch who can *Throw* the ball (and therefore make a strike), then they win.
- ✦ In the very rare event of both teams losing their last Jack or Striker at the same point, or neither team having any when Sudden Death is called, the game actually is a draw. Both players get a single point if this is a league game, but no Man of the Match is awarded as the fans are disappointed.

# DREADBALL'S HISTORY

The true history of DreadBall is a hotly debated subject, and one that is unlikely to ever be known unequivocally. This may seem a little strange given its universal popularity and acclaim – how can such a public and popular sport be a mystery? The answer, of course, is money.

DreadBall is the most popular sport ever devised, and the revenues it generates are vast. Corporations fall over each other to sponsor new teams and ever more splendid new arenas, knowing that their investments will return many times over. Teams pay huge sums for new players, hiring exotic aliens and even former enemies to liven the spectacle and amuse the fans. Few people had ever seen a Forge Father or Veer-myn before they ran out onto a DreadBall pitch,

except in the post combat footage on the news; and even if they are what Sportline 888's reporter called "the mercenary dregs of their societies", they are still real, live aliens. At least, that is one interpretation. Robots, mind-controlled prisoners, and vat-grown clones have all been suggested by those who fail to understand that everyone, even aliens, have their price.

Money drives the telling of history too. But let us ignore the (allegedly) crackpot conspiracy theories and rival claimants for a moment and hear what the DreadBall Governing Body have to say. They are, after all, the most important organisation in DreadBall by a long way. Perhaps the following tale from their "What is DreadBall?" vidcast will explain at least the official line.



Who could have known when this new sport was invented, that it would sweep to such a success in less than a lifetime? From its humble beginnings in the grimy hangars of the flagship of its creator to the vid screens of every home in the central planets, it has been a whirlwind ride.

It all began in the mind of now retired Senior Flank Commander Jesus Ortiz. In his own words "*it was something to keep the troopers happy, fighting fit and hungry for blood. I had no idea it would grow to be so popular*".

But grow it has. It began in the stark steel shell of drop hangar 91 aboard the Corporation warship Dread. The first games were played with dismantled cluster munitions for a ball, wearing decommissioned Enforcer armour. The modern player takes to the pitch in specially built, multi-arena stadiums wearing a carefully designed and personalised DreadBall suit worth millions of credits. These suits last no more than 2 or 3 games before they are damaged beyond repair. The weapons-grade titanium balls are replaced every

time a new one enters the arena, such are the stresses on them. It is a violent sport.

Surprisingly, throughout this evolution the game has remained true to the creator's vision, mainly due to the sacrifice of time and energy which Ortiz himself has given to it. It is overseen by the DreadBall Governing Body, usually known as the DGB, or "Digby". The Chairman of the DGB is Jesus Ortiz himself, still maintaining control over the game to ensure that it retains its true spirit and isn't debased by the many influences that smell money and power and seek to corrupt it. "*As long as I'm in charge*", says Ortiz, "*DreadBall will remain pure.*"

The modern game is a slick and massively promoted spectacle that is instantly familiar to the many citizens of the Corporation's Co-Prosperity Sphere. It has grown from nothing to be the most popular sport on the net, and looks like being so for many years to come.



## DreadBall Xtreme

*Now Sportline 888, in association with Glistergrin mouthwash, brings you another in-depth report! This week - the phenomenon known as DreadBall Xtreme!*

*In the dark alleys and grimy sewers of the sprawling underbelly of the city, DreadBall's unlicensed and illegal child claims its victims to the roar of a blood-soaked*

*crowd. It is played in secret arenas, without a referee, and is frowned upon by DreadBall's governing body, the DGB. Games are shut down wherever they can be found and arrests are frequent. Even so, it has a growing popularity among those for whom the slickness of "real" DreadBall seems too clean. In fact, proponents claim that theirs maintains the spirit of the real game.*



# PLAYER ROLES

Growing up to be a DreadBall player is every child's dream – whatever their race. It's a hard selection process, but the rewards are huge. Once a player has gone through the drills, the endless practice and the gruelling selection camps and finally been chosen by a coach, he will be intensively trained in one of the specific roles familiar to every DreadBall fan: a Guard, Striker or Jack. Some teams use all three while others specialise on only one or two of the standard roles.

Over time a player who survives enough games will learn new tricks and skills, making him ever more deadly on the pitch, and ever larger a target for the opposing Guards. Regardless of any additional skills he may gain, a player is always known by their core role – with one exception.

Occasionally a Guard will get dropped on his head once more than is entirely good for him and he will become even more crazed and belligerent than normal. These individuals

are sometimes trained as Keepers. A Keeper's role is not to protect the Strikers, as a Guard does, but to defend the Strike Hexes instead. He is even more heavily armoured than a normal Guard, and is even equipped with a glove to launch the ball back down the pitch, away from his own goals. They aren't well enough trained to use them to pass the ball about as a Striker would, but their innate strength and lack of care for accuracy allows them to clear the ball from a scramble round their own end of the pitch and allow the team a moment's breathing space. More importantly, if anyone comes too near they're in for a thumping!

## Keepers

Keepers are defined as having the *Keeper* ability, and can only be created as a result of experience. In the real DreadBall leagues, no team starts with a Keeper in place.

## THE DREADBALL GLOVE

Of all the equipment that a DreadBall player uses, the most iconic is the DreadBall glove. This takes many outward forms depending on the race of the team, but the function is the same for all: to catch and throw the titanium ball at high speed without it tearing the user's hand off.

Some teams take a technical route and use elegantly crafted designs that incorporate a crescent-shaped launcher on the back of the wrist. Using these is simplified by the focussed electromagnetic funnelling devices that are carefully calibrated to slot the moving ball into the launcher.

Goblins take another route. They rely on carefully honed blades to capture and decelerate the ball by a combination of the blade's shape and the player's skill. Of course, when the ball can top 200mph, accidents do happen. However, there is never any shortage of keen youngsters eager to try their hands at the game.





## GUARD

The biggest and strongest players take to the pitch as *Guards*. These are the most heavily armoured, and they need every bit of that protection because their role is both to flatten the opposing *Strikers* and protect their own lightly armoured *Strikers* from the opposing *Guards* doing the same to them.

*Guards* don't wear *DreadBall* gloves and never pick up or throw the ball. They're too busy cracking heads!

The brute simplicity of the *Guard's* role appeals to many fans who love to see their favourites crashing through the opposition lines.



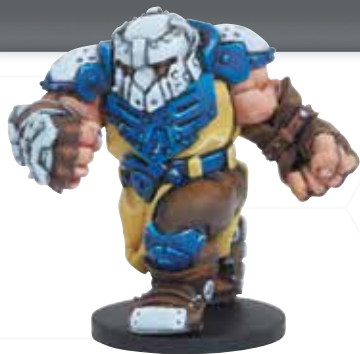
## JACK

The "jack of all trades", or *Jack* for short, is the all-rounder of the game. They are able to fill any role, whether that is holding the line against the opposing *Guards*, or passing the ball about like a *Striker*. Naturally they sacrifice the finesse of the specialists, but they allow a team to adapt quickly to the rapidly changing nature of the game.

Their armour is a compromise between the protection needed by the *Guards* and the lightness needed by the *Strikers*. They also wear *DreadBall* gloves and can throw and strike with the best of them (on a good day).

Fans love the *Jacks* for their willingness to try anything, and many's the time when a desperate gamble by a *Jack* has saved a team from certain defeat.





# STRIKER

Often seen as the golden boys of the game, the *Strikers* are the ones who score the most points by making the most *Strikes*. However, without the protection of their teammates they are quickly taken out of the game as they are only lightly protected, sacrificing armour for speed and manoeuvrability.



Strikers have been described as simply a means of getting a DreadBall glove into the right place at the right time to make a *Strike*. This is a little harsh, but contains an element of truth. It is certainly their signature piece of equipment.

Everyone loves a winner, and scoring points is the easiest way to capture the attention of the adoring fans. It is also the riskiest position to play as the opposing Guards will be only too happy to crush any opposing Striker they can reach.





# AN EXAMPLE RUSH

Probably the easiest way to show you how to play is to run you through a whole Rush. This will give you a general overview of how the game plays and how the different actions can be linked together to make a play and score a strike.

The following doesn't try to go through every detail of the rules as that's all explained later. Try reading through this example once to get a general feel for the flow of a Rush, and then a second time while referring to the detail in later sections to get a more thorough idea of how each element of the rules work. You'll then know enough to try a whole game of your own, referring to the rules as you need to. Don't worry if your first Rush is slow because that's normal when you're learning; your Rushes will get quicker as you get the hang of things. After a couple of games you'll be playing a whole match in little over an hour.

So, without further ado...

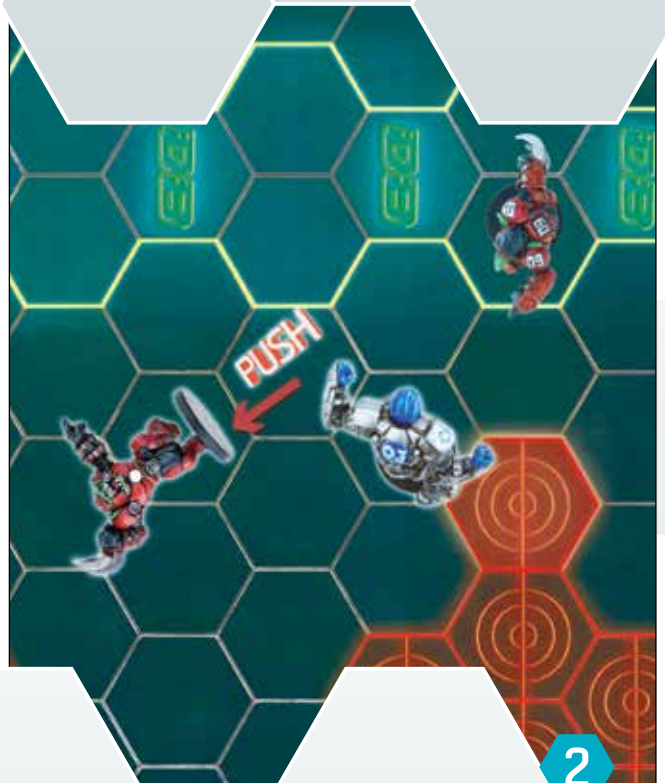
Imagine the scene. It's almost the end of a tough game, and a match that was all going the Smacker's way early on has been dragged back to a draw by the 29ers' stubborn refusal to stay down. The atmosphere is electric as each side has only a single Rush left to win and the crowd sense that their cheers can lift their team to victory. Every move is greeted with a roar of approval and even though the players are tired and bruised they have just enough left in them for one last effort...

In game terms, it is the start of the 29ers' last Rush. Their coach has 5 Team Action Tokens to spend on his players to get them to activate and move, *Slam*, *Throw* the ball, etc in an effort to score.



## ACTION 1

The 29ers' coach has two things to set up before making a run for the Strike Zone. Firstly he needs to get the Striker free of the Orx that's in his face. Secondly he needs to make a hole for him to run through without tripping up over too many opposing players. Both of these are jobs for a Guard.



The Guard starts by spending an action to *Slam* the Goblin next to him (1). It's a solid hit and he pushes the Goblin back and down (2). The Guard chooses not to follow up because he's going the other way in a second. Still, that's made a little gap in the line for the Striker to exploit later. As he was knocked down by a *Slam* the Goblin must check his armour. He makes the roll easily and is down, but not out.



## ACTION 2

The 29ers' coach spends a second action on the Guard who *Runs* 2 hexes to *Slam* the Orx in front of the Striker (3). He pushes back the Orx, but does not knock him down. This time he follows up to place himself between the dangerous Orx and his fragile Striker (4).

## ACTION 3



The Striker makes his move to position himself for the Strike. There are two ways he can try to get to the Strike Zone, and each uses a different one of the two methods of movement in DreadBall.

The first option is to *Run* between the Goblin and the Orx (5). This is the more direct route, but the Striker will have to *Evade* the clutches of both opposing players to make it through the gap and he will also have to *Dash* an extra hex at the end to make it into the Strike Zone. When you *Run* you move one hex per point of movement your player has (5 in this case), and turning to face a different direction is free.

The second option is to *Sprint* around the end of the Smackers' line, past the fallen Goblin the Guard *Slammed* out of the way in the first action of the Rush (6). This requires the Striker to *Evade*



twice rather than once, but he rolls more dice each time than he does for the *Evade* on the short route. Also, he won't have to *Dash* for extra movement at the end (7). Note that a *Sprint* movement is twice as many hexes as the player's movement value (10 in this case). However, turns cost one point of that total per hex side. This makes *Sprint* great for going in straight lines or big curves, but less good at ducking and diving.

There isn't much to choose in terms of the odds, but the 29ers' coach decides that if he does fail an *Evade* (which means that the Striker will fall over and drop the ball) it would be less dangerous to lose it on the longer route, so he chooses that option. Planning ahead like this is a sign of a good coach.

In the event the Striker makes both *Evades* and *Sprints* around the Gobblins and into the Strike Zone!

## ACTION 4

As the Striker is now in the Strike Zone and can try to *Throw* a Strike with his second action, the 29ers' coach realises that he has one action spare from his 5. He could use this to buy a DreadBall Card as you never know when one will come in useful, and even in this final turn there are cards that could help. Alternatively, there may be a better move to make elsewhere on the pitch, positioning a player to block the Smackers' final Rush. In either case, he should spend the action he does not need for his Strike attempt before he makes the *Throw* otherwise it will be wasted. Why? Because losing the ball whether by Throwing a Strike or missing one will end your Rush even if you have unspent Team Action Tokens.

In this case he opts to buy a DreadBall Card.



## ACTION 5

Finally, the Striker takes aim and makes his *Throw* at the Strike Hex (8). It's a hit! Two points for the Trontek 29ers, and the crowd go wild!





## TALK TACTICS

*When you first start playing DreadBall it will probably surprise you. What happens when someone scores a Strike is one of DreadBall's most unusual features, and catches many a rookie Coach unawares. You're likely to be more familiar with the common sequence in sports of re-setting the teams after a score, and the fact that DreadBall ignores this tradition can be a little tricky to adapt your tactics to. At least at first.*

*The key skill to learn is thinking ahead. As Coaches become more experienced you will see them using actions to move players who aren't involved in the immediate play, and may not be anywhere near the ball. They are usually setting up positions to cover possible breakaway moves, or scattering balls (defence) or lining up for future plays (offence) and*

*these are the kinds of thing that you need to consider to beat the best of the opposition. Where will the focus of the game be next Rush? And the one after that? How can you control it? No team has enough players to cover every possibility.*

*Balancing your offence and defence is another key skill. It's all very well running all your players down towards the Strike Zones, but what happens when the opposing team breaks a hole in your defence and surges through? You need to leave a player or two in your own half to be able to react quickly, preferably with a single action.*

*Exactly how you achieve this perfect balance of attack and defence depends on many factors. There is no single right answer.*

# RULES OF DREADBALL

The rules for playing DreadBall are simple, though there is a great deal of tactical depth to be found by combining them cleverly. Don't worry about that for now though, just begin with the basics. Once you start rolling dice and moving the models around the board it all clicks into place very quickly, and you'll be throwing your first strike in no time.

To begin with, if you haven't read the walk through of a *Rush* on page 22 then do so now. This will give you an idea of how the individual moves fit together and what a "turn" looks like.

Now you've got a general idea of what happens on the pitch, let's start with a core concept: the dice, and how to read them.

## DICE ROLLS AND TESTS

With only a few exceptions (explained in their own sections) all dice rolls are resolved the same way. This is written in a standard format that describes:

- ★ the number of dice to roll (usually 3).
- ★ the game value each dice needs to equal or beat to succeed (Strength, Speed, Skill or Armour).
- ★ the target number (in brackets) of successful dice rolls to achieve the aim of the dice roll.
  - ★ If this number is a "(1)" then you only need a single successful dice roll to pass the check.
  - ★ If this number is an "(X)," then the result is compared to your opponent's score to see who has won.
  - ★ If this number is "(123)" then the first attempt in an player's action needs a 1, and each subsequent attempt in the same action needs 1 more; the second attempt needs 2, the third needs 3, the fourth 4, and so on. This is true even if the attempts are not in consecutive hexes, as long as they are within the same action.

For example, a **3 dice Skill test (1)** means that you roll 3 dice and each one that equals or beats the player's Skill value is a success. If you get at least 1 success then you have passed the test.

To give another example, a **Dash is a 3 dice Speed test (123)**. This means that you roll 3 dice and each one that equals or beats the player's Speed value is a success. If this is the first time you have made this test in this player's action then you need only 1 success to pass the test; if this is the second time in this player's action then you will need 2 successes; and so on.



