

Strategy and Tactics Guide

Blitz Bowl: Ultimate Edition - Season 2

Introduction

Fellow Blitz Bowl Coach, hello and welcome to an unofficial Strategy and Tactics Guide for Blitz Bowl: Ultimate Edition - Season 2. This guide will cover tenets for sound strategy and tricky tactics to out-maneuver and out-wily even the toughest opponents.

This document is divided up into two sections: Strategy and Tactics, in which the former covers general principles for Blitz Bowl success while the latter focuses on specific Challenge Cards and Abilities through which one can extract an unexpected advantage.

Note that this guide focuses exclusively on gameplay without Random Event Cards and without Ball cards.

Author's Note:

Coach djakl (Andrew) is known as the longtime Head Coach of the Cream Bay Pocket Pasties, a Halfling squad that has seen its share of ups and downs while carving out a mostly mediocre existence in this sport of gladiatorial mayhem. With more than 150 (and counting) losses under his belt, djakl has made every mistake in the book along the way to becoming a moderately successful Blitz Bowl Coach. Therefore, the goal of this guide is to use djakl's failures to your advantage.

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Summary

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Strategy

Challenge Deck Overview

In contrast with Blood Bowl, in which Coaches and Players aim to score Touchdowns to win the game, Blitz Bowl focuses on the art of evaluating Players' talents to determine if they are suitable to progress on to a hallowed Blood Bowl pitch. As such, while Touchdowns comprise a significant role within the game, the majority of points - approximately 75% - will come by claiming Challenge Cards. Moreover, each Challenge Card allows a Coach to gain access to a respective Bonus Play Card which can further yield tactics to increase one's advantage.

There are 26 core Challenge Cards, totaling 44 points, available to claim during the course of a Blitz Bowl match, and it is essential to be familiarized with these cards to develop a deeper understanding of the game.

Challenge Deck by Action

The Challenge Card deck can be viewed through the actions required to claim a card (Positional, Throw, and Block; some are more direct while others may require multiple actions to claim:

Positional Cards

1-pt Cards

Get The Ball! x2
Move The Ball! x2
Showboat For The Crowd! x2
Spread Out!
Get Together!

2-pt Cards

Get Moving! x2
Show No Fear
Play As A Team! x2
Show Them How It's Done! x2
Tie Them Up! x2

Positional Cards are claimed via actions such as Run, Mark, Sidestep, and Reserves. They comprise the largest portion of the Challenge Card deck, totaling 26 points. Note that many of the Positional Cards do not involve a dice throw (or require a successful dice throw) to claim, whereas Throw Action or Block Action cards are subject to higher risk as they necessarily require Nuffle's blessings!

Throw Action Cards

Show Us A Completion! (1 pt) x2

Make A Risky Throw! (2 pts)

Only four points are purely associated with a Throw, but Throw can also be used to claim Move The Ball!, Showboat For The Crowd!, Play As A Team!, and Show Them How It's Done!.¹

In total, Throw may be associated with up to 16 points worth of Challenge Cards.

Block Action Cards

Free Up The Ball! (2 pts) x2
Take Them Down! (2 pts) x2
Break Some Bones! (3 pts) x2

Fourteen points are directly tied to a Block action, though the process of setting up a Block can lead to claiming other cards such as Tie Them Up!

Challenge Deck by Ball Possession

The Challenge Card deck can also be viewed through the lens of which team possesses the ball:

Ball Possession Cards

Nine cards, totaling 10 points, depend on possession of the ball:

Get The Ball! (1 pt) x2
Move The Ball! 1 pt) x2
Showboat For The Crowd! (1 pt) x2
Show Us A Completion!² (1 pt) x2
Make A Risky Throw!² (2 pts)

No Ball Possession Cards

Three cards, totaling 6 points, depend on the Opposition having possession of the ball:

Show No Fear! (2 pts)
Free Up The Ball! (2 pts) x2

¹ Throw Team-Mate can also be used to claim Free Up The Ball!

² These cards can also be claimed by a Player with the Throw Team-mate ability.

Ball-Neutral Cards

The remaining 14 cards, totaling 26 points, are ball-neutral. Given that there are more points associated with holding on to the ball compared with the reverse situation, and that the only way to score a Touchdown is through ball control, it is generally preferred to have ball possession.

Another point to consider is that there are six Challenge Cards (Get Moving! x2, Play As A Team! x2, and Show Them How It's Done! x2) that require three entire actions to claim, whereas the remaining twenty cards of the deck can all be claimed via one single action.

On Clean Sweeps!

