

The Non-Stunty Goblin Playbook

Introduction

Dear fellow Blood Bowl Coach, welcome to my attempt at writing a playbook for the goblin team. Before you start reading I need to make one thing clear: I do in no way consider myself a stunty coach.

Now you're probably thinking '*why is this important to point out?*' - Because you need to know what you are getting yourself into.

A die hard "stunty coach" plays a goblin team for the hell of it, for the fun, the madness, the total randomness and for the odd chance of once in a million games to pull off that crazy goblin play that leaves everyone thinking they just got hit by a truck! His playbook would look nothing like what you're about to read. So if that is what you're looking for, then read no further. *My* playbook is an attempt to tell you how you can build a somewhat competitive goblin team, and I stress the word *somewhat!*

Why this approach?

I got the motivation to create a gobbo team because I always play Blood Bowl to win, but let's face it, winning is not something any stunty team does on a regular basis, hence the people playing stunty teams tend to have a "it's more important to have fun than to win attitude". While there is nothing wrong with this, in fact more people should be like this, it's not how I feel about the game - I have fun winning! So the reason I started playing a goblin team was for the challenge, to see if I could build a team that would win more than it lost... this I failed at! But I did manage to build a team that at the time of writing has played 33 matches with a record of 10 wins 9 ties and 14 losses. This was done in a very strong league (the MBBL) vs. a lot of skilled coaches in a very competitive environment and included many matchups that were far from optimal. So all in all I am pleased with the performance of the team and I'll admit that with time I have adopted just a tiny bit of the "I have fun just playing the game" attitude.

Where to begin?

Before we take a look at the roster I think I'll talk about the team as a whole. I am going to try and point out some of the (many) weaknesses of the team and how to counter them where possible, and some of the strengths (yes, they do exist) and how to utilize these.

Let's begin with some weaknesses. The biggest problem a goblin team faces is, and this will come as no surprise to many, that it breaks. If you're lucky and win the toss you might get one good drive where you can stick it the opponent, but from that point on it's going to be an even more uphill battle. You're going to lose players, both due to Stunty but also to Secret Weapon. Rare is the game where you're fielding 11 players for long, so how to handle this? Team construction-wise you need to add some stability to your roster, and this is not easily done since you only have easy access to side step for protection. So, when you get a choice pick those AV+'s and on doubles go for block even though it's tempting to get skills like wrestle and guard, but more on this below.

On the field you can do certain things to counter your own break-ability. First off break your opponent more! Given the choice, DRIVE(!) and try to make it an eight turn drive - this is going to be hard but not impossible. Field both your B&C and your chainsaw for the first drive, hold nothing back, this is going to be the drive where you try to inflict so much damage that the rest of the match is going to be bearable when your own numbers starts to diminish. Even if you pull this tactic off its still not a guaranteed win. I remember a match where I cleared the pitch in the first half, leaving only a single vampire on the field, but in the end I still lost. But enough of my rambling - let's look at the roster.

What you have to work with

GOBLIN TEAMS

With the art of throwing sadly lost to them, the agile goblins have turned their diminutive size to their advantage. Moving through the opponents' legs, they can leave the best drilled defence dumbfounded.

| Qty | Title | Cost | MA | ST | AG | AV | Skills | Talent |
|------|------------|---------|----|----|----|----|---|--------|
| 0-16 | Goblins | 40,000 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 7 | Dodge, Right Stuff, Stunty | A |
| 0-1 | Bombardier | 40,000 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 7 | Dodge, Stunty, Bombardier, Secret Weapon | A |
| 0-1 | Looney | 40,000 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 7 | Stunty, Chainsaw, Secret Weapon | A |
| 0-1 | Pogoer | 70,000 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 7 | Dodge, Very Long Legs, Stunty, Leap | A |
| 0-1 | Fanatic | 70,000 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 7 | Ball & Chain, No Hands, Stunty, Secret Weapon | S |
| 0-2 | Trolls | 110,000 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 9 | Throw Team Mate, Loner, Regenerate, Mighty Blow, Really Stupid, Always Hungry | S |



Re-roll counter: 60,000 gold pieces each.

The Goblin

How to build up your standard goblin is a matter of taste, but I opt for stability and with that in mind I always go for Side Step as the first skill. Diving tackle is an important skill as well and you should get this as your 2nd choice. When you always take Side Step as the first skill you might from time to time lack enough Diving tackle to pin your opponent, and I have lost matches due to this. But with survival in mind I still think side step is the best choice, and let's not forget diving tackle is a lot better on a goblin that already has Side Step.

If you should ever get a 3rd normal skill then jump up is always a good choice. It adds speed and if thrown and armour is not broken, he can jump up and carry on as if nothing happened. On doubles, go for block as I have already mentioned. Don't get tempted by neat skills, like Guard, dirty player or Wrestle. Sure they are good on paper (and on the field) but the main objectives are stability and survival, so get block! If you get a 2nd double then guard is probably a good choice. Stats: All stats are nice, AG+ and ST+ are very sweet and AV+ is even sweeter. There might be times where it's better to take the MA+ but only if the Goblin already has AG+. If you're lucky enough to get 2-3 AV8 goblins your stability on the field is going to be notably improved.