# DICE ROLLING SEQUENCE

If a rule says a dice roll is resolved “as normal”, it means in the following manner:

- ★ Determine how many dice to roll. This usually starts as 3 per test, but can vary.
  - ★ Apply any modifiers to the roll. These are listed with the explanation of the test.
  - ★ **Important!** Modifiers *always* add or subtract from the number of dice to be rolled. They *never* modify the number you need to score on an individual dice for success.
  - ★ If the modifiers reduce the number of dice you can roll to zero or less then count this as no dice. You cannot make this roll without using Coaching Dice (see below).
- ★ Check your value to see what you need to roll on each dice. Remember that this value never changes – only the number of dice you roll.
- ★ Roll all the dice at once.
  - ★ Each dice is read separately.
  - ★ A result of anything other than a 6 is compared to your value. If you have equalled or beaten the value you needed then you have scored a success. If not then that dice is a failure.
  - ★ Each dice that shows a 6 counts as one success and you may roll an extra dice. If you roll a 6 on this dice too then it is another success and you get another extra dice. Keep rolling again until you roll something other than a 6. For this reason a 6 is sometimes called a *Roll Up*.
- ★ Add up the number of successes to find your total score.



So, if a Human Jack with a *Speed* of 4+ attempts a *Dash*. This is a **3 dice Speed test (123)**, so he rolls 3 dice and gets 1, 2, 4. The 1 and 2 are less than his *Speed* value and so they fail. However the 4 is equal to the value and so it's a success. If we imagine that this is his first *Dash* this action then he only needs 1 success so he has passed the test. If the Coach decides that the Jack needs to *Dash* another hex then he has to roll again. The dice roll will be the same: 3 dice with each one needing to equal or beat his *Speed* value. However, as it is a (123) test, the second attempt in the same turn will need 2 successes to pass.

Let's say he rolls 2, 3 and 6. So far he has only 1 success, so he has failed. But wait! He also rolled a 6 which counts as the success but also allows him to roll again. He does so and rolls a 4, so he gets 2 successes in total and makes the *Dash* safely. If he had rolled a 6 again with the extra dice he would have rolled yet another dice, and so on until the dice was 5 or less. In this way a really lucky player can roll more successes than he had dice!



## Check Your Modifiers

It's always worth checking the exact wording of the modifiers before you roll. The one to watch for is when you are being penalised for enemy threat hexes. In tests where you have a clear opponent against whom you are rolling directly you will usually not count their threat hex, for example, in a *Slam*. However, if you are not rolling an opposed test then it is usual for all the threat hexes to count, for example in a *Dash*. It's a subtle, but important difference.



# DOUBLING

In some instances, doubling the target number or doubling your opponent's total causes an improved effect. These are listed where they apply.

So, a result of 2 or more successes when you need (1) is doubling; as is 4 to (2) 6 to (3) and so on. For the purposes of this game, if your opponent scores zero successes then all you need to double them is 1.

For example, a human Guard and an Orx Guard are facing off, and the Orx Slams the human. The human chooses a *Slamback* action, which is described later on page 35. Basically it's a bit of a fight. A *Slam* and *Slamback* are both 3 dice Strength (X) rolls. The human has a Strength of

4+, and the Orx has a 3+. Both players get +1 dice because they are Guards, and let's assume that no other modifiers apply. The Orx Guard rolls 2, 3, 3, 5 for a total of 3 successes.

The human rolls 1, 3, 6, 6 for a total of 2 successes, but he has two 6s and so rolls 2 more dice. These come up a 4 and a 6 so he rolls one more dice for this 6. This final roll is a 1, and so his total number of successes is 4.

As this is an (X) test you compare the total numbers of successes. The human wins by 4 to 3. If the results of the dice rolls had been the other way round then the Orx would have won 5 to 1 and would have doubled the human's score for a more powerful effect (see page 36).

# COACHING DICE

Each team will start each match with the number of blue Coaching Dice listed on their roster. Each Coaching Dice can be used once per game. They are a distinctive colour to avoid mixing them up with the normal dice by mistake.

They can be added to any player's normal test during your turn or your opponent's. This can be any test that uses the normal dice mechanic as explained above. For example, a *Slam*, *Dodge*, *Evade*, *Dash*, *Throw* or whatever. They cannot be used for Ref checks or scattering the ball, for example, as these are not normal tests.

Coaching dice are added after all other modifiers have been applied. Note that modifiers cannot reduce the number of dice below zero. If negative modifiers had reduced the number of dice you could roll for a test to zero then Coaching Dice may be used to make this "impossible" roll.

Simply choose as many Coaching Dice as you want from those available to you, and add them to the hand of dice **before you roll any**. They are treated just like your other dice and may roll up if they score a 6, and so on.

Once a Coaching Dice has been rolled it is removed from the game. You may, however, earn more Coaching Dice later in the match.



# STARTING A GAME

Getting ready to play is quick and easy  
– just follow these steps.

1. Separate the two Fan Support cards from the rest of the deck and shuffle them face down. Each Coach then takes one and places it beside him, face up. This determines which team is Visiting and which team is playing at Home.
2. Place the pitch between the Coaches, with the Home and Visitors' ends next to their respective teams.
3. Shuffle the rest of the DreadBall card deck and place it face down next to the board. Put the event counter next to it.
4. Deal each Coach the number of cards shown on their roster. The Coaches get a single chance to discard some or all of these cards and take replacements. This option to swap cards only applies once and only at the start of the game.
5. Put the score counter on the zero, and the *Rush* track counter next to *Rush* 1.
6. Place the Referee on the chequered hex near the centreline.
7. Give each Coach the 5 Team Action Tokens and the dice of their colour.
8. The Home team Coach then places up to 6 players anywhere he wants on his side of the starting line. The remainder of his team are placed on their Subs' Bench. Note that 6 players is the legal maximum on the pitch at any one time.
9. The Visiting team Coach places up to 6 of his players anywhere he wants on his side of the starting line. The remainder of his team are placed on their Subs' Bench. Note that 6 players is the legal maximum on the pitch at any one time.
10. This initial set up with both teams facing each other from behind their start lines is called a Face Off.
11. The ball is launched onto the pitch and the Home team Coach starts the game by moving the *Rush* counter onto the number 1, and taking the first *Rush*.



# LAUNCHING THE BALL

At the start of the match and after every successful strike, a new ball is launched onto the pitch. This is done in the following way:

1. **The ball is launched** along the centreline of the pitch from the left hand side of the Coach who is starting their *Rush*. Roll 1 dice to see how far it goes. Only count the hexes containing a green DB logo. One of three things will happen:
    - a. The ball will move 1-5 hexes without hitting anything. It will then stop. Go to step 2.
    - b. The ball will move 5 hexes without hitting anything, but will have rolled a 6. This means that it hits the opposite wall and then ricochets. Roll a second dice. On a 1-3 it is deflected towards the Rushing Coach; on a 4-6 it is deflected away. The final hex of movement is taken in that direction. See the diagram below.
  - c. There will be a player on one of the hexes into which the ball needs to travel. Either:
    - i. The player **must** try to catch the ball if they would normally be allowed to. It counts as an inaccurate pass.
    - ii. The player cannot try to catch the ball because they are a Guard or are facing the wrong way. Scatter the ball from that hex.
2. **The *Rush* continues** unless a player from the Rushing team failed in an attempt to catch the ball.

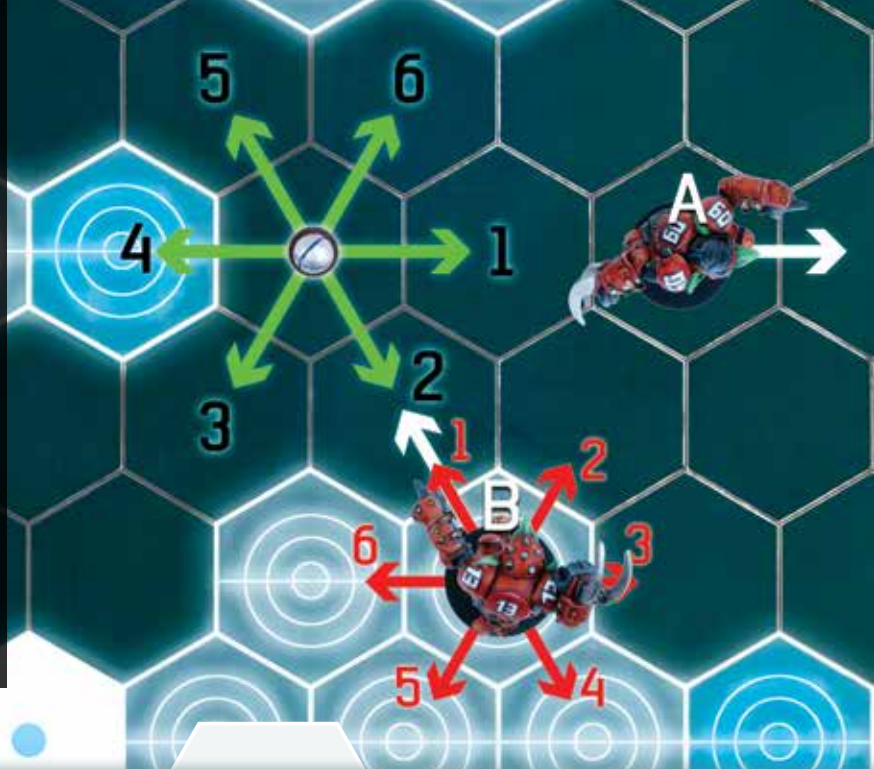




For the sake of this demonstration, imagine that the ball in this diagram must scatter. In this case it is the Home Coach that is rolling the dice, so direction 1 is away from his end of the pitch. If the direction dice is a 3-6 then the path is clear for the ball to scatter as far as the distance dice say. However, if the roll is a 1 or a 2 then it will hit a player if the roll for distance is more than a 1.

Player A cannot see the hex the ball starts in, so he cannot try to catch it. If the distance roll is 2 or greater then the ball will hit player A and scatter again from his hex. The direction will be the same as the original scatter as that is the direction player A is facing.

Player B can see the hex the ball starts in, and so he must attempt to catch the ball if he can. It counts as an inaccurate Throw, so he will have zero dice unless he gets a bonus or uses Coaching Dice. If he does not catch the ball then the effect will be the same as for player A, with the exception that the scatter direction will be different because he has a different facing.



## SCATTERING THE BALL

Much of the time the ball will be safely controlled by a player. However, this is not always the case, and whether it misses a strike or is knocked from a player's grasp by a Slam it scatters in the same way.

1. **Declare which is direction 1.** This depends on whether the ball is scattering from a standing player or not.
  - a. If scattering from a standing player then direction 1 is the way the model is facing.
  - b. If scattering from a fallen player or from an empty hex then direction 1 is always straight down the pitch, directly away from the Coach rolling the dice.
2. **Roll a dice for direction.** Starting at direction 1, count clockwise around the hex the ball is scattering from until you get to the number you rolled. This is the direction the ball scatters in.
3. **Roll a dice for distance.** The ball scatters this far.
4. **If the ball hits a standing player** before it goes its full distance then either:
  - a. The player **must** try to catch the ball if they would normally be allowed to. It counts as an inaccurate pass. When working out if the player can see the ball coming to catch it, count the hex the ball originally scattered from as if it was the thrower. A player can double the catch for a scattered ball, with the normal benefits (see page 28) **even during the opponent's Rush**. If this happens then your opponent will resume his interrupted Rush once all your free action(s) have been resolved.
  - b. The player cannot try to catch the ball because they are a Guard or are facing the wrong way. Scatter the ball again from that hex.
5. **Fallen players** do not stop a ball scattering straight over them, but if the ball finishes on top of one it will scatter again.

# PLAYING A RUSH

## A Rush consists of the following steps:

1. Move the *Rush* marker one step along the track.
2. Spend a Team Action Token or Special Move card on a player.
3. Resolve the action.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until your *Rush* ends.
5. End of Rush
  - a. Move your models one step along in the Sin Bin, towards the Subs' Bench.
  - b. Take back your 5 Team Action Tokens.
  - c. Turn over the top card of the draw deck and move the Ref accordingly.

# ENDING A RUSH

## A Rush can end in one of four ways:

1. **The team makes a successful strike.**
2. **The Coach chooses to stop.**
  - \* There is no requirement for a player to do anything in a Rush and you can act with as many or as few as you like (subject to your Rush ending for other reasons). If a Coach thinks it's better to have one of his players stay put and do nothing, then that's what he shall do.
3. **The Coach runs out of players he can act with or actions he can spend.**
  - \* Each player can potentially act more than once, but the maximum for a single player is 2 Team Actions and 1 Special Move in each Rush.
  - \* There is no set order to playing Special Move cards and Team Action Tokens. A Rush may continue as long as a Coach can play either.
4. **The team loses the ball. This can be by:**
  - \* Failing to *Pick up the Ball*.\*
  - \* Failing to make a catch.\*
  - \* Missing a strike.\*
  - \* Throwing the ball at another player.\*
  - \* A Keeper punting the ball.\*
  - \* Falling over while carrying the ball.\*

\* In all of these cases the ball will scatter.

**Important:** in all variations of case (4), if a scattering ball is caught by a member of the team that dropped it (even the same player) then the *Rush* is not ended after all.

Also, note the distinction between falling over with the ball in your hands, and onto the ball on the floor.

Falling over *into* a hex that already contains a ball lying on the floor will scatter it but will not end your *Rush*. The same is true for a Guard that moves onto a hex containing a ball.

Falling over when you are carrying the ball will make you drop it, which will also scatter the ball and will end the *Rush*.

As soon as one of these is true, the current *Rush* ends.

Complete any remaining parts of the current action (scattering the ball, etc) and then resolve the End of *Rush* step. The opposing Coach then starts their next *Rush* by moving the marker along the *Rush* track.



# ACTIONS

During a *Rush* you can spend your 5 Team Action Tokens and as many Special Move cards as you have and want to. Each Team Action Token and Special Move card you spend “buys” an action for a player. At the end of your *Rush* you take your Team Action Tokens (not cards) back for the next *Rush*.

In a single *Rush*, each player may have a maximum of 2 actions from Team Action Tokens, and 1 from a Special Move card. Free actions do not count towards this limit.

Once you have spent your Team Action Token or Special Move card then nominate a player and declare what type of action he will make from the list below. Note that many actions are restricted to one or two player roles (listed in brackets after

the action’s name). **In no circumstance may a player who is not of the correct role perform that action.**

Note also that although a player can act more than once in a *Rush*, these actions do not have to be consecutive. A Coach may therefore select player A and act with him, then select player B and use an action on him before returning to player A. However, any free actions must be taken immediately by the player than earned them, otherwise they are lost.

**Remember!** *Modifiers always add or subtract from the number of dice to be rolled. They never modify the number you need to score on an individual dice for success.*

# FREE ACTIONS

In some cases, when a player does an action particularly well he will be give a *free action*. This is just what it sounds like: an action that doesn’t cost a Team Action Token or Special Move card.

Clever use of this can allow an individual player to do far more than his normal limit of 3 actions in *Rush* (2 from Team Action Tokens and 1 from a Special Move card). In fact, it is even possible to score without buying any actions at all!





A Run Action is very flexible and is not restricted by facing or turns.



## RUN

Any Player

The player moves a number of hexes up to a maximum equal to his movement value. He may only move further than this if he chooses to risk a *Dash* (see page 41).

In a *Run* action a player can turn freely, and turning does not count towards the distance moved.

A Sprint Action must pay for turning so is best at moving in a straight line. Even with twice the movement it cannot go as far if it tries to follow the path of the Run move to the left.



## SPRINT

Any Player

The player moves a number of hexes up to a maximum equal to **double** his movement value. He may only move further than this if he chooses to risk a *Dash* (page 41).

In a *Sprint* action, a player must move into the hex **directly** in front of him (ie the middle one of his 3 threat hexes). Each 60 degree turn (one side of a hex) a player makes counts as one hex towards his movement.

## MOVING ONTO THE PITCH

In order to move onto the board, a model must be in the Subs' Bench (not the Sin Bin) and have an action played on them that allows them to move at least 1 hex. This first hex must be the yellow entry hex adjacent to their Subs' Bench. This costs a movement point to enter, just like any other hex. The rest of their action is resolved as normal. Note that a player can only Slam, etc when they are actually standing on the board – this is not possible whilst they are still standing in the Subs' Bench.

### Moving Off the Pitch

This is like entering the pitch in reverse. You must move off through the yellow entry hex, and must have enough movement to continue into the Subs' Bench as if it was a separate hex. You may only move onto your own Subs' Bench, never your opponent's.