There are three active Challenge Cards available to claim on the Challenge Card row; when a Coach claims all three Cards on their turn, this is known as a Clean Sweep! and yields two additional bonus points for that Coach.

Thus, the minimal points for a Clean Sweep! turn is 5 points (3x 1-point cards) while the maximal points for a Clean Sweep! turn is 10 points (Break Some Bones x 2 and a two point card), though with the addition of a Touchdown the maximum points possible in a turn is 14.

While it is good coaching principles to always keep an eye out for a potential Clean Sweep!, there are negatives to overreaching. For one, going for a Clean Sweep! often involves risky plays requiring a successful dice roll, and failure may compromise an otherwise favorable position..

For another, claiming multiple cards (or even all three in the Challenge Card Row) leads to uncertainty in the card draw; a Coach is only guaranteed to see the on-deck Challenge Card, so in a controlled game state it can be better to only claim a single Challenge Card each turn versus multiple in one turn, lest the unknown card(s) be unfavorable.

With all that said, there are times when it is a no-brainer to go for a Clean Sweep!. Any turn yielding more than six points, for example, would be hard to pass up, or a Clean Sweep! + Touchdown that yields at least 9 points.

Bonus Play Cards

On the backside of each of the 26 Challenge Cards is a Bonus Play, of which there are 20 unique Bonus Plays.

These cards can be divided into three categories: Action Efficiency, Extra Action, and Gameplay.

Action Efficiency Bonus Play Cards

There are six unique (eight total) Action Efficiency Bonus Play cards which do not directly alter gameplay but rely on altering probabilities of the dice roll. Accurate Throw is used on a Throw check, Raw Talent is generalized for Throw/Armor/Block Actions, Bladed Knuckle Dusters is related to Armor checks, while the remaining three are related to Block rolls.

Accurate Throw	Raw Talent (x3)
Bladed Knuckle Dusters	This Kid's Got Moxy
Blocking Play	Tough Enough

Of these Bonus Play cards, the most widely applicable is Raw Talent, but keep an eye out for Bladed Knuckle Dusters when there is a Break Some Bones! available to claim.

Extra Action Bonus Play Cards

There are five unique (eight total) Extra Action Bonus Play cards in the game that allow for a Free Block (Blitz!, Diving Tackle), Jump Up, Reserves, or a 4th Action during one's turn (Inspiration).

Note that Diving Tackle is Action-neutral, as the Bonus Play comes at the cost of placing one's Player Prone.

Blitz!	Jump Up
Diving Tackle	Reserves (x2)
Inspiration (x3)	

Inspiration is the best of the Extra Action Bonus Play cards and also among the best of all the Bonus Play cards.

Gameplay Bonus Play Cards

Nine unique (10 total) Bonus Play cards alter gameplay. Intervention, Shadowing, and Step Aside are used during the Opposition team's turn while the remaining Bonus Play cards are only played during one's own turn.

Aggressive Mark	Dodge
Defensive Play	Hail Mary Pass

Intervention
Nerves of Steel
Shadowing

Sprint
Step Aside (x2)

Of the Gameplay cards, Step Aside and Dodge are the most powerful. Note that Defensive Play is one way to neutralize Step Aside - highlighted in the Tactics portion of this guide.

Team Lineups

Team size ranges from 6 to 10, with the majority of lineups composed of a six-Player team. The traditional lineup consists of three Linemen (L), one Thrower (T), one Runner (R) or Catcher (C), and one Blocker (B); some Players serve more in a hybrid role of Defender (D), and in lineups over six Players it is common to have Players serving in Specialist (S) roles.

Knowledge of one's own team and that of the Opposition Coach is crucial to success, but detailed team-specific breakdowns are beyond the purview of this document.

Linemen

In general, Linemen are the most common Player type within a team and often possess pedestrian Player statistics. They are useful in positioning by limiting Opposition Player movement, bogging down or Fouling high-value Opposition Players, or helping to Assist Blocks.

Thrower

Throwers have the best Throw statistic on their team and can be used effectively to distribute the ball through Hand-offs and Passes.

Runner/Catcher

Runners and Catchers usually have the highest Move value on their team and correspondingly possess the best capacity for scoring Touchdowns.

Defender

In some teams, there exists a defensive role for Players who are more challenging for Opposition Players to take them or surrounding teammates down.

Blocker

Blockers either have a Block 2 statistic or an offensive Blocking ability (e.g. Frenzied, Offensive Specialist). They provide the

highest action efficiency in scoring Challenge Cards requiring a Knock Down result.

Specialist

Teams with more than six Players may have a Player (or Players) with unique abilities or statistics not seen on any other team.

Team Breakdowns

Below are all 23 Official teams highlighting their constituent Player roles. The vertical bar glyph separates the various Player types of each specific team.