You should also build up one primary TTM Goblin, with sprint and sure feet, heck even catch if he gets enough skills, use him only when needed or when going for the Throw Team Mate touchdown. It goes without saying that if you get an AG+ Goblin turn him into your TTM Goblin at once – even if he'll end up as a snack for a troll.

The Troll

Your Trolls are going to be your main sources of frustration. Nothing can ruin a Goblin coach's day like a stupid Troll. All your clever plans ruined on the first roll... only thing more annoying than that is when your Troll decides to eat your star goblin... *sigh*, but don't get me started on that subject. Don't always blitz with a Troll - sometimes it's better to just use a gobbo, after all a gobbo won't lose the blitz to very stupid, and he doesn't have loner either. Naturally you'll quite often *have* to blitz with a Troll, but when you do make sure it's a 3dice blitz!

The first skill for both your Trolls should be Guard, or on a double Block. I find it useful to have a Strong Arm Troll so the first "Guard Troll" to get a 2nd skill should get this. As 2nd skill Stand Firm and Break Tackle are both useful. I'd go Guard, Stand Firm, Break Tackle and a Guard, Strong Arm, Break Tackle.

Doubles and Stats will change this of course and for the record in case you don't know, NO don't take AG on a Troll - it does nothing for the TTM. But AV is well worth considering, you don't want your Troll of the pitch or soon your Goblins will follow.

Tactic with your Trolls is simple, put them next to stuff and let them smash it, but have in mind that a TTM attempt is not a turn over (unless throwing the ball carrier) so feel free to start your turn with chucking a Goblin somewhere that can give you a sudden strong field position, like getting a Side Step, Diving Tackle Goblin on the ball or something similar. Always keep an eye open for plays like that, but don't try them just for the hell of it, there is a good chance you will be a Goblin down one way or the other when you throw them around.

Weapons of mass destruction!

The Goblin team has one thing which no other team has – an arsenal of weapons! This is the team's main strength, but also its weakness, because your bench gets depleted as your weapons are sent off. This is why I recommend that you blow your petty cash on bribes once your roster is filled out and you have a small stash. Sure, this gives your opponent extra inducements, but you're only paying ½ the prize for your bribes so your opponent is only getting half the value of your inducements in return. So load up on bribes and hope for some Get the Ref rolls on the kick off table.

The Looney

Wroom wroom - who doesn't love the sound of a running chainsaw? I'll tell you, no one! Neither friend nor foe!

The chainsaw can be as much a danger to you as it is to the opposing players. How to best use it is debatable. I'll tell you how I like to swing it - but in the end do what you feel is right!

The Looney is a very situational player. I tend to use him in offense, because your team needs to inflict massive damage, and it also gives you some measure of control. If you play defense with him, then your opponent may pull off a fast touchdown and get him thrown out. Or, as it often goes on defense, you'll soon leave your saw open to a hit – and a Looney hit is a Looney lost. (Mind you, if you want your opponent to score quickly, then fielding your Looney on defense could be just the encouragement he needs!)

When setting up for offense, make sure to place your Looney so that he can't get hit if the kick-off is a Blitz! I know this will prevent you from using the saw on the line, but I tend to not do that anyway. If you have to use it on the LOS, place him between the Trolls so he won't be as obvious a

target on a Blitz! Also when covering your chainsaw, keep an eye out for leapers! You don't want that War Dancer making a quick leap and hitting you in the face!

I play my Looney like a surgeon. I hide him and wait for a chance to cut up the other guy's star player! Either with a foul or with a blitz, but if I blitz I'll try and protect the Looney afterwards! If possible always target low-AV players. Remember, against AV9+ odds are that the target will remain standing – and be ready to knock you back down onto your saw! Against an av9 team, I recommend you primarily foul with the Looney or have the option to block the opponent away in case your saw fails to penetrate av9.

Skills on the Looney aren't really needed. They are nice to have, but he works fine straight out of the box. If he does skill up, then dodge is nice both for protection and mobility and side step is a fun choice as well. On doubles you can either go for dirty player or block. Personally it's a matter of taste. If it was his first skill I'd go for a dirty player - if it was the 2nd and he already has dodge I would go for block. Both are good choices, and if you ever get lucky enough to get a 3rd skill there is a lot of fun in having a blodge side stepping chainsaw, but I doubt very much any Looney will get to 3 skills before he dies. Luckily they are cheap, so cheap in fact that if you have the cash you can consider sacking an MNG Looney and just buy a new one, so that you don't have to be without one for a match.