Note that you only have to move off in this way if you are spending an action to move a player off by choice. Players sent off for fouls or through injury are immediately removed and placed in the appropriate section of the Sin Bin.



winning player chooses which one and may choose whether or not to follow up into the vacated hex himself. The losing player is turned to face directly at the hex he just vacated. The winning player is turned to face the target (if he followed up) or the hex the target was in (if he didn't follow up).

**Slam doubles opponent:** the losing player is pushed back as above, then they are knocked down and must finally make an Armour check. The target number for the Armour check is equal to the difference in total successes between the winning *Slam* and the losing player's roll.

**Dodge wins:** the dodging player may turn to face any direction. The slamming player turns to face directly at the dodging player.

**Dodge doubles opponent:** the dodging player may move 1 hex in any direction and does not need to *Evade* to do so. They may choose to face any direction. The slamming player turns to face directly at the hex the dodging player just vacated.

## Pushing Back

Sometimes one or more of the hexes behind an opponent are already occupied. In these cases you cannot push a model into a hex it couldn't move into normally. If all 3 hexes behind an opponent are already occupied then they cannot be pushed back. If you double them then they will fall down in the hex they started in.



# ARMOUR CHECKS

In DreadBall, the armour you wear is a function of your role on the pitch, not the team you play for, and the maximum levels of protection are laid down by the DGB. Consequently all Jacks have the same armour value, whichever side they are on. The same is true for all Guards and all Strikers. See the table below. Even though they do not take part in one-off games, Keepers are listed here for completeness.

| Player role | Armour value |
|-------------|--------------|
| Guard       | 4+           |
| Striker     | 5+           |
| Jack        | 4+           |
| Keeper      | 3+           |

An Armour check is a 3 dice armour value (X) test. The only modifiers are for Guards and Keepers who get +1 dice.

Each success on this roll cancels out one potential point of damage. If the total number of successes equals or beats the number of damage inflicted then the player is unharmed. If not all damage has been deflected then the player is sent off

the pitch to recover. The number of turns he needs to recover (and the part of the Sin Bin in which he is placed) is equal to the number of unsaved damage. If this is 4 or more then the player has been killed and is removed from the game.

For example, a Veer-myn Striker has just been slammed by a human Guard. The Veer-myn only rolled 2 successes on his *Dodge*, while the Guard rolled 6 successes on his *Slam*. The *Slam* has more than doubled the *Dodge* (6 successes to 2), so the Veer-myn is pushed back, knocked down and must make an Armour check. The damage to be avoided is 4 (6 *Slam* successes - 2 *Dodge*).

The Veer-myn rolls 3 dice for this (because this is the normal number of dice for an Armour check), needing 5+ on each to succeed. He rolls 1, 4, and 6. This is a single success, but he can roll the 6 again and rolls a 5. This is a total of 2 successes. As his armour has failed to stop all 4 damage he is sent off to recover for 2 turns (4 damage - 2 saves). Place the model in the "2" area of the Sin Bin.





# STEAL

## Jack or Striker

A *Steal* is a sneaky way to turn the game around by grabbing the ball from an opponent before he can score.

A Jack can move up to 1 hex before he makes a *Steal*, turning for free if he chooses to. He cannot *Dash* as part of this action, though he may have to *Evade*. A Striker can make a full *Run* Action as part of a *Steal*. This counts as a single *Steal* action for purposes of opponents running interference, etc. A Striker can *Dash* and may need to *Evade* as normal during this *Run* action.

When you have finished moving, nominate a target. This must be a single standing opponent who is carrying the ball and is in one of the stealing player's 3 threat hexes.



The target can choose to *Dodge*, or *Slamback*. *Dodge* is available to any player. *Slamback* is available if the target player is a Jack or Guard, and the stealing player is in one of their 3 threat hexes.

Depending on what each player chooses, they roll different tests:

**Steal:** a 3 dice Speed test (X).

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (ignoring your target, maximum of -2).

**Slamback:** a 3 dice Strength test (X).

- ★ +1 if the player is a Guard.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (ignoring your target, maximum of -2).

**Dodge:** a 3 dice Speed test (X).

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (ignoring the Slamming player, maximum of -2).

Compare the total numbers of successes to find the outcome. The results are the same as for *Slam* (see above) apart from when the stealing player wins.

**Steal wins:** the ball is knocked out of the hands of the losing player. Scatter it immediately.

**Steal doubles opponent:** the winning player takes the ball from the loser.

# THROW

## Jack or Striker

The acting player tries to throw the ball to a teammate, at the strike hex to score, or at an opponent to injure them. A Jack can move up to 1 hex before he makes a *Throw*, turning for free if he chooses to. He cannot *Dash* as part of this action, though he may have to *Evade*. A Striker can make a full *Run* action as part of a *Throw*. This counts as a single *Throw* action for purposes of modifiers, opponents running interference, etc. A Striker can *Dash* and may need to *Evade* as normal during this *Run* action.

When you have finished moving, nominate a hex you can see as your target. This must be a teammate, an opponent, or the strike hex attached to the strike zone you are standing in. You can target a strike hex even if it has an opposing player in, but not if the throwing player is standing on it themselves. Note that if an opposing player is standing in the strike hex you will resolve the strike attempt first, and then if you fail to score resolve it as if it had been a throw at the opposing player all along (rolling the dice again with the appropriate modifiers).

So how do you know you can see your target? Firstly, regardless of whether it is a player or a *Strike Hex*, it must lie in your front arc (see the diagram on page 11). Secondly, you must have a clear route between you and your target. Remember that you must always measure distance by the shortest route, but that there will often be a choice of routes (see the diagram on page 15). If all of the possible shortest routes must cross a standing player or the Ref then the *Throw* is blocked. If at least one of the

shortest routes passes only over empty hexes or fallen players then the target can be seen and the *Throw* attempted.

If the *Throw* is to a teammate, then they must be able to see the throwing player, and must be either a Jack, Striker or Keeper. **You cannot Throw to a teammate who cannot try to catch the ball.** This is completely against the player's training as it would lose control of the ball for nothing.

**In all cases, your target must be in your front arc.**

The throwing player rolls a Skill test using a number of dice that depends on the distance between him and his target:

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| 1-3 hexes | = 3 dice |
| 4-6 hexes | = 2 dice |
| 7-9 hexes | = 1 dice |

**The maximum distance a player can Throw a ball is 9 hexes.**

This test is modified by:

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 if the target is a strike hex.
- ★ -1 if the player moved or turned during this *Throw* action.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (maximum of -2).

A *Throw* that gets no successes is called "inaccurate".

Actually, a "throw" is a bit of a misnomer because half the teams use a powered launcher to do the "throwing" for them. Such launchers can shoot the ball out at over 300kph. No wonder DreadBall is the fastest ball in sport! This is one of the reasons that it's deceptively tricky to pass between players who are standing right next to each other. You might think that being so close would make things even easier, but the ball moves so fast that there is little time to react and it's no easier to make a point blank pass than one from a couple of paces further back.

In terms of distance, a launcher can shoot the ball the length of the pitch quite happily. The reason why passes are so short in DreadBall is to do with controlling the ball rather than any technical limitation. Keepers are the only ones who use the full range of the launchers. The rest of the players are trained that being able to control the ball is more important than range. The speed at which a single uncontrolled ball can be turned into a 4 point strike against you is testament to the wisdom of this strategy.

# THROWING A STRIKE

## Jack or Striker

**Throw is inaccurate:** scatter the ball from the strike hex.

**Throw succeeds:** Strike! Mark the points on the score track, end the current *Rush* and launch a new ball.

**Throw doubles:** Strike! Mark the points on the score track, end the current *Rush* and launch a new ball. In addition, the throwing player manages to score with such style that they immediately get to make a Fan check for showboating (see page 48). This is in addition to any they get for making a 3 or 4 point strike.

## Passing to Teammates

If your target was a teammate then throwing the ball is not enough. He must try to catch it.

Catching the ball is a variable number of dice Skill (1) test. The basic number of dice is 1 dice per success the thrower had in making the pass. This is modified by:

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 if the player is a Keeper.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (maximum of -2).

Note that even an inaccurate *Throw* be caught by a Striker because he has +1 dice. You can also use Coaching Dice to try to catch inaccurate Throws with any Striker, Jack or Keeper. A Guard that has not been trained as a Keeper can never catch a ball.

Note also that trying to catch the ball is not an action regardless of whether it is thrown by a teammate or randomly scattering.

**Catch fails:** scatter the ball from the catching player's hex. The *Rush* ends.

**Catch succeeds:** The catching player now has the ball. The *Rush* continues if the Coach has any more Team Action Tokens or Special Move cards to spend.

**Catch doubles:** The catching player now has the ball and gets an immediate free action. This may be either *Run* or *Throw*.

## Throwing the Ball at Opposing Players

Sometimes, a desperate situation calls for desperate measures, and this is one of them. Throwing the ball at an opponent is not a foul, but it will end your *Rush*, so it's not to be tried lightly. Still, there are times when using the ball as a weapon is the only sane thing to do.

The *Throw* is worked out as above. If the target player has the thrower in his front arc then he may try to *Dodge* the incoming ball. If the target cannot *Dodge* then he counts as rolling zero successes.

**Dodge:** a 3 dice Speed test (X)

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (ignoring the Throwing player, maximum of -2).

**Throw wins:** the losing player is pushed into one of the 3 hexes directly away from the winner (see the diagram on page 35). The winning player chooses which one. The losing player is turned to face directly at the hex he just vacated. Scatter the ball from the target's original hex. The *Rush* ends.

**Throw doubles opponent:** the losing player is pushed back as above, plus they are knocked down and must make an Armour check. The target number for the Armour check is equal to the difference in total successes between the winning *Throw* and the losing player's roll. Scatter the ball from the target's original hex. The *Rush* ends.

**Draw or Dodge wins:** the ball hits the target, but it's only a glancing blow and the player is unhurt. Scatter the ball from the target's hex. The *Rush* ends.

**Dodge doubles opponent:** the dodging player may move 1 hex in any direction. They may choose to face any direction. Scatter the ball from the original target hex. The *Rush* ends.



# STAND UP

## Any Player

A player that has been knocked down can try to recover and *Stand Up* as an action. This is a **3 dice Speed test (1)**.

This is modified by:

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (maximum of -2).

***Stand Up fails:*** the player is still groggy from the fall. He remains on the floor where he was.

***Stand Up succeeds:*** The player stands up in the hex he was in, facing the direction his Coach chooses.

***Stand Up doubles:*** The player stands up in the hex he was in, facing the direction his Coach chooses. He gets an immediate free action. This may be anything except a *Sprint*.

## Buy a Card

A Coach can spend a Team Action Token to buy the top card of the draw deck. This may be kept secret from their opponent until it is played. Each team can buy up to the number of cards they have written on their roster in a single *Rush*. For example, a starting Human team would be able to buy 2 cards per *Rush*; for a Marauder team the starting limit is 1. This number can be increased during league play (see page 61).



# EXTRAS

Extras are not actions in their own right, but instead modify or add to other actions.

## DASH

Any Player

A *Dash* modifies a *Run* or a *Sprint* action. This includes *Run* actions that are part of Slams (for Guards) or Throws (for Strikers). *Dash* works the same way in both cases. Move as far as you can with the normal movement allowance for the chosen action. Then declare that the player will *Dash*. You must state out loud which hex you are intending to move into (or if the extra movement is for a turn and in which direction) before you roll to see if you have done it safely.

*Dash* is a **3 dice Speed test (123)**. Roll for each hex/turn separately.

This is modified by:

- \* +1 if the player is a Striker.
- \* -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are moving **from** (maximum of -2).

**Dash fails:** the player falls over in the hex he was moving to. If a loose ball is in that hex then it scatters. The action ends, but the *Rush* does not. If the player was carrying the ball when he fell then the *Rush* ends.

**Dash succeeds:** The player gets one extra hex worth of movement. If this is extending a *Sprint* action then it could alternatively be spent on turning a single hex side, as normal. If the player wants to then he can roll to *Dash* again (with a target number one higher) to move another hex or turn again depending on the action.

Note that a player falling over as a result of a failed *Dash* test does not make an Armour check and will not be injured.

## EVADE

Any Player

A model must *Evade* whenever they move out of a hex that is threatened by an opposing player. Turning within a single hex does not require an *Evade* test. You must state out loud which hex you are intending to move into before you roll to see if you have got there safely.

*Evade* is a **3 dice Speed test (123)**. Roll each time you need to *Evade* separately.

This is modified by:

- \* +1 if the player is a Striker.
- \* -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are moving **from** (maximum of -2).

**Evade fails:** the player falls over in the hex he was moving to. If a loose ball is in that hex then it scatters. The action ends, but the *Rush* does not. If the player was carrying the ball when he fell then the *Rush* ends.

**Evade succeeds:** The player moves into the new hex safely. If he wants to then he can roll to *Evade* again later on in the same action (with a target number one higher).

Note that a player falling over as a result of a failed *Evade* test does not have to check his armour and will not be injured.

Also note that it is possible that a player will need to both *Dash* and *Evade* to move to a new hex. In this case both tests must succeed in order for the move to be made. Roll each separately.

# PICK UP THE BALL

## Jack, Striker or Keeper

Picking up the ball must be part of any Jack, Striker or Keeper's action that involves moving onto a new hex that contains a loose ball. It is a **3 dice Skill test (1)**. Whatever the outcome, it ends that action.

If you *Sprint* onto the hex containing the ball then you must try to *Pick up the Ball* before you change facing. If you *Run* onto the hex with the ball then you should decide on your facing before you roll to *Pick up the Ball*.

This is modified by:

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 if the player is a Keeper.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (maximum of -2).
- ★ -1 if the action you are doing is a Sprint.

**Picking up fails:** the player bobbles the ball and it scatters. The *Rush* ends.

**Picking up succeeds:** The player picks up the ball.

**Picking up doubles:** The player picks up the ball and gets an immediate free action. This may be either *Run* or *Throw*.

Note that if a Guard moves onto a hex containing the ball then it scatters immediately without ending that player's action or that team's *Rush*.

A model will keep the ball until they choose to *Throw* it or they are knocked (or fall) down. If a model is knocked or falls down then the ball scatters from the hex they land in.

Holding the ball has no effect on a player's game values or tests other than allowing them to *Throw* it.

# RUNNING INTERFERENCE

## Jack

You try to block an opponent's move, or knock them over while they run past.

*Running Interference* is not a normal action and cannot normally be chosen. The only times a player may choose to *Run Interference* is when he has the appropriate Special Move card played on him, or if he has the Ability. The Ability allows him to *Run Interference* once per game in addition to any allowed by Special Move cards.

*Running Interference* is something you do in your opponent's *Rush*, to interrupt one of their player's actions.

At any point during an opposing player's action you may declare *Interference!* The opposing Coach stops what he's doing while you *Run Interference*, and then continues with his declared action once you have finished.

Each action may only be the subject of a single attempt to *Run Interference*. Each attempt to *Run Interference* is done by a single Jack and that player cannot be carrying the ball.

*Running interference* is the same as a *Slam* by a Jack, ie they may move up to one hex before they *Slam*. All the rules for dodging, threat hexes and so on apply to interference moves as normal. If the Jack running interference wins the *Slam* then the target player's action is over. If the target player drops the ball as a result of this *Slam* then their *Rush* is over too.



# THE ART OF THE FOUL

DreadBall is an amazingly fast and brutal sport, but even DreadBall has rules. Each game is overseen by two match officials: **the Eye** and **the Ref**. It is the job of these two to ensure that the game is played fairly, or at least that those who break the rules are punished.

The “Eye in the Sky”, or Eye for short, is a floating surveillance pod that hovers out of harm’s way above the pitch. It can see the whole pitch at once and there is no hiding from its gaze.

The Ref, on the other hand, is on the pitch with the players, and can’t be everywhere at once. Although they sometimes literally have eyes in the back of their heads, they can be distracted, and if their attention is focussed elsewhere it’s possible to sneak a foul past them.

A Ref may never be the target of any action except *Distract the Ref*.

## REFEREES

In an effort to find impartial referees, the DGB has resorted to all manner of intriguing options. As well as a few Refs of recognisable races there are robots and cyborgs of all shapes and sizes in the Referees’ Guild, as well as a plethora of aliens. Most of the aliens are deliberately chosen from obscure and distant systems, little known to the general public. This lends them a mystique which is always worth a few points in the ratings, but it also has practical value. It’s hard for the team Coaches to bribe Refs when they can’t speak their language.



A foul is the term for an illegal action – something that breaks the rules of sporting conduct. This is a game term and refers to the players on the pitch, not to Coaches palming cards and other real-world cheating. **In the real world Coaches should play entirely fairly.** What their players get up to on the pitch is another matter...