Six-Player teams

Amazon	LLL T R B	Khorne	LLL R BB
Black Orc	RRR BBB	Lizardmen	RR C BBB
Chaos	LLLL BB	Noble	LL T DD B
Dark Elf	LLL R B B	Nurgle	LLL R BB
Dwarf	LLL R B B	Orc	LLL T B B
Elf Union	LLL T C B	Skaven	LLL T R B
Human	LLL T C B	Wood Elf	LLL T C R

Note that the most common lineup is LLL|T|C|B, and that all teams with the exception of Wood Elf have a dedicated Blocker positional.

Seven-Player Teams

Goblin	RRRRRR B
Halfling	LLLL D C B
Necromantic	LLL R R B S
Norse	LLL R B B S
Undead	LL LL R B B
Vampire	LLLL T R B

With seven-Player teams, the roles become more varied and unique, with such oddities as the Beer Boar or the Wraith making their appearance. On the Necromantic team, the Werewolf serves a hybrid role and is listed under Runner while Undead possess two types of Linemen in the Skeleton and Zombie.

Eight-Player Teams

Gnome	LLLL T D R B
Ogre	LLLLLL BB

Of the eight-Player teams, Gnome is the more diverse, yet Ogre is the more challenging team with which to achieve sustained success.

Ten-Player Teams

Snotling LLLLLL|S|R|R|B

Snotling is the only team with a 10-Player lineup and contains two scoring threats in the Fun-Hoppa and Stilty Runna.

Opening Setup

Every Blitz Bowl match begins with teams positioned in their own end zone, with Players placed in one of eleven squares.

While it may seem that placement of Players is unimportant, suboptimal positioning may lead to dire consequences down the line!

Here are some general guidelines for team placement:

1. Avoid the Corners

Unless coaching the Snotling team, wherein one Player necessarily must be placed in a corner square, one should take care not to place a Player into a corner, as it only serves to allow for a Block against an obstacle by an Opposition Player en route to an enemy Touchdown.

2. Spread out the Linemen

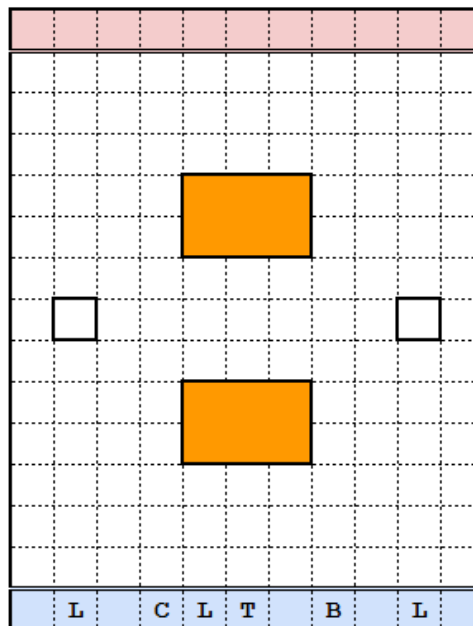
With the updated Mark rule in place for Ultimate Edition - Season 2, wherein a Player must stop their movement upon reaching the Tackle Zone of an Opposition Player, it is easier than ever to prevent a Touchdown.

Whereas previously six Players were required to negate the Run + Mark + Block tactic for a score, now only four Players are needed. Although it is optimal to get as many Players involved in a game as possible, if the goal is defense, try to leave two squares between Linemen to minimize the Open squares of one's end zone.

Sample Team Setup

Here is an example of standard setup for a Human team consisting of three Linemen, one Thrower, one Catcher, and one Blitzzer.

Note that the Linemen are spread out, defending 9 out of 11 squares by themselves. Also, either the Blitzzer or Catcher, the only Move 7+ Players, is able to reach the trapdoors on Turn 1, if ball control is the preferred strategy.



Strategy by Player State

In Blitz Bowl, there are four Player States: Open Players, Marked Players, Prone Players, and Reserves Players.

During a Coach's turn, there are three total Actions available to take, divided up amongst the team, and the differing options for actions corresponding to each Player State that contributes to the depth of Blitz Bowl.

Open Players

All Players begin the game in the Open State, and Open Players have the most options to choose from, as they can perform a Run, Mark, Throw, or Foul Action. Let us review each in turn.

Run

The Move Value statistic is the most varied statistic within Blitz Bowl, with movement ranging from the plodding Move 2 of the Treeman to the ultra-fast Move 9 of the Gutter Runner. Here are some general guidelines to Move:

1. Maximizing Movement

Blitz Bowl is a game of tradeoffs, and teams with high Move values generally have worse Block and/or Armor. The important point is to recognize that Move is the only Player statistic that does not require a dice roll, such that higher Move value is advantageous in reaching Opposition Players, scoring Touchdowns, and maintaining board control.