The Fanatic

There are few things more dangerous than a fanatic, this is true in life and on the blood bowl pitch. This ball and chain wielding maniac is one of the strongest players on the field, but at the same time one of the weakest. So even though the Fanatic is supremely strong, he still needs to be protected, because any knockdown at all and he is out. (Note: the fanatic himself is **extremely** valuable to other weapons like the bomb and the chainsaw)

Use the fanatic on your first offense. Needless to say if your opponent sticks his 3 LoS fidders together you just plow into them. If your opponent spreads them out, you can start blocking with the trolls from the edges pushing the opposing players closer together and giving your B&C more targets. Remember that the best thing for a B&C to hit is a player already down. So his ST7 will let him block almost anything, you will much prefer him hitting people already on the ground - free amour/injury rolls with no risk of a turnover.

The first skill for your fanatic, except ST+, should be mighty blow. I know some people argue that grab is a god send for the B&C and it is, but you need to do some take out fast so I recommend Mighty Blow but well do what you feel for. Either way both grab and MB don't work against opponents on the ground. If you by some act of Gork get a 3rd skill guard can at times be useful. Doubles should be used on block and even dodge but also sure feet is worth considering since he'll end up doing a lot of GFIs.

Not much else needs saying. Don't isolate the B&C from the rest of your team leaving him open to quick elimination. Sometimes it's better to spend some movement getting him back towards your own team rather than running out in front begging for a blitz. Also remember that you can afford the chance of letting the B&C hitting your own players now and then, since 3 dice vs. a goblin has very good odds of getting you a push. So if you have an option where you can hit one or two of your opponents players and also one of your own, it's often worth it since you can most likely push

your own – as long as it's a gobbo. This can also sometimes be used to push a Goblin into a position your opponent never saw coming.

The Bombardier

This is without doubt the player in blood bowl that has given me the most joy and the most grief! You will learn to love to hate your bombardier - he has the potential to win you games all on his own, but also to lose them with a single badly thrown bomb.

You should use your bombardier in your defensive drive, unless you're facing a very fast team that can make a two turn Touchdown without getting close to the bomb. But even then it might be worth it to field the bomb just to force that two turn touchdown. This is a judgment call.

When playing against the slow caging teams like Dwarfs and Khemri your bomb will be your best weapon to win the game, so treat him like it. Protect him and if you have bribes reserve them for him.

When throwing the bomb there are a few things you should look out for: Don't have any team mates adjacent to the bombardier, so nobody else get blasted on a fumble. Watch out for interceptions - often you will have to throw over the head of someone this means there is at least a 1/6 chance that the bomb might come right back at you. Even an AG1 player can throw an inaccurate quick pass on 2+ so don't be fooled by the AG of a player when considering whom to throw the bomb over. An interception is almost always big trouble for you.

Considering this, a good way to use the bomb is to throw it towards players already on the ground, like the B&C this is risk free damage (unless the bomb scatters back in your head or is fumbled)

When playing the slow teams that needs a cage to move forward I like to make most of my moves, blitz etc. and then make a screen in safe distance of the cage and then just throw the bomb right at the ball carrier hoping for the best. Leave one or two goblins ready just in case the bomb has the desired effect and the ball hits the ground after the blast.

About skills for the bombardier, he is the only blood bowl player who actually becomes a worse player unless you roll doubles. The only useful skills for the bombardier are the ones he does not have natural access to. But truth be told all you need to do is roll a double and you will have one of the most devastating players ever! Three words: Hail Mary Pass! The fun and madness you can have with this is.... amazing. Slow teams will dread you and everyone else will just... be scared. So my advice is if you're Bombardier gets a skill and it's not a double, fire him and buy a new one.

Basic offence

The best way (or the only way) to win your own offence is to do damage and lots of it. 3 dice blocks on the LoS with the Trolls, chainsaw fouls or attacks, B&C madness and maybe even bring your bomb. I like to do this vs. elfs teams sometimes when I feel the bomb would be less useful in offence. Throw it at the feet of the elf's so they can't intercept and hope for a lucky bounce. Keep the ball on the pogo, but always be in a position so that you can handoff and do a TTM if you suddenly find yourself in a tight spot.

I like to get up around the middle of the field and stand and fight there until turn 7 or 8 and then take a shot at a TD, either by running the pogo deep or a TTM pass.

Basic defense

Defense with a goblin team is a challenge...

Don't get caught in an 8 turn drive with your 3 SW on the bench, so that your opponent just grinds you down for 8 turns then scores and forces you to field your SW in your own turn 8 - so either field some weapons on defense like the bomb or chainsaw or stay down if it looks like you won't stop him anyways. Sometimes the best defense is to do nothing, stay down wait for your own turn 8 TTM attempt and then have 11 goblins for 2nd half.

When you need to apply pressure it's nice to stick your goblins to the players that does not have block and try to keep the Trolls next to the blockers and tacklers.

It is often a good idea to place two Trolls on the LoS with a side step and or AV8 Goblin between them. While this will prevent you from making a TTM attempt on a Blitz! you need the trolls to protect your gobbos more than anything else.

Keep your eyes open and don't be scared to try high risk high reward moves, it's the only way you sometimes stop an offence.

That's all I had to say. Good luck and remember it's better to lose with style than to win... nah not really its best to just win, something you won't do a lot with a Goblin team, so when you do be sure to enjoy it!!!!

Cheers
Niebling