Fouls are actions and are described below in the same format. But before we look at the possible fouls your players can commit, we need to understand Ref checks.

### Calling Foul!

In the hurly-burly of the game, it’s easy to miss a foul. To keep the game moving (and because it’s fun) a Coach has to call *Foul!* when one of his opponent’s players breaks the rules. The description of the individual fouls tells you when to roll the

Ref check to see if anyone was sent off. However, this check is not automatic: you must call for it.

A Coach can call *Foul!* at any point during the action, before or at the point when the Ref check is indicated. If you miss it and a player has been nominated for the next action (of either side), then you are out of luck. The foul has been missed and play continues. You’ll just have to find another way to get your own back...

For example, my opponent is playing his *Rush* and decides to *Stamp* one of my fallen Strikers. As he declares the action and picks up his dice I shout *Foul!* This doesn’t stop the action, but we will now roll a Ref check at the end. I could have called *Foul!* at any point during the action with the same result. However, if I had not been paying attention then it would have gone unpunished. You’ll be surprised how easy it is to miss fouls.

# REF CHECKS

A Ref check is called for when a player commits a foul. See the foul description for the point at which this should be made. All Ref checks work the same way, but note that **Ref checks do not work the same way as normal rolls**.

1. Determine the number of dice to roll.
  - ★ Roll 1 dice for the Eye.
  - ★ Roll 1 dice for the Ref if she is within 7 hexes of the player committing the foul. In the case of *Sneak*, this is any player on the sneaking team. Note that the Ref has no facing and can see in every direction.
  - ★ This number may be modified by event cards.
2. Roll all the dice at once. The dice are rolled by the Coach whose team is not under suspicion.

3. Each dice is read separately:
  - ★ 1 is a 1 turn penalty.
  - ★ 2 is a 2 turn penalty.
  - ★ 3 is a 3 turn penalty.
  - ★ 4-6 means no penalty.
4. Add together all the dice that rolled 1-3. The player is sent to the Sin Bin for that many turns. If this adds up to 4 or more then the player is sent off for the rest of the match.

If more than one foul needs to be checked at the same time, then resolve them in the order they are listed here. For example, if a player *Stomps* an opponent, but the team is also *Sneaking*. Resolve the *Stomp* first.

## Foul Actions

Fouls cost a Team Action Token or Special Move card to perform, just like other actions. Each is defined as a particular action type so that you can tell whether a Special Move card will buy one or not.

## FOUL: SUCKER PUNCH

### Jack or Guard

*Sucker Punch* is a type of *Slam*. The only difference from a normal *Slam* is where you start your action relative to your target. Running around behind someone to *Slam* them in the back is considered unsporting and is a foul. So, if you begin your action in your target's front arc and hit them in the back, then the *Slam* is a foul and is called a *Sucker Punch*.

Note that moving behind someone with one action, then slamming them from behind with a second action is **not** a foul, nor is slamming someone from behind if they just happen to be facing away from you. The foul is only when you start in their front and move behind them to *Slam* in a **single action**.

Roll a Ref check after the *Sucker Punch* has been resolved.

# FOUL: STOMP

## Jack or Guard

*Stomp* is a type of *Slam*. Some players just find the sight of an opponent on the floor in front of them too tempting, and they put the boot in to ensure that they stay down.

The stomping player may not move at all, and the target must be in one of his Threat Hexes. The only response the target can make is to *Dodge*.

**Stomp:** a 3 dice Strength test (X).

- ★ +1 if the player is a Guard.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (ignoring your target, maximum of -2).

**Dodge:** a 3 dice Speed test (X).

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 for being on the floor.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are in (ignoring the stomping player, maximum of -2).



Compare the total numbers of successes to find the outcome:

**Stomp doubles opponent:** the losing player must make an Armour check. The target number for the Armour check is equal to the difference in total successes between the winning *Stomp* and the losing player's *Dodge*.

**Dodge doubles opponent:** the dodging player may move 1 hex in any direction and does not need to *Evade* to do so. They remain on the floor. The stomping player turns to face directly at the hex the dodging player just vacated.

**Any other result:** the stomping player turns to face directly at his victim.

Roll a Ref check after the *Stomp* has been resolved.

# FOUL: STALL

*Stall* is any type of action that allows a player to move one or more hexes. It continues to be a foul (and may be called as such) until the player is no longer committing it.

The gate by the Subs' Bench opens onto the yellow hex, and an unscrupulous player can deliberately block this so that the opposing Coach can't reinforce his team.

At the end of any action by the opposing team, if one of their players is on the yellow hex next to your Subs' Bench (blocking your route on and off the pitch) then it is a *Stall* foul. This is true even if the player has fallen over.

Make a Ref check at the end of every action by the opposing team that this hex is blocked by one of their players, whether the action was spent on that player or not.



# FOUL: SNEAK

## Any Player

*Sneak* is initially any type of action that allows a player to move one or more hexes and therefore move onto the pitch. After that it continues to be a foul until the team is no longer committing it. This means that as long as you have 7 or more players on the pitch **every** action is a foul (and may be called as such).

The legal maximum number of players on the pitch at any one time is 6. However, this isn't always enough for a desperate Coach.

At the end of any action by the opposing team, if they have more than 6 players on the pitch then it is a sneaking foul.

Make a Ref check at the end of every action by the opposing team if they end the action with more than 6 players on the pitch. The Ref rolls a dice if any player is within 7 hexes. If the Ref check results in a player being sent off then choose him at random from those on the pitch.

# FOUL: DISTRACT THE REF

## Any Player

*Distract the Ref* is a type of *Run* or *Sprint*. The player harangues the Ref with threats, bribes, promises and anything else he can think of to distract her from the fouls his teammates are about to commit.

The *Distracting* player must move adjacent to the Ref using the normal rules, and then attempt to *Distract* them while the Ref tries to Remain Calm. This is done as a normal test, but instead of being on one of the usual game values it is done on a fixed 4+ for everyone. Guards get a bonus dice because they are more intimidating.

**Distract:** a 3 dice 4+ test (X).

★ +1 if the player is a Guard.

**Remain Calm:** a 3 dice 4+ test (X).

★ -1 per player from the distracting player's team threatening the hex you are in (ignoring the distracting player, maximum of -2).

**Draw or Distract wins:** the Ref ignores the rest of both teams for the moment and focuses on the player in front of him. For the rest of this *Rush* the Ref will only roll dice in a Ref check against the distracting player. After this *Rush* the Ref returns to normal. Roll a Ref check against the distracting player immediately, but do not add a dice for the Eye.

**Distract doubles opponent:** as above, but the distracting player is so convincing that you do not make a Ref check against him.

**Referee wins:** the Ref is unimpressed. Roll a normal Ref check against the distracting player immediately.

**Referee doubles opponent:** the distracting player is sent off for the rest of the match.



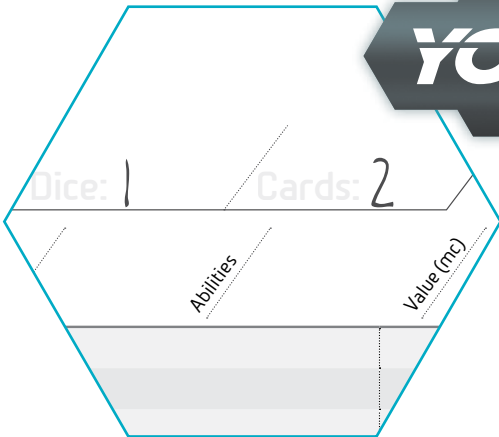
# DREADBALL CARDS

These are a 54 card deck consisting of four types of card: **Fan Support cards**, **Special cards**, **Event cards**, and **Special Move cards**. The card type is clearly marked at the top.

At the start of the match, separate out the two fan support cards and shuffle all the remaining cards together. These will form a face-down draw deck for Coaches to take cards from during the match. Any cards that have been used are placed next to the draw deck in a face-up discard pile. If the draw deck ever runs out then shuffle the discard pile to make a new draw deck.



## YOUR HAND OF CARDS



Each Coach starts each match with the number of cards written on their roster, drawn at random from the top of the draw deck. During each one of their *Rushes* they may buy additional cards. Each card costs one Team Action Token. A Coach can buy a maximum of the card number on their roster per *Rush*.

There is no limit to the number of cards a Coach may have at one time.

## THE CARDS IN PLAY

The cards are used in a number of ways, and it is important to understand the differences.

Cards can be used to:

- \* Make Special Moves
- \* Trigger events
- \* Make Fan checks
- \* Move the Ref
- \* Select a player at random



## MAKE SPECIAL MOVES

If a Coach has a Special Move card in his hand then he can play it instead of a Team Action Token. Most Special Move cards allow a defined type(s) of player to make a defined

type(s) of action. Each player may have a maximum of 1 Special Move card played on them in each *Rush*. This is in addition to the limit of 2 Team Action Tokens per *Rush*.

## TRIGGER EVENTS

If a Coach buys a DreadBall card that turns out to be an event then this goes into his hand as normal. He may play it whenever he wishes to put that event into effect. This can be during either Coach's turn and it takes effect as soon as the current action and all associated dice rolls and card draws have been completed.

If an event card is turned over as part of a Fan check, Ref move or random player selection then it takes effect as soon as the Fan check, Ref move or random player selection has been completed.

With the sole exception of *The Ball Shatters*, all events remain in play until another event is played. When a new event is drawn

or played the old card is discarded. *The Ball Shatters* is an instant event. It is resolved and then discarded. Any event that was in play before it was drawn remains in play.

Note that if a card says "your team" or "opposing player" then this is from the point of view of the Coach that drew or played the card.

If a player who is the subject of an event is removed from the pitch due to injury or fouling, they remain the subject of the event.

## MAKE FAN CHECKS

The fans like to see their teams trying their hardest, and the players like to hear the roar of approval from the crowd. Each feeds off the other. When a player does something dramatic you make a Fan check. Each Coach has a Fan Support card to track the level of support he has from his team's fans.

Make a Fan check each time one of your players:

- ★ Scores a 3 or 4 point strike.
- ★ Injures an opponent for 3 or more turns.
- ★ Struts his stuff in a display of **Showboating**.

A Fan check simply means turning over the top card of the draw pile and looking at the number of Fan "Cheers" (red dots) on the bottom. This card is placed underneath the team's Fan Support card with the cheers sticking out from underneath – see Card Commentary on page 50.

However, if the card you have just drawn takes the total number of cheers visible to 3 or more then all the visible cards are turned over and placed face down under the Fan Support card instead. In return your team is so inspired by the crowd's support that you get an extra Coaching Dice.

If you are playing a DreadBall League then the total number of cheers you have at the end of the match is important. See page 56.

Note that some actions can result in more than one Fan check being due. In these cases simply make each Fan check in turn, taking Coaching Dice as they are earned.



## MOVING THE REF

The Ref moves at the end of each *Rush*. The Coach who has just finished his *Rush* takes the top card from the draw deck and places it in front of him, face up.

He may move the Ref up to the number of hexes shown on the red panel at the top left of the card. There is no minimum move required. However, because the Ref is trying not to get in the way she can only end her move on a plain black hex or her starting chequered hex – not any other colour. Moving through coloured hexes is fine, just not ending her move on one. In addition, she will never move onto the ball. As the Ref is a neutral party they never need to roll to *Evade* and can move freely. A Ref cannot *Dash*.

Note also that the Ref does her best to stay out of the way and will never try to catch the ball. If it scatters onto her then scatter it again.

If the card is an event then this is now resolved.

If the card is a Special or Special Move then it is discarded.



## SELECT A PLAYER AT RANDOM

Several different events and other rules require you to select a player at random. The process is the same every time. There are 3 steps:

1. Agree on which players are eligible to be selected. This is not always the same group of players. For example, it could be anyone currently on the pitch (if being sent off for *Sneak*), or anyone who played in that match (for Man of the Match).
2. Turn over the top card of the draw deck.

3. Starting at the top, go down the random sequence of player numbers on the right, one at a time, until the number matches one of the eligible players.

4. Apply the effect to that player and if the effect is ongoing, mark them with the counter provided.



If you are resolving an event and the card you turn over to determine a random player is a new event card, then use the random number as normal and complete the first event before resolving the second.

## CARD COMMENTARY

The cards are usually self-explanatory. However, a small number can give rise to odd situations and it's worthwhile explaining how to deal with them.

**Bored Fans:** the card lost can be face down under the Fan Support card (ie already used to claim a Coaching Dice). It's a random choice from all the cards that team has.

**The Ego has Landed:** it is the opposing Coach's responsibility to ensure that his opponent follows this rule, just as it is with fouls. If someone tries to move the Ego second or later, then they should be reminded that they cannot do this. If both Coaches miss this then that's tough – you can't rewind the game. You should be paying more attention! Also, if the Ego takes the first action, then they can take further actions later. These do not all have to be done at the start of the *Rush*, just the first one.

### Fan Support & "Cheers":

The Fan Support cards are laid out as shown here, with "unspent" cheers showing from underneath. When you get a Coaching Dice for 3 cheers then the cards that "bought" it go completely under the Fan Support card, out of sight. They are used at the end of League games to see which side fielded the Man of the Match.

Note that you don't get to choose which cards and when they are traded in – they just get swapped for a Coaching Dice automatically as soon as you get a card that brings your total of "unspent" cheers to 3 or greater. This could mean that you "waste" some cheers as you might draw a 3 cheer card when you already have 2 showing. This is just the luck of the draw.



## EXHIBITION MATCHES

Sometimes you don't have time or the inclination to play a whole League, but you still want to try out your new MVP model and have a game with lots of well-trained and highly skilled players. In this situation you want to be playing a special kind of one-off game called an Exhibition Match.

These are games that the DreadBall Governing Body arranges to showcase all that is exciting about the sport. They are often widely broadcast and range from stage-managed posturing to real grudge matches between old rivals. In all cases they are characterised by high quality presentation, state-of-the-art equipment and highly motivated, handpicked teams.

In game terms, the differences are simple. You play a one-off game as normal, but instead of taking a basic 100mc starter team, you agree beforehand on a budget of 120, 130 or more mc. There are a number of ways you can spend this money, depending on what kind of game you want. Have a chat with your opposing Coach to decide what kind of value and limits you want to set.

One option is to take a normal 100mc starting team and then spend the extra on MVPs and experience. Decide which MVPs are available and bid for them as normal. This is likely to bring some cheap MVPs into the game, so be careful not to let them overpower the rest of the players.

Experience cannot usually be bought, but for this purpose it is allowed. Each roll on the advancement tables costs 5mc. Choose a table and roll for the exact result as normal.

If both Coaches agree then the extra money can also be used to buy more players.

Note that teams which play Exhibition games may never play real games (ie those that count towards player experience or death, plus League points) against those in a League. If you want to play in a League then use the underdog rules and develop your team and hone your Coaching skills on the pitch. Exhibition games are intended to allow you to play with the full range of models and abilities in a one-off game, not to get an experienced team for a League without any effort!

# DREADBALL LEAGUES

Once you and your friends have played a few games of DreadBall you might like to try playing a league.

In a DreadBall league the players gain experience and the teams become more powerful. This is because you keep the same players in the same team over many games instead of starting each new match with a set of fresh players.

It's not just the extra abilities though. What's even more fun is the stories that a team gains as it wins and loses,

plays easy matches and hard-fought losses, and rises to the top or struggles valiantly against fickle luck. Everyone remembers the highly trained Striker that always misses, or the Orx Guard that loses 4 Slams in a row against a human Jack. In a league the players and the teams take on a life of their own and the game comes alive in a whole new way.

## SETTING UP A LEAGUE

Let's imagine that you and a group of friends decide you want to set up a league.

In order to play a DreadBall league, you need a few simple things. Firstly, each Coach needs a team of models, preferably painted in their chosen team colours. You obviously need enough sets of DreadBall to be able to play several games at once so everyone can join in. The final ingredient is also important: you need a League Sponsor.

Before we go into the details of what a League Sponsor does during a league, let's look at the first steps in setting one up. There are a number of things you should agree together:

1. How long will the league run for (too short is better than too long)?
2. How often will you play?
3. Who will be the League Sponsor?
4. How is the winner decided (highest team ranking, most wins, or something else)?
5. Do you play a grand final (between the top 2 teams, for example)?

Mostly these are obvious and will depend on what is practical. If you all meet for a weekly gaming session then perhaps a 4 week league and weekly rounds would work well. If you don't see each other as regularly then maybe fortnightly rounds would be better.

What is important is that you agree on something that is practical. It is far, far better to run a league that finishes when everyone is still keen than one which drags on till everyone drops out in frustration. Aim small to start off with. If you run a successful league then people will want to do it again. Regardless of how brilliant and ornate your plan was, if it fizzled and died then nobody will want to join in next time.