2. Avoiding Obstacles

Especially true for weak-Armored Players, avoidance of Obstacles can be the difference to staying on the pitch versus being wheeled off on a gurney. By not ending a Run Action adjacent to the pitch border,

obstacles, or Prone/Open Team-mates, the Player will remain in the "Open Field" which makes it significantly harder for Opposition Players to successfully achieve a Knock Down result.

3. Keeping two squares away from Team-mates

For board control purposes as well as preventing the Opposition Coach from claiming Tie Them Up!, it is more advantageous to end a Run at least two squares from a Team-mate, as seen in the graphic. In the top game state, the two Players control 13 additional squares in their Tackle Zone while in the bottom state the two Players control 16 additional squares, not to mention a wider zone of control spanning six columns.



3. Keeping three squares away from Opposition Players

Given that a Mark (sans Bonus Plays) allows for a maximum of two-square movement, to make the Opposition Team burn the most Actions, it can be strategic to position one's Players more than two squares from Opponents. Now, much of this is dependent on the contents of the Challenge Card Row, so if it calls for a Block, by all means Run right at them!

4. Running out of No Man Zone

There is a common tactic in Bitz Bowl of the RuMB1 or the RuMS, the former consisting of a Run + Mark + Block series of Actions while the latter being a Run + Mark + Sidestep series of Actions.

When one's Players are in the nearest two rows of the pitch (including the end zone), an Opposition Player can score via the RuMB1 or RuMS. In the third-nearest row, an Opposition Player can score via a RuMS. Thus, one should take care to either Run one's Players out from the endzone or use Reserves appropriately to limit opposition scoring threats.

5. Controlling the Ball with Move 7+ Players

There is a significant jump in the value of Move for 7 and above, as central trapdoors require a Move of 7 to pick up the ball (initial board state). Thus, always be on the watch for speedy Players on Dash-oriented teams.

Mark

The Mark Action has been altered significantly in the latest edition of Blitz Bowl, as now Players must stop when they Mark into an Opposition Player's Tackle Zone. As such, gameplay has become more defensive-oriented. Mark has a few main goals:

1. Setting up Blocking

Perhaps the most obvious way Mark is used in the game is to set up a Block. There isn't much to say here as the key points will be covered in the Block portion of the strategy guide, but keep in mind positioning, positioning, and positioning!

2. Tying up High-value Opposition Players

A way one can use Mark to annoy the Opposition is to use one's low-value Players (i.e. Linemen) to Mark a high-value Opposition Player. In doing so, this may reduce the impact of strong abilities (e.g. Frenzied) and force the Opposition Player to make a Block or Sidestep to escape.

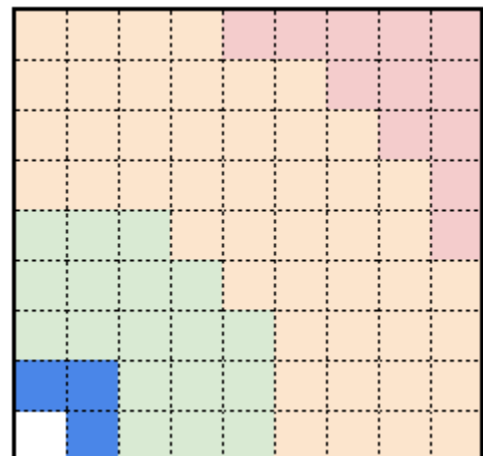
3. Claiming or Denying Challenge Cards

Mark can be directly used to claim Tie Them Up! or even make it more challenging for the Opposition Coach to claim cards such as Get Moving! or Spread Out!

Throw

Throwing is among the most entertaining aspects of Blitz Bowl for Player, Coach, and crowd alike as there is room for both equally spectacular glory and failure.

The Throwing Chart displayed shows the throw range for Blitz Bowl Players, wherein Blue = Handoff, Green = Short Throw, Orange = Long Throw, and Red = Out of Range.³



1. Throwing to score Challenge Cards or a Touchdown

The purest way of Throw is to be used to score Challenge Cards or en route to a Touchdown. As listed in the Challenge Deck analysis portion of this document, Throw Challenge Cards total four points directly

³ There is room for interpretation of the Throw Chart depending on the physical components of each Blitz Bowl Edition (size of pitch varies ever so slightly), but this discussion is beyond the scope of this document.

while indirectly totalling 16 points, while Touchdowns themselves are worth four points each.

Therefore, teams that excel in Throw (most notably Elf Union) should seek to exploit this strength; in addition, any team with a Player with the Catcher's Instincts ability should also look towards targeting that Player for the ensuing Free Action provided.

2. Throwing to play keep-away

Throwing can also be used to widen the field, tossing the ball from one side of the field to the other, or even throwing the ball backwards. These all serve the purpose of ball control which construes an important portion of most teams' game plan.

3. Throwing the ball away

When one's team has possession of the ball but the Challenge Card Row is unfavorable (i.e. Free Up The Ball! and/or Show No Fear!), a Throw Action can be used by a Player with a poor Throw statistic in hopes of achieving an Inaccurate Throw or Fumble, thus preventing the Opposition team from scoring valuable points.

4. Throwing a Team-mate

A useful ability for Halfling, Gnome, Goblin, and Ogre is Throw Team-mate. For these teams (and Halfling in particular), Throw Team-mate should be on the mind of the Coach at the start of every turn.

Throw Team-mate can be used for such varied purposes including Free Up The Ball!, making a completion, or even for Play As A Team! at the beginning of a game.

Throw Probability Tables

Short Throw Table	Throw Result		
Throw Statistic	Fumble	Inaccurate	Completion
2+	0.167	0.000	0.833
3+	0.167	0.167	0.667
4+	0.167	0.333	0.500
5+	0.167	0.500	0.333
6+	0.167	0.667	0.167

Risky Throw	Throw Result		
Throw Statistic	Fumble	Inaccurate	Completion
2+	0.333	0.000	0.667
3+	0.333	0.167	0.500
4+	0.333	0.333	0.333
5+	0.333	0.500	0.167
6+	0.333	0.500	0.167

Short Throw (w/ Reroll) Table	Throw Result		
Throw Statistic	Fumble	Inaccurate	Completion
2+	0.028	0.000	0.972
3+	0.056	0.056	0.889
4+	0.083	0.167	0.750
5+	0.111	0.333	0.556
6+	0.139	0.556	0.306

Risky Throw (w/ Reroll) Table	Throw Result		
Throw Statistic	Fumble	Inaccurate	Completion
2+	0.111	0.000	0.889
3+	0.167	0.083	0.750
4+	0.222	0.222	0.556
5+	0.278	0.417	0.306
6+	0.278	0.417	0.306

Foul

Fouling is limited to Open Players against a Prone Opposition Player, and as such it is generally used in the aftermath of a skirmish.

1. Fouling to Injure an Opponent

Fouling is even more risky than Throw in the sense that 2/3 of the time the Fouling Player will be unable to make further Actions that turn.

However, given that it is a 50-50 proposition as to whether the Foul is successful, Foul is usually the most efficient method of claiming Break Some Bones, especially as two Foul attempts has a 0.750 probability of Injury with three Foul attempts yield 0.875 probability of Injury.

With their Violent ability, the Werewolf Player on the Necromantic team is the best at Fouling.

Foul Probability Table

Foul Table	Foul (Probability as Best Result, from L - R)			
	Spotted!	Slipped!	Take That!	Got Them!
1 Foul Attempt (0.500 Injury)	0.167	0.333	0.167	0.333
Foul w/ Violent (0.583 Injury)	0.139	0.278	0.139	0.444
2 Foul Attempts (0.750 Injury)	0.083	0.167	0.250	0.500
3 Foul Attempts (0.875 Injury)	0.042	0.083	0.292	0.583

Marked Players

Block

After Run and Mark, Block is perhaps the next most frequent Action taken by Players. While the Run + Mark + Block series of Actions is a tempting sequence to perform, in the long run that usually leads to poor Action Efficiency.

Here are some Blocking strategies:

1. Open Field Block vs. Block Against an Obstacle

There are two general types of Blocks - an Open Field Block and a Block against an Obstacle.

A common mistake made by newer Coaches in the game is to simply find the nearest Opposition Player and target them for a Block, no matter their positioning on the field.

However, a Block 1 Player only has a 0.500 probability of a successful Knock Down, as a Miss or a Shove comprise 3 / 6 of the dice sides. Compare this with a Block against an obstacle, when a Shove also Knocks Down an Opposition Player. Now, there is a 0.867 probability of success (three times less likely to fail).

2. Assisted Block vs. Unassisted Block

Assisted Blocks, likewise, yield higher rates of Knock Down as well - 0.750 in the Open Field. Note that this is actually less than that of an unassisted Block 1 against an obstacle!

However, when one makes an Assisted Block (Block 2) against an obstacle, the rate of failure is 1 out of 36!