On the subject of a grand final, it's a fun way to round off a league. You could play the final between the teams with the two highest rankings, or if they are different, between the team with the highest ranking and the one with the highest results total. There are no strict rules on this – it's about what seems most fun to you and your friends.

The Corporation being what it is, much of the League organisation revolves around money – lots of money. DreadBall uses millions of credits (mc) for all transactions, as anything smaller is too tiny for the big leagues to notice.



# LEAGUE SPONSORS

In the real DreadBall there are corporate sponsors for every league. In the game, the League Sponsor is the person who will be in charge of the league as a whole. If you are the League Sponsor then there are 4 main tasks for you to do:

1. Organise rounds.
2. Maintain the League Table.
3. Keep a Roster of available MVPs.
4. Keep track of the games.

# ORGANISING ROUNDS

A DreadBall league is played in *rounds*. In each round, every team plays at least one game and may play more.

Having agreed that you will play rounds every week, fortnight or whatever, you need to get started. So how do you sort out each round? Who plays who?

In the first round, when everyone has a starting team worth the same, the easiest thing to do is to put everyone's name in a hat and pick out a series of matches at random. This can be fun in itself, and is a great way to kick off a league, especially if you can all play your matches there and then.

After the first round, teams will have different rankings and you will have a league table drawn up. Get everyone together (either physically at the club or over email or text). There are two things to sort out. The first is setting up the matches and working out Underdog Bonuses; the next is bidding for MVPs (see page 60).

Starting with the person at the bottom of the league table, let them challenge whoever they like. That's your first match. Then the next Coach up the table gets to challenge someone, and so on. Once a Coach has a game then they can no longer challenge or be challenged this round for a second league match (but see *friendlies*, below). Other than that you are free to choose to play someone your level or go up against the big teams. Picking opponents like this allows Coaches who aren't doing so well a degree of control over their fate and avoids the problems of random matches against people you don't feel you can beat. This way everyone should always feel like they have a chance, which makes things more enjoyable.

When you know who you will be playing you can work out which team (if either) has an Underdog Bonus and how much it is. It is important to do this before the MVP auction as the Underdog can use his bonus on this. See below for more information on underdogs, Free Agents and MVPs.

## Odd Man Out

If you have an odd numbers of teams then someone needs to play twice. In most gaming groups this is not a problem, but to keep things fair and above board you might find it best to get the League Sponsor to play against the last unpicked player. Alternatively, you could have the League Sponsor nominate an opponent, bring someone in from outside the league or simply give that player a win on the assumption that his opponent was too scared to play. The League Sponsor should decide in advance what the rule will be for his league.

Once everyone has a game sorted out and the MVPs have been auctioned off, then you can get playing. This game is the one that will count for league wins and losses. However, if you are keen you can play more than one game in a round. These extra games are called *friendlies*. They help to build up the abilities of your players and therefore your team ranking, though they don't count towards your wins and losses in the league. You can organise *friendlies* in any way you like - I find it's best to be informal and just let people sort this out themselves. The only rule I'd suggest is not letting a team play the same opponent twice in a row. You can also play *friendlies* before or after your official league match if you want - the order is not that important as long as you play your

league match at some point during the round. The only thing you do need to do is ensure that you both know whether it's a league or friendly match you are playing *before* you start.

This system is the best of both structured and freeform worlds. By having one game a round organised you gain a structure for the league, and by letting people play as many as they like you are able to avoid the faster and more enthusiastic players getting frustrated when they have to wait for others who may simply have less free time.

In general, teams that play more have an advantage in experience and cash and so are higher ranked. This may or may not be seen as a problem. In some groups it's seen as rather unfair if some people have more chance to play than others and win through simple numbers of games. Of course, if someone had lots of gaming time they could even play two different teams in the same league and play one match with each per round!



## EVERY MATCH COUNTS

When you have developed a team over a few games of DreadBall you will be loath to go back to a starting team to play a one-off game. It's easy to get used to the veteran players you've built up, and a "vanilla" starting team can seem strange once you've fought hard to get a history behind your players.

So what happens if you are playing against someone who only has a new team, or wants to try out a new one? How do you make it fair? And what about playing someone who isn't involved in the league at all?

Simple - just use the underdog rules. They work just the same whether you are playing a one-off game or a league match. You can imagine that these are exhibition games, showing the flag for corporate sponsors, or simply friendlies to keep everyone at the top of their game. Whatever the reason, every match counts towards your team's history. If you gain experience then that's happened. If a player dies, then that's happened too. You can't rewind to an earlier version.

Play every game like it matters, because it does!

# UNDERDOGS

When two teams of different rankings meet, the lower rated team is known as the underdog. In order to keep things entertaining for the crowds, the DGB organises a handicap system that gives a temporary boost to the underdog by means of Free Agents and easier access to MVPs. This is the Underdog Bonus.

The Underdog Bonus is measured in mc and is simply the higher team's ranking minus the lower team's. So, for example, if the Skittersneak Stealers are ranked at 134mc and play the Ronton Rooks who are only ranked at 112mc, then the Ronton Rooks have an Underdog Bonus of 22mc (134-112).

The Underdog Bonus can be spent in two ways: MVPs and Free Agents. You might as well spend it too as you cannot save it. Any Underdog Bonus that is not spent at the start of a game is lost.

Once you have organised your match and have worked out your Underdog Bonus there is the MVP auction (explained below). Your Underdog Bonus can be used just like cash to bid for players, and if you need more you can top it up with real cash from your roster. For example, let's imagine that you have an Underdog Bonus of 12mc and are bidding for Buzzcut. Although you win the cost ends up being 17mc. This costs you 5mc from your own savings on top of the 12mc of the Underdog Bonus. Still a bargain!

If you have any of your Underdog Bonus left after the MVPs have all been auctioned off, then you can use it to acquire Free Agents. These are drawn from the pool of fully trained and equipped DreadBall players that are not yet signed to a team and are assigned at random, regardless of your imagined needs.

Free Agents are paid for by Digby (via your Underdog Bonus) to play for a team on a single match basis. This gives the team another player or two and makes the whole match that much more exciting. However, their experience is lost to the team, so you have to balance letting them take the lead with getting your own players to earn new abilities. Note that even if you play two matches in a row with the same type of Free Agent they never gain experience. In reality they are different

individuals as Digby makes a point of rotating all their Free Agents to keep as many as possible at game fitness.

Make one roll on the Free Agents table below for every whole 10mc you have left of your Underdog Bonus. Anything less than 10mc is lost – perhaps you should have used it on MVPs! Like every other team member, they are included in the team limit of 14 players. Add them to your roster temporarily. A Free Agent will only ever play for a team for a single match. If you need Another Free Agent for your next match, roll again.

| Dice roll | Free Agent         |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1         | Human Jack         |
| 2         | Human Guard        |
| 3         | Human Striker      |
| 4         | Veer-myn Striker   |
| 5         | Forge Father Guard |
| 6         | Orx Guard          |

For example, I am coaching the Skittersneak Stealers against your Greenmoon Smackers. I have an Underdog Bonus of 27 left after the MVPs have all gone. Dividing this by 10 and rounding down I get 2 rolls on the table. If I roll a 1 and a 5 then I can add a Human Jack and a Forge Father Guard to my team roster for this one match at no cost, as Free Agents.

Purists will have noticed that this means underdogs can get some player and racial mixes that teams can never have on their own. This is entirely intentional on Digby's part. When an underdog is up against an experienced team of veteran players they need something to give them a chance. Standing things on their heads by adding a Veer-myn to the Delves or an Orx Guard to the 29ers makes for an interesting match whoever wins – and it gives both Coaches something new to think about.

Free Agents were surprisingly popular among our playtesters who found them fun on several levels. It was nice to have a change in models to paint and several immediately saw the possibilities for painting up a set or two of the possible Free Agents in their team colours. In the game it adds a completely new twist to the tactics each team has available, and upsetting the balance like this can be enough to give the underdogs a real chance against the higher ranked team.



# LEAGUE TABLES

Every league needs a table that ranks the teams in it from highest to lowest. This changes as games are played, players die or gain abilities and new teams join the fun.

A league table should keep a tally of the team rankings, the total points from wins and losses, and the total strike difference for that team. This means you can see who has the overall toughest team, who wins the most matches and who gets the highest scores. It's not always the same team.

If there is a draw on team rankings, then it's ranked by points. If that is tied then rank the teams by strike difference.

The table itself can be done on computer and printed out, it could be on a club website, or just written out on a piece of paper. There is no right or wrong way to do it. All that is important is that you (the Sponsor) keep it up to date (which means that the Coaches have to tell you their results) and that everyone can see it when they want to.

If you have a regular club you might want to put the table up on the wall. Perhaps you always play at your local games store or in the garage round at a particular friend's house. Alternatively, your club might have its own website, in which case you could put it on that. Or you could email the Coaches once a week once you've got the results of that round's matches. Pick the system that suits your gaming group.

| TEAM NAME        | RANKING | LEAGUE POINTS | STRIKE DIFFERENCE |
|------------------|---------|---------------|-------------------|
| ManticCorps      | 156     | 16            | +7                |
| The Veerminators | 132     | 10            | +3                |
| Merc City DBC    | 124     | 6             | +5                |
| Diabolic Sevens  | 122     | 6             | +3                |
| Cheddar Gorgers  | 115     | 1             | -3                |
| Aesir Avengers   | 111     | 1             | -8                |
| Darksun Raiders  | 106     | 0             | -11               |



# MVPS

Another thing that the League Sponsor needs to do is keep track of the MVPs in the league. This simply means maintaining an up to date list of who is available to play, how much they cost to hire, and who they are playing for each round. See the section on MVPs on page 60 for more about these types of players.

## KEEPING TRACK OF GAMES

This is perhaps the hardest part. It's not that there is really a lot to do, it's just that people tend to forget to tell you.

In order for you to keep track of team rankings and MVPs, you need to find out the results from the Coaches involved (team rankings, match result and final score). It's usually a good idea to ask everyone to tell you as it builds in a sort of redundancy. However, you could try just getting the winner of each game

to tell you. After all, they're more likely to want to admit a glorious victory than their vanquished opponent. You'll still need to record the team ranking of the loser though.

Remember that you only need to record the wins, losses and strike totals for league games, but the team ranking counts from every game.

## BETWEEN MATCHES SEQUENCE

When you are playing in a league then you need to do a little bit of record keeping after each match. This is best done immediately, when the Coaches can witness each other's rolls so everyone knows it's fair. It's also good to do this immediately as the Coaches can remember what happened.

The sequence between matches follows these steps:

1. Man of the Match
  - ★ Allocate extra experience to the Man of the Match.
2. Results
  - ★ Inform the League Sponsor of the result. He notes the details and updates the league table accordingly.

3. Player Advancement
  - ★ Roll new abilities
  - ★ Update the roster
4. Team Revenue
  - ★ Calculate earnings
  - ★ Dead players
  - ★ Buy new players, DreadBall Cards and Coaching Dice
  - ★ Update the roster
5. Team Ranking
  - ★ Calculate new ranking from players, dice, cards and cash.
  - ★ Update the roster

To ensure fair play, these steps should be witnessed by the opposing Coach.

## MAN OF THE MATCH

Count up the total number of cheers each team has had during the match.

A random player from the more popular team gets an extra point of experience. Do not count any players that died or just sat on the Subs' Bench all game.

If neither team has earned any cheers at all then the Man of the Match is not awarded.

If the teams are drawn on a number of cheers greater than zero, then both get a Man of the Match award, as above.

# RESULTS

Whilst the losers may say it's all about how you play the game, we all know that DreadBall is really about breaking heads and winning trophies (and nice, fat prize packets)!

A league measures wins and losses from games as well as strike difference. This is used, along with the team ranking, to place teams from highest to lowest on the league table. Points are awarded for wins and losses as follows:

**If the match ends with a 7 point landslide:**

Winner: 3 points / Loser: 0 points

**Any other game:**

Winner: 2 points / Loser: 1 point

Draw: 1 point each

Remember to tell your League Sponsor the results of your match.

# PLAYER ADVANCEMENT

Players are ranked as well as teams, and each player starts at rank 1. During a game a player can earn experience points for doing certain things and this helps them rise through the ranks. Each of the following earns 1 experience for the player, each time he does it:

| Cause                             | Who can gain experience? |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Scoring a 3 or 4 point strike.    | Striker or Jack          |
| Injuring an opponent for 3 turns. | Any player               |
| Killing an opponent.              | Any player               |
| Man of the Match                  | Any player               |

A normal player earns 1 point of experience each time he does one of the above. For example, if a Jack knocks two opponents out for 3 turns each and then scores two 3 point strikes they would earn 4 experience points for that game.

Mark each point of experience on the roster as soon as it is earned.

Note that MVPs and Free Agents never gain experience.

At the end of a match, check your players to see if any have gone up a rank. A player needs to earn as many experience points as the next highest rank. For example, if a player is rank 1 then he needs to earn 2 experience points to go to rank 2.

If a player has enough experience then he goes up to the next rank. Choose an advancement table (see below), roll to see what you get, and add the new ability or increase the game value accordingly. Update the roster, making sure that you note the new rank and cross

out the experience "spent" to gain it. For example, if the Jack in the example above was rank 1 and earned 4 experience in a game then he would advance to rank 2 and make an advancement roll. Two of his experience would be crossed out and he would be left with 2. He needs a total of 3 to advance to the next rank, so he only has to get one more in his next game to advance again.

A player can only advance by a single rank after each game.

Each rank that a player advances increases his value by 5mc. Remember to change this on your roster.



# ADVANCEMENT ROLLS

When a player goes up in rank they make a single roll on one of the advancement tables below. There are 4 to choose from: 3 for specific player roles and one for extra coaching. You can always pick the table for your role or you can choose to sacrifice one of your team's Coaching Dice (cross it off the roster) and roll on the extra coaching table. Make your choice before you roll.

Roll 1 dice and look up the result on your chosen table. There are no modifiers for this roll.

If the player cannot have the result rolled then they may choose what they want from that table. If a player already has all the advancements they can have from that table then they may freely choose from any of the other role specific advancement tables (ie, not the extra coaching table). Note that not all abilities are usable by all player roles.

There are a few limitations to these advancements:

- ★ A player can only ever gain 1 point on each game value (Strength, Speed and Skill).
- ★ A game value can never be better than 3+
- ★ A player cannot have the same ability more than once (though see *Lucky/Really Lucky*).

Improvements to game values make the number drop by 1. So, a 5+ becomes a 4+ and a 4+ becomes a 3+.



## Striker

| Dice roll | Advancement                 |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1         | <i>Roll</i>                 |
| 2         | <i>Jump</i>                 |
| 3         | <i>A Safe Pair of Hands</i> |
| 4         | <i>Backflip</i>             |
| 5         | Skill                       |
| 6         | Choose from this list       |

## Jack

| Dice roll | Advancement                             |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1         | <i>Running Interference</i>             |
| 2         | Strength                                |
| 3         | Speed                                   |
| 4         | Skill                                   |
| 5         | Choose from this list                   |
| 6         | Choose from Guard, Jack or Striker list |

## Guard

| Dice roll | Advancement               |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| 1         | <i>Can't Feel a Thing</i> |
| 2         | <i>Does This Hurt?</i>    |
| 3         | <i>Keeper</i>             |
| 4         | <i>Steady</i>             |
| 5         | Strength                  |
| 6         | Choose from this list     |

## Extra Coaching

| Dice roll | Advancement                 |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1         | <i>Lucky/Really Lucky</i> * |
| 2         | <i>Can't Feel a Thing</i>   |
| 3         | <i>Grizzled</i>             |
| 4         | <i>Backflip</i>             |
| 5         | Strength, Speed or Skill    |
| 6         | Choose from this list       |

\* The first time a player gets this ability they become *Lucky*. If they roll this result a second time then they become *Really Lucky*.

## TEAM REVENUE

Revenue and all expenses are measured in millions of credits (mc).

Your revenue for a match is somewhat unpredictable as it depends on ice cream and t-shirt sales as well as simple crowd numbers, tri-vid licensing and so on. You get a number of dice to roll and each dice earns you 1-6mc.

Roll 1 dice per point you earned for winning or losing the match, plus 1 dice per whole 10 higher team ranking your opponent had at the start of the match, regardless of whether you won or lost.

When you have worked out how many dice you have for revenue, roll them all together and add the scores. This is how many mc you have earned for that match. Add it to your team's cash.

For example, let's say we just played a game and you snuck a victory in the last seconds with a daring 3 point strike. This gets you 2 points for the victory, so that's 2 dice. Your team has a ranking 11 lower than mine, so you add one more dice for the "whole 10" higher ranking my team is and you get to roll 3 dice for your revenue this match. Not bad!