Knock Down Probability Tables

Knock Down Table	Number of Block Dice		
Block Type	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
Normal Block	0.500	0.750	0.875
Normal vs. Stand Firm	0.500	0.750	0.875
Off. Specialist	0.750	0.938	N/A
Titchy / Insign.	0.333	0.556	
Violent	0.583	0.792	

Knock Down to Wall Table	Number of Block Dice		
Block Type	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
Normal Block	0.833	0.972	0.995
Normal vs. Stand Firm	0.500	0.750	0.875
Off. Specialist	0.972	0.999	N/A
Titchy / Insign.	0.667	0.889	
Violent	0.861	0.977	

3. Blocking to Injure

One useful aspect of Blocking is to Injure an Opposition Player, possibly with hopes of claiming Break Some Bones! Note that it is harder than one might expect to Injure a Player.

In the Open Field, a Block 1 Player only Injures an Opponent with Armor 4+ with probability 0.278, barely over a quarter of attempts. Note that this number jumps up to 0.444 against an obstacle.

While Foul generally achieves a higher rate of successful Injury as compared with a Block, there are exceptions to the rule, generally for weak-Armored Players. Against Armor 5+ and 6+ Players, Block 1 against an obstacle is superior to Foul with respect to Injury. This also holds true for Assisted Blocks (or Block 2) in the Open Field against Armor 5+ and 6+.

Block Injury Tables

Normal Block Injury Table	Number of Block Dice		
vs. Armor Statistic	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
2+	0.111	0.176	0.216
3+	0.194	0.301	0.362
4+	0.278	0.426	0.508
5+	0.361	0.551	0.654
6+	0.417	0.625	0.729

Normal Block to Wall Injury Table	Number of Block Dice		
vs. Armor Statistic	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
2+	0.167	0.213	0.236
3+	0.306	0.375	0.402
4+	0.444	0.537	0.568
5+	0.583	0.699	0.734
6+	0.694	0.810	0.829

It is extremely tricky to Injure well-Armored Players via Block. Against a Armor 2+ Player, for example, Block 2 against an obstacle is successful with only 0.213 probability.

Sidestep

Sidestep is generally used when there is an opportunity to score, either via Run + Mark + Sidestep or Mark + Sidestep + Run. Of all the Player Actions, it is likely one of the least frequently used.

Prone Players

Stand Up

There are three ways a Player can end up Prone on the pitch.

- 1 - Knock Down from a Block made by an Opposition Player
- 2 - Inaccurate Throw Team-mate
- 3 - Placed Prone from Diving Tackle

Prone Players are for all intents and purposes not active participants in the game and do not contribute to claiming Challenge Cards.

Moreover, they also do not contribute to board control nor the number needed to reach Emergency Reserves.

While it is tempting not to use an Action to Stand Up a Prone Player, this can be useful in a few situations, including that of Throw Team-mate which will be covered in the Tactics portion of this guide.

1. Limiting Fouling Opportunities

One of the main ways that strong-armored Players such as an Ogre or Troll or leave the pitch is via a successful Foul action. By standing these Players up, it is far less likely that they will become Injured by an Opposition Player the following turn.

2. Keeping Players Prone

It may actually be beneficial to keeping Players Prone if there is a card such as Take Them Down! on deck, or even Break Some Bones! if it is a weak-armored Player.

Reserve Players

Reserves

Reserves Actions can be made as a Free Action (via Emergency Reserves or Reserves Bonus Play) or directly as one of the three Actions during a turn.

Throughout the course of a Blitz Bowl game, Players inevitably leave the pitch, either as casualties or after scoring a Touchdown. Therefore, Reserves is indeed an important play to make, both for offensive and defensive purposes. For example, Reserves may be useful to bring back a ball carrier or scoring threat, or it can also be useful to bring back a Blocker to defend against an Opposition scoring threat.

While a multiple-Reserve turn is uncommon, it may prove to be the difference maker in a game in which the Opposition requires a Touchdown to win, as there are few ways of cracking the endzone when all the squares are guarded.

There are several teams to highlight when it comes to Emergency Reserves (ER), both positively and negatively:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (-) Lizardmen: ER 5, Roster 6 | (-) Necromantic: ER 5, Roster 7 |
| (+) Noble: ER 3, Roster 6 | (+) Gnome: ER 4, Roster 8 |
| (++) Halfling: ER 2, Roster 7 | (+) Ogre: ER 4, Roster 8 |
| (+) Norse: ER 3, Roster 7 | (+) Snotling: ER 5, Roster 10 |
| (+) Goblin: ER 4, Roster 7 | |

Free Actions

Free actions are crucial in the game of Blitz Bowl. The maximum number of turns in a Blitz Bowl match is 26 in total, or 13 turns / 39 Actions per team. Therefore, one way to gain an advantage against the Opposition team is not only through Action efficiency but also through Action numbers.