## PLAYER FATALITIES

In The Corporation almost anything is available for a price. The question is simply, are they worth it?

If a player dies then you must choose whether to spend the money on his medical bills to revive him, or earn a little extra money by recycling his body parts. Reviving him will cost the basic cost for his type of player plus the roll of a dice in mc. The bounty you receive for being a good citizen and recycling is fixed at 5mc.

Players are removed from your roster if they are sold for parts rather than revived. The cash is added in their place. At this point they no longer count towards any limits your team may have for player roles.

Revived players stay on the roster as before, but lose any unspent experience points and cannot earn any experience from this match. They retain any abilities they had already earned.

## BUYING NEW PLAYERS

A team can have a maximum of 14 players at any one time. New players cost what they are listed at on their team page (see pages 68-75).

You are limited to a maximum of double your starting number of each player role at one time. For example, a Veer-

myn team may not have more than 4 Guards on its roster at one time because this is double the starting allocation of 2. This total does not include MVPs or Free Agents - only permanent team members.

# HIRING MVPS

In addition to the normal players you start the game with, you can also buy the services of the famous names in DreadBall. These legendary figures are known as Most Valuable Players, or just MVPs. They hire themselves out like mercenaries to play for the highest bidder. Don't pay for these players yet – the League Sponsor will auction their services just before you sort out your next matches.

Unlike normal players who only need to be paid for once, MVPs need to be paid for every round. This pays for them to play the next fixture or two, but doesn't guarantee their loyalty after that. Their only loyalty is to a fat paycheck.

The League Sponsor needs to keep a record of which MVPs are available in the league and how much they are currently worth (see below). The League Sponsor can choose to use as many or as few MVPs as he likes, but make sure everyone is aware of which ones are available. You will find that different proportions of MVPs to teams creates different kinds of buying frenzies when they come up for auction and obviously the more you allow then the less they will cost. You can also change the balance of power in a league by the mix of MVPs you allow.

Each MVP is an individual and can only play for one team in the league at a time. A team can hire as many MVPs at once as it can afford.

The basic cost of an MVP is listed on his entry. This is the least he will ever work for. All MVP fees are per round and paid up front. After each match, when all the Coaches are available and after you have sorted out the next round's games, bid for MVPs. Auction the available MVPs in whatever order the League Sponsor chooses. The Coach who hired them last round gets the first option to bid; if nobody has yet hired them then a random Coach starts. Coaches can then offer more money in turn until there is only one left. They pay the money and get the MVP in question for the next round. Write their name on your roster temporarily. Whatever they paid becomes that MVP's minimum fee for the next auction.

A Coach may drop out of the bidding for a particular MVP at any time. However, once a Coach has done this then he may

not bid on them again that round. They may still bid on other MVPs in this round, and still bid on that MVP in other rounds.

Note that you can bid for an MVP even if he will not play for your team. This is a way of forcing up the price, though you run the risk of actually winning the bid and paying the fee just to have him sit on the sidelines. Of course, this may have been your plan all along...

If nobody wants to hire a particular MVP in a round then the Sponsor should note a reduction of 2mc in their fee and save them for the next round's auction. This reduction will go on until they reach their base fee, which will not be discounted further. In this way MVPs can sit out a round or two if they get too greedy.

A team may not have more than 14 players in total on its roster. Each MVP you have in your team takes up one slot on your roster, just like a normal player.

MVPs are available to the team that hired them for the whole round, not just the league game. This usually means that Coaches with powerful MVPs are really keen to play as many games as they can organise that round, but their opponents are not so sure!

For example, if the MVP Lucky Logan comes up for auction the bidding will start at whatever he cost last round and the first bid goes to whoever hired him last. If this is the first round in the league then he will charge his minimum fee of 8mc. Bidding will start with a random Coach.







## BUYING CARDS AND DICE

You may buy no more than 1 DreadBall Card and 1 extra Coaching Dice during each Between Matches Sequence. Each DreadBall Card costs 10mc. Each Coaching Dice costs

6mc. These are permanent additions to your roster (unless specifically removed by another rule). Your team can have up to a maximum of 7 Coaching Dice and 7 DreadBall Cards.

## TEAM RANKING

As it is primarily a Corporation based sport, DreadBall teams are ranked simply by their value in mc. This is equal to the total of a team's:

- \* Players (basic cost plus 5mc per rank gained)
- \* DreadBall Cards (10mc each)
- \* Coaching Dice (6mc each)
- \* Spare (unspent) cash

Simply add these together and put the total in the box provided. This is the team's ranking. Remember to tell your League Sponsor your new team ranking after each match, whether it is a league match or a friendly.

Note that MVPs and Free Agents do not count towards a team's ranking.

# ABILITIES

Players are trained in standard abilities for their position, but as they gain experience they learn new tricks and veterans all have different strengths and weaknesses.

## A SAFE PAIR OF HANDS

*Striker or Jack*

A player with this ability gets +1 dice to catch inaccurate passes, ie a scattering ball or a *Throw* with no successes. He gets no bonus to catch accurate passes.

## BACKFLIP

*Any Player*

A player with this ability who tries to *Stand Up* will automatically do so as if he doubled the test. Note that no test is actually rolled. In effect, knocking down a player with this skill merely stops them using *Sprint* as their next action.

## CAN'T FEEL A THING

*Any Player*

The player gets 1 additional automatic success whenever they make an Armour check, in effect ignoring one extra injury each time.

## DOES THIS HURT?

*Guard or Jack*

The player treats *Stomp* as if it were a *Slam*, being able to move 1 hex or *Run* depending on the player's role. If the player did not start adjacent to the target, but moved adjacent during this action then they add 1 dice to their *Stomp*.

Note that in the eyes of the Ref this is still a *Stomp* and so still a foul.

## GOTCHA!

### Any Player

Whether it is the tentacles, a magnetic personality or the trail of sticky ooze, some players are just tricky to get away from. This has two game effects. Firstly, whenever a player with this ability would cause a -1 penalty for an opponent being in their Threat Hex, this is doubled to a -2 penalty instead. Secondly, if an opposing player fails to *Evade* out of a Threat Hex of a player with this ability, then they do not move at all and their action ends.

## GRIZZLED

### Any Player

The player is a particularly tough veteran who takes little notice of physical pain. Any opponent making a *Slam* against this player loses 1 dice in addition to any other modifiers.

## JUMP

### Striker or Jack

The most agile players can leap over their friends or opponents in dramatic displays of acrobatic skill.

A *Jump* is a 2 hex move (and costs 2 hexes of movement) and can be part of either a *Run* or *Sprint* action. The first hex you jump over must be occupied by a player (either standing or on the floor).

Jump is a **3 dice Speed test (123)**. Roll each time you need to *Jump* separately.

This is modified by:

- ★ +1 if the player is a Striker.
- ★ -1 per opposing player threatening the hex you are moving from (maximum of -2).

**Jump fails:** the player falls over in the hex he was moving to. If a loose ball is in that hex then it scatters. The action ends, but the *Rush* does not.

**Jump succeeds:** The player moves into the new hex safely and may face any direction he wants (even if Jumping whilst Sprinting). If he wants to then he can roll to *Jump* again later on in the same action (with a target number one higher).

Note that a player falling over as a result of a failed *Jump* test does not have to check his armour and will not be injured. However, if he is carrying the ball then he will drop it and end the *Rush*.

Also note that it is possible that a player will need to *Dash* in order to gain the extra movement to *Jump* into a new hex. In this case all *Dash* tests must succeed in order for the *Jump* to be successful. Roll each separately. If the player fails any *Dash* attempts that are required for the *Jump* then they will fall over in the hex they were trying to *Jump* into.

A player making a *Jump* does not need to roll to *Evade* for that part of their movement, though they are subject to those rules as normal both before and after the *Jump*.



# KEEPER

## Guard

When a player gets this ability their role changes to that of Keeper. A Keeper is a type of Guard, and unless a rule specifically differentiates between the two or is overridden here, the player should still be treated as a Guard.

The player is also issued with new armour (4 dice at 3+) and a DreadBall glove. Unfortunately he is not really trained in its proper use and simply uses it to cannon the ball downfield.

Unlike pure Guards who cannot *Pick up the Ball* or catch, a Keeper can (at -1 dice). A Keeper cannot *Throw* the ball like a Jack or a Striker, but they do have a unique action called *Punt*.

If a Keeper wishes to *Punt* the ball, he simply places it wherever he wants on the pitch. This is a hugely inaccurate means of getting rid of the ball. Scatter the ball from the hex it is placed in, then scatter it again when it comes to rest.

A *Punt* can never be used to make a strike.

A *Punt* does count as losing the ball and ends your *Rush*.

# LUCKY

## Any Player

Once per *Rush* the player may re-roll any one dice that they have rolled for a normal test. Declare that you will do this after you and any opponent have both rolled your dice normally, but before you apply any results. If you both have the *Lucky* or *Really Lucky* ability then the active player chooses first whether to re-roll or not.

Re-rolling the dice means just that: pick up the dice you want to roll again and roll it again! Whatever result it rolled initially is ignored. Only the result of the re-roll counts. If the re-rolled dice is a 6 then it counts as a success and generates an extra dice as normal.

# MIND LIKE WATER

## Any Player

The player has learned to apply martial arts techniques to the sports field without incurring the wrath of the Referee. Instead of battering opponents with physical strength, the player uses leverage and balance to knock down their opponent, turning the other player's own strength and speed against them.

Whenever this player is the target of a *Slam* they do not need to choose their response: it is always

the same. Work out the number of dice that the Slamming player gets as normal. The player with this ability then gets the same number of dice. There are no further modifiers.

The player with *Mind Like Water* uses their own *Speed* to calculate the number of successes. However, they treat this as a *Slamback* for calculating the outcome, even if the *Slam* came from behind.

A player with this ability who takes a *Slam* action does so normally.

## REALLY LUCKY

### Any Player

You may only have this ability if you already have the *Lucky* ability (which this replaces). A player cannot have both the *Lucky* and *Really Lucky* abilities at the same time.

This works just like the *Lucky* ability, but a player can use it once per action instead of once per *Rush*.

## ROLL

### Striker or Jack

The player is used to being knocked down and can quickly roll out of the way of opponents. If the player is the target of a *Stomp*, treat a normal win for *Dodge* as if it was a double win.

## RUNNING INTERFERENCE

### Guard or Jack

The player may use this ability once per match. See the box on page 42 for details of how this works.

## STEADY

### Guard or Jack

A *Steady* player cannot be knocked down as a result of a *Slam*. They can be pushed back and they can be injured, but they cannot be knocked down. This means that a *Steady* player who is doubled by a *Slam* will be pushed back and must make an *Armour* check as normal. If this fails then they will be removed from the pitch to recover from their injuries as normal. However, if their *armour* protects them then they will remain standing in the hex to which they were pushed.

Note that a *Steady* player can fall down on their own, for example if they fail while trying to *Dash* or *Evade*.



# DREADBALL TEAMS

There are thousands of professional DreadBall teams in the many full-time leagues of the Corporation's Co-Prosperity Sphere. Each team is run by one or other of the myriad corporations within The Corporation. Some make this obvious, such as the Trontek 29ers or the Shill Industries Nightmares; others go for the showmanship of names like The Beasts or the simplicity of a place name and a trade – for example, the Prosperion Prospectors. A few, like the Midgard Serpents, are inspired by ancient mythology.

Team names are often related to the race(s) of their players as part of being a successful DreadBall team is the showmanship, story and spectacle you bring. Although the Co-Prosperity Sphere is mainly human and wars are fought against Forge Fathers, marauding Orx and so on, this doesn't mean that all other races are bad. Many of them are DreadBall fans too!

All of the non-human teams have dramatic histories describing how they came to be playing DreadBall, and some of them are even true! More common than the unadorned truth is a degree of artistic license and exaggeration that everyone knows is there, but all ignore because it makes the whole spectacle more exciting. It's a bit of escapism for the crowds, and nobody is interested in the mundanities of the real workings behind the scenes. DreadBall is a sort of combination of sport, carnival and soap opera, all rolled together to form a unique and compelling blend.

## Team Types

Each starting team roster is strictly controlled by the DGB, and each must conform to one of the recognised (and approved) formats. This means that all starting teams of a given type are identical. See the following pages for the initial line-ups of the four most common team types.

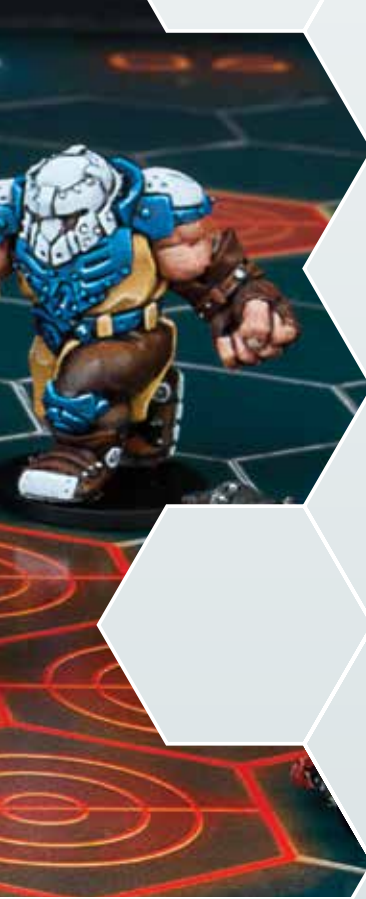
This limitation of initial team rosters allows the DGB to ensure fair, balanced and interesting games for the crowds to watch. Of course, as soon as you join a league and get a few matches under your belt the team will change and grow, but that too is fun for the fans to follow.

Rather than list them as simply "human teams", "Veer-myn teams", etc, each of the four types is described as a famous example – just as they were when they started out. This gives you a better idea of the character and history you can include in a team and acts as a sort of template for you to invent your own. Of course, if you want to, then simply use the examples given here!

## Starting Your Team

Every team starts with 8 players, but each type of team has a different combination of player roles. Have a look at the different rosters, read their descriptions and look at the models. One of the teams will appeal to you more than the others, and this is the one you should play. Don't worry about why you chose it or which is "the best" – they're all balanced and in the hands of a skilled Coach they can all win.





## Reading a Team Roster

This is mostly self-explanatory. The types of player who play in that team are listed on the left. If a player type is not listed then the team does not have them. For example, the Greenmoon Smackers and other teams of Orx and Goblins do not include Strikers. Here is their full roster:

|       | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Starting Team | Cost | Notes  |
|-------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|---------------|------|--------|
| Guard | 5    | 3+       | 4+    | 5+    | 4+     | x3            | 13mc | Orx    |
| Jack  | 5    | 5+       | 3+    | 4+    | 4+     | x5            | 9mc  | Goblin |

## TEAM STATLINES

**Extras:** an Orx and Goblin team starts with 1 Coaching Dice and 1 DreadBall Card.

The game values for Move, Strength and so on are shown against each player type. Starting team shows how many of each type of player are included in an approved starting team. Every team begins with 8 players. In the example shown here, the team starts with 3 Guards, 5 Jacks and no Strikers.

The cost is only used on leagues, and is the price (in millions of credits) to permanently

hire one more of that player type from the pool. This is a one-off charge, paid when the player joins the team. The notes section lists any additional abilities a player may have. These are rare in starting players, but will fill up quickly when you start playing in a league.

The number of Coaching Dice and DreadBall Cards the team starts with are listed below each roster.

Starting up a new team is simple. All you need to do is choose which of the four types you want to play and then copy their 8 player starting line-up onto a roster sheet.

Once you've made your decision and written out your roster sheet then you can start to personalise things. Obviously you'll need a team name. You can use one of the examples in this book or make up your own. Players need names too, though I'd save nicknames for later. These will naturally suggest themselves as a result of game events and are much more fun when tied into a history you share with your gaming buddies. Add all these names to the roster.

You can also decide on team colours, a fancy logo and even a team song if you're feeling creative. Why not write them a back story? How did they come about? Which corporation is behind them? There's lots you can do to make your team unique.

Of course, you won't get far without models to play with, so you'll need to ensure that you've got a set of the appropriate miniatures for your team. Ideally these should be painted in whatever team colours you've decided on. However, to start with the most important thing is that they are the right models so that your opponent can tell at a glance what type each player is (Striker, Guard or Jack) and they have their player number on somewhere. The numbered positions on the team roster need to match the number on the player's shirt. This is so that they can be picked out at random for some of the game events, both good and bad. You can paint the numbers on, use waterslide transfers or – if they aren't painted yet – just write the numbers on the model's base. The most important thing is that they can easily be identified.

Now, with your team roster all organised and a matching set of models to represent the players, all you need is an opponent!