Free Actions are found via several Bonus Play cards as well as through Player abilities.

Note that there are many other abilities that have hidden Action economy that in essence serve as a Free Action (i.e. Mark with Handling Skill), but do not overtly grant a Free Action. These will be covered in greater detail in the Tactics portion of this guide.

The team with the greatest number of Free Action abilities is Chaos, as four of their Players have the Head-Butt ability.

Free Action abilities include Catcher's Instincts, Dump-Off, Frenzied, Head-butt, Hit and Run, Pick-Me-Up, Regenerate, Running Pass, and Wardance. Note that Dump-Off is a reactive ability used during the Opposition team's turn.

Free Action Bonus Plays include Inspiration (x3), Reserves (x2), Step Aside (x2), Intervention, Blitz!, Jump Up, and Diving Tackle. Note that Step Aside and Intervention are reactive Bonus Plays used during the Opposition team's turn.

Re-rolls

Two Player abilities involve re-roll: Expert Passer and Offensive Specialist, but the main appearance of re-rolls in Blitz Bowl comes in the form of the three Raw Talent Bonus Play cards. Raw Talent can be used to re-roll an Armor, Throw, or Block check. Keep in mind that one cannot re-roll a re-roll!

A rule of thumb on when to use Raw Talent is if the Action was expected to succeed or not; if one is attempting to make a 6+ Throw or Armor Check, it is less effective to use up a Raw Talent with the hopes of rolling a natural 6. Rather, Raw Talent is an excellent way to mitigate disaster from unexpected results - it is much more unlikely to roll back-to-back 1s on a 2+ Armor Save, for example.

Player Abilities

Similar to that of Bonus Play cards, Player abilities can also be divided into three categories: Action Efficiency, Extra Action, and Gameplay. There are 31 unique Player abilities. For those abilities that do not neatly fit into one particular category, they will be listed into a primary category.

Abilities are given marks: - if negative, + if minor, ++ if moderate, and +++ if strong.

Action Efficiency Abilities

Defensive (+)	Offensive Specialist (+++)
Enforcer (++)	Safe Hands (+)
Expert Passer (++)	Stand Firm (++)
Hulking Brute (+++)	Violent (++)
Mighty Blow (+)	Woodland Aid (+)

The best Action Efficiency ability is Hulking Brute, while Offensive Specialist adds much-needed reliability for a Block 1 Player.

Extra Action Abilities

Catcher's Instincts (++)	Pick-Me-Up (++)
Dump-Off (++)	Regenerate (++)
Frenzied (+++)	Running Pass (++)
Head-Butt (+++)	Wardance (+)
Hit and Run (+)	

Frenzied is the most powerful of the Extra Action abilities, followed by Head-butt.

Gameplay Abilities

Bloodlust (-)	Leap (+++)
Bomber (++)	Lithe Creature (+++)
Elusive (+++)	Minion (+)
Ethereal (++)	Throw Team-mate (++)
Handling Skills (++)	Titchy (-)
Insignificant (-)	War Machine (+++)

War Machine is a unique ability to the Pump Wagon, but one that is extremely strong. Elusive and Leap make ball control much easier to accomplish, while Bloodlust, Insignificant, and Titchy are all negative abilities.

Bash-Dash

There are 23 unique Official teams of Blitz Bowl, and one way to analyze them is via a "Bash-Dash" system. Bash teams are strong in Block and Armor while Dash teams are strong in Move and Throw. The former teams rely more on brute strength and Injuring Opposition Players while the latter teams rely more on moving the ball around and scoring Touchdowns.

While this may be somewhat up for debate, presented below is a list of teams graded by relative bashiest to relative dashiest, as analyzed through the [Team Value System](#):