# TRONTEK 29ERS



The ever-present logo of Trontek Industries reaches into every aspect of the lives of an average citizen in the Co-Prosperity Sphere, so it is hardly surprising that their team is one of the most highly regarded of the major leagues.

Genetically pure human teams are the most common type in the major leagues, simply because that's what most of the citizens of the Co-Prosperity Sphere are! Whilst some leagues allow all manner of mutants, cyborgs and robots as players, most do not. After all, the game is supposed to be one of skill rather than who bought the best droid.

Human teams are flexible and versatile with the ability to adapt to a number of different styles of play. They are not the best at any one skill, but they aren't rubbish at anything and have few real weak spots. In many ways you could say that this is the team equivalent of a Jack – it can try its hand at anything.

Remember that you can play this team either as the Trontek 29ers themselves, or as another genetically pure human team of your own. The game values will be the same for all human teams, but of course your team will be the best!

Trontek 29ers Visitors Kit



# DREADBALL FACTS

The outstanding name among DreadBall's corporate sponsors has to be the industrial giant known as Trontek. Who can claim to live in the Co-Prosperity Sphere and not own an item they have manufactured? With interests as diverse as hamburgers and space freighters, they touch the lives of almost every citizen of the Sphere. Why not sport too?

Trontek became involved with DreadBall in its earliest days, bringing it to the vidcasts and sports

channels in its rough and ready form. The explosion of popularity for the sport plus some bold management decisions gained them contracts for building bespoke armoured suits and whole arenas, and their aggressive business practices matched the violence on the pitch. Trontek muscled out any attempts at competition for almost 80 years, and until very recently all DreadBall kit was made by them. Even now the majority of famous players swear by the Trontek brand.

|         | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Starting Team | Cost | Notes |
|---------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|---------------|------|-------|
| Guard   | 5    | 4+       | 4+    | 4+    | 4+     | x2            | 10mc |       |
| Jack    | 5    | 4+       | 4+    | 4+    | 4+     | x3            | 8mc  |       |
| Striker | 5    | 4+       | 4+    | 4+    | 5+     | x3            | 10mc |       |



## TEAM STATLINES

**Extras:** a Human team starts with 1 Coaching Dice and 2 DreadBall Cards.





# GREENMOON SMACKERS

The Smackers began their career as pirates, ambushing lonely merchant vessels from their hideout on the green moon of Lanthis IV. Eventually they found some recordings of DreadBall games in the entertainment suite of the MVV Bilge Rat and, with little to do for months on end, started playing games among themselves. As their raids began to focus on stealing DreadBall equipment, they soon came to the notice of Digby, who decided to strike a deal and bring their raw talent to the big leagues.

True to their origins, only Orx and Goblins can join the ranks of the Smackers and their imitators. It's not always easy to get quality recruits, but then Goblins are known for their low standards at everything other than sliding out of trouble (and running away), so they're happy to make do. Orx, on the other hand, can always be relied upon to thump things with little or no formal training.

Orx and Goblins have different strengths and make an interesting combination. The most obvious tactic starts with using the brute might of the Orx to smash as many of your opponents as possible. Once there are few of them left standing, the fact that the Goblins are prone to dropping the ball is less of a worry. Sometimes it's a problem not having Strikers, though you do get the best Guards to make up for it.

Remember that you can play this team either as the Greenmoon Smackers themselves, or as your own team of green-skinned miscreants. The game values will be the same for all Orx and Goblin teams, but your team will be the meanest!

|       | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Starting Team | Cost | Notes  |
|-------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|---------------|------|--------|
| Guard | 5    | 3+       | 4+    | 5+    | 4+     | x3            | 13mc | Orx    |
| Jack  | 5    | 5+       | 3+    | 4+    | 4+     | x5            | 9mc  | Goblin |

## TEAM STATLINES

**Extras:** an Orx and Goblin team starts with 1 Coaching Dice and 1 DreadBall Card.



# DREADBALL FACTS

Every DreadBall arena needs some form of medical support and evacuation staff to clear the pitch of injured and dead players during the game. As with all aspects of this rapidly growing sport, the solutions to this problem vary enormously from grimly practical and crude to clever applications of the highest technology.

At its simplest, the job goes to a brave paramedic who runs onto the pitch to drag the fallen player off. As the game never pauses, this is clearly a very dangerous thing to do. Wealthier arenas have tried moving floor sections that deposit injured players onto an under-pitch network of conveyors, and the most advanced have mediporters to instantly teleport the injured from their crumpled heaps to a medi-bay.





# SKITTERSNEAK STEALERS

They say that you are never more than a couple of metres from a Veer-myn, and if that is the case then their DreadBall teams are far from surprising. There are so many DreadBall fans that they couldn't help but hear all about it! Their most famous team of all is the Skittersneak Stealers – winners of the Thudweiser League in '37 and '39, and holder of more “Most Fouls” awards than any other team in DreadBall's history.

Veer-myn are not really a natural race for DreadBall. They have terrible depth perception and their nervous twitchiness gives them real trouble when catching the ball. It is a testament to their enthusiasm and perseverance that they can play at all, and they do play pretty well. They only take Veer-myn recruits, choosing the best from the vast array of hopefuls who constantly step forward to try out for every team.

With a clarity of self-realisation uncommon in sport, the Veer-myn focus their training on the area they are naturally weakest at. The idea is that training will compensate for a lack of innate talent and, to a degree, this works. This concentration gives you teams comprised mostly of highly trained Strikers, with a smattering of hardier rats as Guards. With a habit of making way more scoring chances than every other team, but missing far more of them, Veer-myn teams are not for Coaches with a nervous disposition or weak heart.

Remember that you can play this team either as the Skittersneak Stealers themselves, or as your own team of rats. There's never any shortage of recruits. The game values will be the same for all Veer-myn teams, though naturally yours will be the big cheese.

|         | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Starting Team | Cost | Notes |
|---------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|---------------|------|-------|
| Guard   | 6    | 4+       | 3+    | 5+    | 4+     | x2            | 12mc |       |
| Striker | 6    | 4+       | 3+    | 5+    | 5+     | x6            | 11mc |       |

## TEAM STATLINES

**Extras:** a Veer-Myn team starts with no Coaching Dice and 1 DreadBall Card.





# DREADBALL FACTS

How can Veer-myn play in the DreadBall leagues? What about Orx and Forge Fathers? Aren't they the enemy? Is this safe? These were the sort of questions that greeted the earliest non-human teams when they took to the pitch for the first time back in The Thudweiser Cup XXXV. Several explanations have been offered in official press releases, scandal sheets and on serious newsfeeds.

To take the Veer-myn as an example, some folk hold the view that these are not real rat-men at all, but vat-bred stand-ins who simply look similar; others suggest robots could be the answer, carefully dressed up with sythnthiskin; clones are another possibility.

Rex Roth from DNN ran a series of articles supposedly uncovering a capture and breed programme, but that has been largely debunked as the result of an overactive journalistic imagination.

These days the average DreadBall fan simply doesn't care. The non-humans add so much spectacle and excitement to the game that any cultural foibles are seen as just part of the showbiz atmosphere and razzmatazz that accompanies the big games. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that DreadBall should be officially adopted as the means to resolve disputes instead of fighting wars!



# MIDGARD DELVERS

It all began with a deal, as is common with the Forge Fathers. They would be allowed to play in the league in exchange for certain mining rights and technical know-how. These days, after years of play and several league victories, it is hard to imagine the leagues without the doughty presence of the father teams, first among whom are the stalwart players of the Midgard Delvers.

The Forge Fathers aren't the most demonstrative race, though DreadBall has rapidly built a fanatical following in the mining fields of their domains. Forge Fathers are the only race allowed in these teams, and while recruiting can be slow (like most things with these folk), there always seem to be more available when you need them.

Forge Father teams are perhaps a little more flexible than they at first appear. Their obvious strength is their Strength, which is even more potent when combined with the Steady ability. Together they make a front line of Guards who are very hard to shift. However, they can also work well with a variety of other styles of play and can easily surprise an unwary opponent.

Remember that you can play this team either as the Midgard Delvers themselves, or as your own version of the vertically challenged type. The game values will be the same for all Forge Father teams, though yours will be the most resolute!

|         | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Starting Team | Cost | Notes  |
|---------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|---------------|------|--------|
| Guard   | 4    | 3+       | 5+    | 4+    | 4+     | x3            | 13mc | Steady |
| Jack    | 4    | 3+       | 5+    | 4+    | 4+     | x3            | 9mc  |        |
| Striker | 4    | 3+       | 5+    | 4+    | 5+     | x2            | 9mc  |        |

## TEAM STATLINES

**Extras:** a Forge Father team starts with 1 Coaching Dice and 1 DreadBall Card.





# DREADBALL FACTS

Of all the non-human teams, the Forge Fathers have the simplest explanation for playing: money. Forge Father society is divided into many sub-groups and not all see eye-to-eye with their leaders who choose to fight against the Corporation. Some consider this to be lost profit and a missed business opportunity and have decided to make their own peace and their own deals with the humans. There are limits to the technology they will share, but Digby's strict control over what is allowed in the arena and the size of the prizes in the DreadBall leagues make this an area they can take part in without revealing any secrets and in the hope of great profit.

Of course there have been other less credible "Forge Father" team as well, the most famous of the fakes being the Latherton Little Guys. They were rumbled in their first game when one of their arms came off in a shower of sparks and wires. Latherton Industries had simply refitted some of their sewer cleaning robots with DreadBall gear and hoped that their rudimentary logic circuits could cope, little realising the complexities of the game. By the end of the brief game the crowd were on their feet booing the imposters, and Latherton has never entered another team.







## MVPs

The short, but violent history of DreadBall has given rise to some household names. Everyone's heard of "Blind" Skaggar and Yurik "Painmaster" Yurikson, and who could forget Grag the Unstoppable's short, but incredibly bloody career (especially if you were watching that game in 3D)? Of course, the still unbroken strike total of Meek Sleekit from the Bay City Brigands is the target for every rookie striker in the training camps.

The following offers a taste of the famous and infamous among DreadBall's elite. At least, among those still playing the game and willing to wear your team strip for a not-so-small consideration.

The rules for including them in your games are page 60.

# BUZZCUT

## Plays for anyone

His PR people talk of a harsh life in the Tellium mines of the infamous Radnor Field and specialist military training for covert operations in secret units. The gutter press tell a different tale of backstreet brawls and hired muscle for drugs barons. Neither really prepares an opponent for the sheer wall of muscle that is Buzzcut.

If eating your greens makes you grow up big and strong, then Buzzcut must have devoured forests as a child because he is huge. On the pitch he wears some armour, but generally plays almost stripped to the waist as if preparing for some manual labour which, in a way, he is. His usual excuse is that the uniforms come off when he gets into a fight anyway, and it is true that things seem to break when he is about. This doesn't stop him being fined in almost every game for being improperly attired. As if he cared.

He does wear a helmet of sorts, though this mainly seems to be because it allows him to use his head as a weapon more effectively. The odd thing is that he seems to notice damage less than his more heavily armoured teammates even though it looks like he wears less. Certainly, in his playing history Buzzcut has been knocked down only rarely, and he can count on one hand the number of times he has been carried off injured. Well, he could if he could count.

Nothing is subtle about his style of play, which consists mainly of hurting people and laughing at them when they try to hurt him back.



|       | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes                        |
|-------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Guard | 6    | 2+       | 4+    | 5+    | 4+     | 11mc              | Grizzled, Can't Feel a Thing |

## PLAYER STATLINE



# NUMBER 88

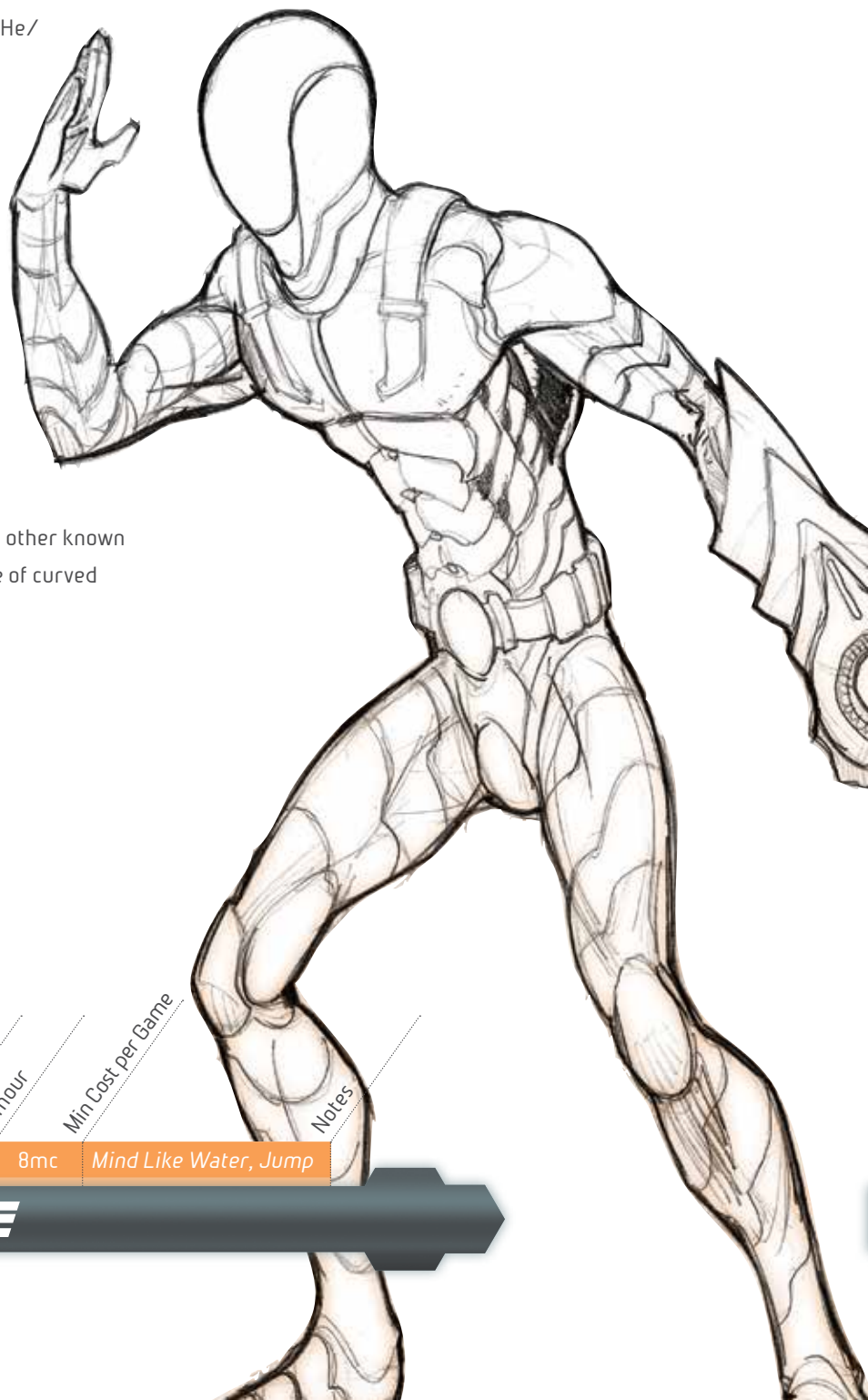
## Plays for anyone

He or she (nobody is quite sure) appeared from nowhere, disappears entirely between matches and never gives interviews. This, of course, only makes the fans want to know about Number 88 even more, and the speculation has reached conspiracy theory proportions about where he/she comes from and what they actually are. Robots, aliens and vat-bred super soldiers all feature heavily among the tabloid sports channels. Nobody knows for sure.

Physically, Number 88 is an androgynous, slender humanoid of indeterminate gender and race. He/she (or possibly it) has never been seen out of a set of on-pitch gear that covers them completely.

Number 88 doesn't look like a normal player from any side, and wears a unique outfit. This comprises a skin-tight (but seemingly padded) body suit with a close-fitting, articulated carapace that protects their body, and a full helmet that encloses their head. Other than that they are unarmoured, though they do have a DreadBall glove. Even this is of unusual design, and while its purpose is clear it does not match any other known example. The helmet faceplate is a single piece of curved mirror, and the rest of the suit is black.

On the pitch Number 88 is hard to spot and moves very fast, making him/her a dangerous opponent. His/her/its primary tactic seems to be to avoid being where the damage is rather than strong-arming their way out of trouble, though they have been known to *Slam* as well as *Strike*, which makes them a Jack. Having said that, their version of a *Slam* seems to involve using their opponent's strength against them rather than the application of their own brute force.



|      | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes                 |
|------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Jack | 8    | 4+       | 2+    | 4+    | 4+     | 8mc               | Mind Like Water, Jump |

## PLAYER STATLINE



# JOHN DOE

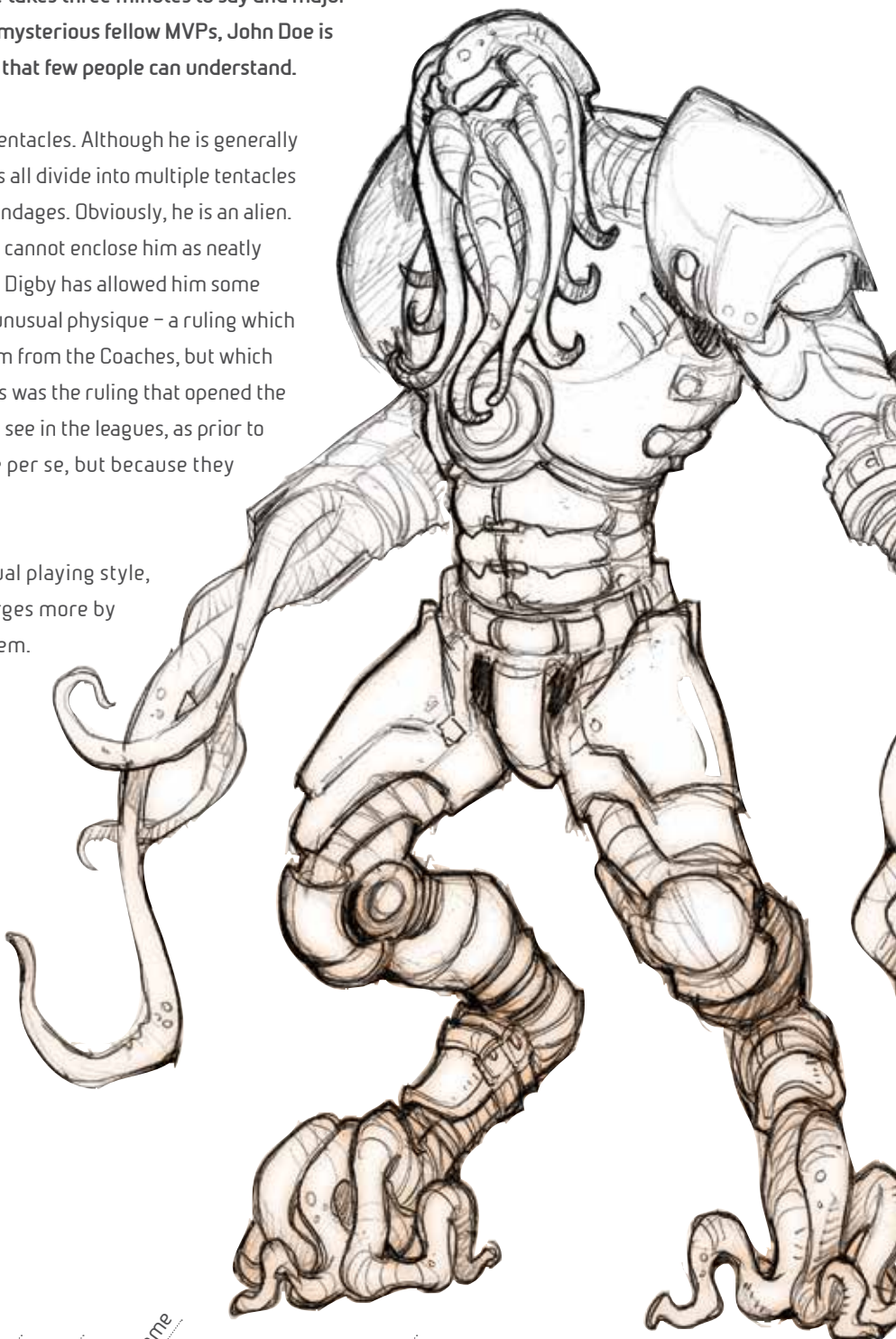
*Plays for anyone except Orx and Goblins*

Of course that's not his real name. His real name takes three minutes to say and major surgery to pronounce. Unlike some of his more mysterious fellow MVPs, John Doe is happy to discuss his history and origins; it's just that few people can understand.

The first thing you notice about John Doe is his tentacles. Although he is generally humanoid in shape, the ends of his arms and legs all divide into multiple tentacles and his head is a mass of yet more writhing appendages. Obviously, he is an alien. Not surprisingly, his armour is custom made and cannot enclose him as neatly as it would a more conventionally shaped player. Digby has allowed him some leeway with the uniform rules on account of his unusual physique – a ruling which created a storm of protest and cries of favouritism from the Coaches, but which the fans were very happy about. Incidentally, this was the ruling that opened the door for many of the other alien players you now see in the leagues, as prior to this they were banned not for their alien nature per se, but because they couldn't fit neatly into DreadBall armour.

JD's tentacles are also what give him his unusual playing style, for although he is a Guard, he protects his charges more by ensnaring the opposition than by thumping them.

Nobody knows why he won't play for the green guys, but he flatly refuses.



|       | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes   |
|-------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|---------|
| Guard | 4    | 3+       | 4+    | 5+    | 4+     | 8mc               | Gotcha! |

## PLAYER STATLINE

# REEK ROLAT, AKA "PAYBACK"

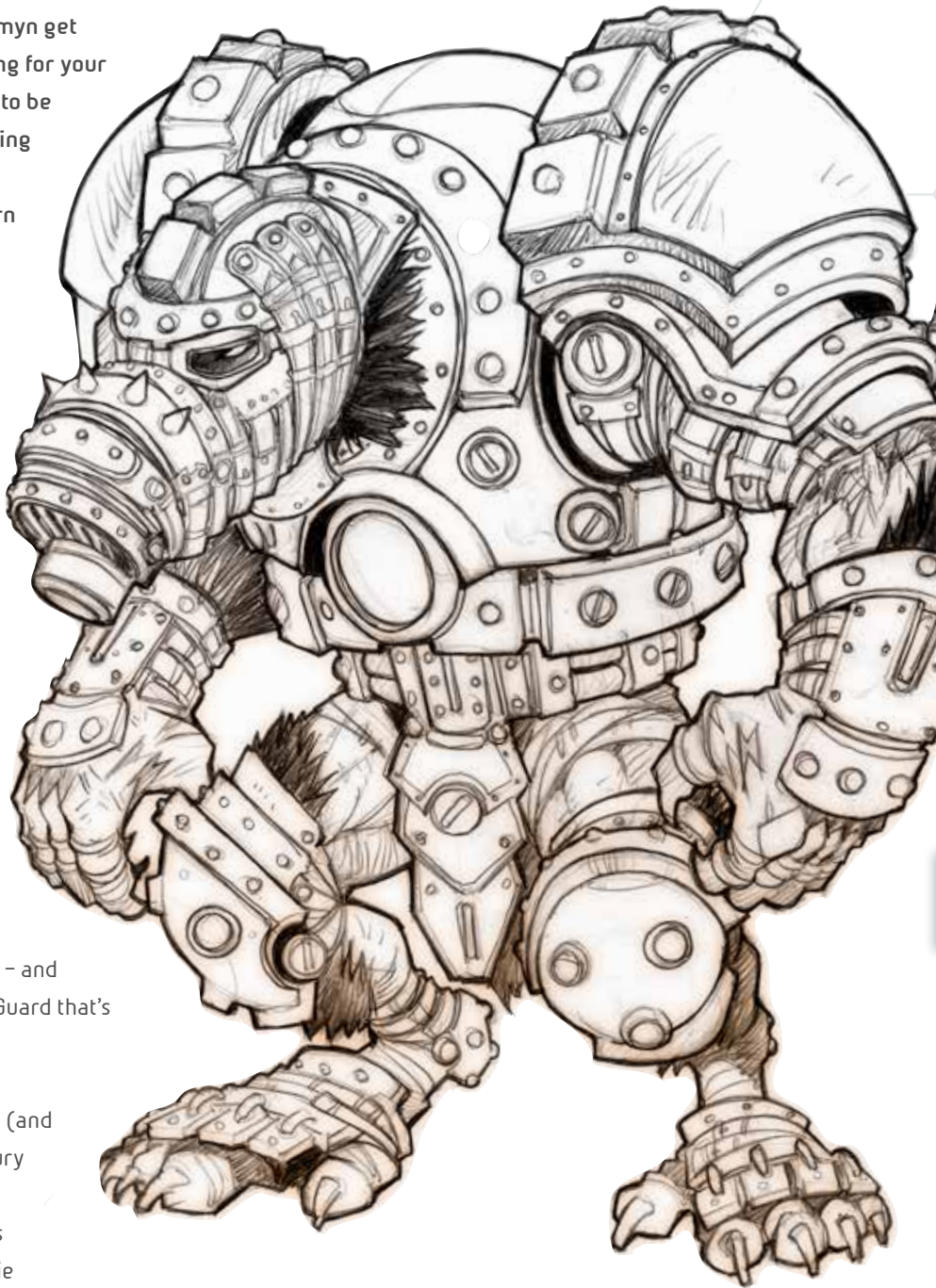
*Plays for Veer-myn teams only*

In a typical game of DreadBall the Veer-myn get thumped. A lot. This can be a little wearing for your average Veer-myn Striker, though it has to be said that spending much of their time being slapped about only makes them all the happier when it comes to their team's turn to do the thumping. "Payback" is a firm favourite for just this reason.

Veer-myn come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and Reek is a particularly large and ornery example of his race. He stands head and shoulders above most Veer-myn players, and even other Guards look a bit weedy in comparison. In addition to being physically large, Reek wears a set of specially made armour. Whilst this does conform to DreadBall regulations, it also seems to offer slightly more protection than normal, which makes him even more difficult for his opponents to get rid of.

"Payback" is aptly named. He lives to inflict bone-crunching revenge on those that hurt his smaller cousins - the Strikers - and he's good at it! Basically he is a Veer-myn Guard that's been turned up to 11 on a scale of 1 to 10.

As he is both *Dodging* and *Slamming* on 3+ (and with a skill that avoids his first point of injury on each test) he is a real challenge for the opposing team to deal with. Even if he does nothing the threat he poses will probably tie up two or three opponents, leaving the Veer-myn Strikers plenty of room to do their thing.



|       | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes              |
|-------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Guard | 5    | 3+       | 3+    | 6+    | 4+     | 9mc               | Can't Feel a Thing |

## PLAYER STATLINE



# "LUCKY" LOGAN

*Plays for genetically pure human teams only*

One of the originals or a charming con artist? Whatever the facts are, Lucky's not one for settling down and never plays for the same team for very long.

Logan looks like a normal Jack, but never wears a helmet. Although this is technically against regulations, his famous charm allows him to get away with it. With no armour to protect his good looks he has inevitably added a selection of dramatic scars to his features. He looks to be in his late 40s, though he hints at being much older. With modern surgery he could be any age, really. His comments and unusual armour suggest the implausible but tantalising myth that he has been playing DreadBall since it started. He won't confirm that directly, but neither does he flatly deny it.

His armour is well worn and looks slightly homemade, but only slightly. It's more re-purposed than scratch built and is

reminiscent of the original cobbled suits which were based partly on military issue, partly on deep rescue gear with a bit of whatever was lying about thrown in. It looks fine from a distance, but up close if you compare him to a "real" Jack his kit is slightly less uniform and not every piece is in the same style.

On the pitch Logan is full of surprises. He'll try anything, and being lucky he's got a good chance of succeeding. He's a bit of a Jack the Lad, and his lopsided grin and scruffy hair appear on several adverts, mostly for whiskey. He's fast, agile and his trademark is being lucky and getting *just* out of the way of the slam, being *just* over the line, *just* hitting the mark...

| Jack | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes        |
|------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|--------------|
| Jack | 6    | 4+       | 3+    | 3+    | 4+     | 8mc               | Really Lucky |

## PLAYER STATLINE

# "SLIPPERY JOE"

*Plays for Orx and Goblin teams only*

Everybody knows that Orx and Goblins are hairless. Everybody also knows that they tend to have some sort of inferiority complex about this, and so it is not entirely uncommon to see them sporting implausible looking topknots and mohawks made of artificial hair. Slippery Joe has decided that what he really needed was a moustache, and not just any old moustache.

Joe has what might best be called an old music hall villain moustache – a great, black soup-strainer of a thing that sits like a giant slug on his upper lip and which he twirls thoughtfully as he leers at the crowd in what has become his personal interpretation of showboating. And despite his

comical appearance he gets to twirl the waxed tips of his moustache rather more than his opponents would like as he is a prodigious Striker. Yes, Striker!

Goblins aren't normally up to the intense training that it takes to become a professional Striker, being naturally too flighty and nervous. Slippery Joe is one of a very rare breed indeed, and he is almost as proud of his training as he is of his moustache, which is saying something.

| Striker | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes                            |
|---------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Striker | 5    | 5+       | 3+    | 4+    | 5+     | 7mc               | A Safe Pair of Hands, Jump, Roll |

## PLAYER STATLINE



# GORIM IRONSTONE

## Plays for Forge Father teams only

Nobody expects Forge Fathers to be fast, and it's true that even Gorim is unlikely to break any records again the Veermyn. But among his kin he shows a real turn of speed.

Gorim was a veteran warrior long before he took to the DreadBall pitch and is old even for a Forge Father player. On the pitch this translates into a fearless disregard for the opposition, or "enemy" as he calls everyone.

His age also allows him to get away with a very old-fashioned helmet that has no visor. Although this would not be allowed in a modern team, Gorim maintains that this was the helmet he was issued with when he first took up the game, and if it was good enough then, it's good enough now. The sight of his salt and pepper beard and steely gaze is a familiar one to DreadBall fans, and adorns several advertising campaigns for

the game. Rumour has it that this technically illegal helmet has been replaced by the DGB more than once.

Whilst you might be forgiven for expecting an old warrior to take up the game as a Guard, Gorim now avoids combat entirely, preferring instead to pay as little attention to the opposition as possible as he goes about his scoring. This entails absorbing quite a lot of punishment, which he soaks up without complaint. As his fans in the crowd roar, "He can take it!"

|         | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes            |
|---------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|------------------|
| Striker | 5    | 3+       | 4+    | 4+    | 5+     | 8mc               | Grizzled, Steady |

## PLAYER STATLINE

# THE ENFORCER

## Plays for anyone

Rumour has it that a number of ex-DreadBall players have joined the elite Corporation unit known as the Enforcers, but as far as anyone can tell this MVP is the only individual to make the change the other way about.

It is possible that the Enforcer was a DreadBall player before he joined the military, and is simply returning to his roots. It's hard to be certain as his official story keeps changing. What is a particular curiosity is his armour, which seems to be almost an entire suit of Enforcer battle armour – a rare and expensive piece of kit. It even retains its integral jump pack, which allows the Enforcer to be even faster and more agile than he doubtless is naturally.

Given the unit's reputation, it is hardly surprising that the Enforcer takes to the field as a Guard. In this capacity he has limitless opportunity to express himself through the medium of violence; a prodigious talent that he is happy to employ for anyone who can find his fee.

|       | Move | Strength | Speed | Skill | Armour | Min Cost per Game | Notes           |
|-------|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Guard | 7    | 3+       | 3+    | 4+    | 4+     | 10mc              | Jump, Backflip. |

## PLAYER STATLINE

**IN THE  
RANGE!**



**Project Pandora:  
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## **Dwarf King's Hold - Green Menace**

Green Menace is a two-player game where one player takes the part of the brutal Orcs, and the other controls the noble Elves. The game is set in an abandoned Dwarf Hold, where the Elves seek treasures long lost and the Orcs seek the opportunity to break a few Elf heads!

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# DREADBALL™

TM



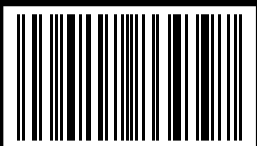
The DreadBall Governing Body (The DGB) is proud to present this handy guide to the Emperor of sports. In these pages you will find a brief history of the game and a selection of its most colourful and popular players and teams. Of course we also include a detailed discussion of the game rules and the duties of match officials such as the Referee.

DreadBall is a massively popular game that has grown from humble beginnings to be the favourite sport of the Co-Prosperity Sphere by a huge margin. This explosion of enthusiasm has all

happened in little over a century, and shows no sign of slowing down. If anything the excitement of its many fans continues to grow every year as new leagues spring up and more and more people take up the game professionally.

If you want to take part yourself then this book includes everything you need to take up the duties of a Team Coach. From a starting squad of rookie players, you'll lead your team through the good times and the bad, through victory and defeat, gaining experience as you go. By the time you enter the Major Leagues you'll be sure of yourself and know how to deal with the famous teams because you'll be one of them!

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