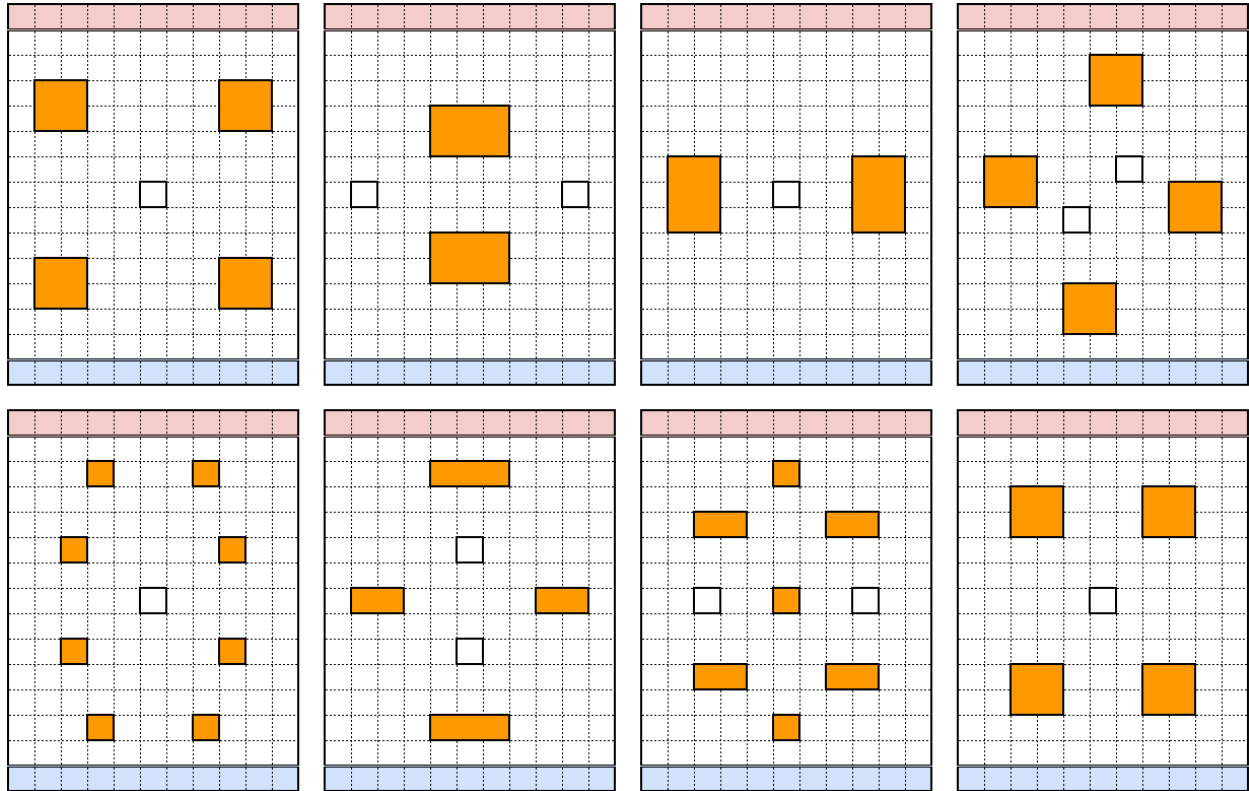
Bashiest

Nurgle	Halfling	Lizardmen
Dwarf	Black Orc	Amazon
Undead	Vampire	Human
Necromantic	Norse	Skaven
Orc	Noble	Goblin
Ogre	Gnome	Elf Union
Khorne	Snotling	Wood Elf
Chaos	Dark Elf	

Dashiest

Pitches

There are eight official Blitz Bowl pitches, two corresponding to each edition. All pitches exhibit the following characteristics: either one or two trapdoors, obstacles not placed next to pitch boundaries or end zones, and between eight and sixteen squares of obstacles in total.



Top Row, L to R: Pitch 1, 2, 3, and 4

Bottom Row, L to R: Pitch 5, 6, 7, and 8

Pitches that offer an advantage to the faster, more agile teams include Pitch 1, Pitch 2, and Pitch 5. Slower teams will benefit more from Pitch 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

There are two pitches, Pitch 4 and Pitch 6, on which there is a near trapdoor and a far trapdoor. For slower teams, it may be also advantageous to select these two pitches for purposes of ball control in case the ball comes out the near trapdoor at the start of the game.

Tactics

Tactics are the beating heart of Blitz Bowl - what keeps the game engaging for Players, Coaches, and fans alike. This section will dive into specific tricks of the trade for a devious Coach to get an edge over their Opponent.

Tactics: Challenge Cards

In Blitz Bowl: Ultimate Edition - Season 2, there are 26 total cards in the Challenge Deck. Ten of these cards are worth 1 point, fourteen of these cards are worth 2 points, and two of these cards are worth 3 points; in total, 44 points are at stake.

For purposes of tactics, it is helpful to divide the Challenge Deck into groups of cards as seen below:

Get Together! & Spread Out!

Get Together! (1 pt) Spread Out! (1 pt)

Get Together! (GT) and Spread Out! (SO) are two of the easier cards to claim and often setting the stage for a Clean Sweep!.

If deciding between the two, go for SO. GT can lead to Players that are bunched up, limiting board control and opening up oneself to the opposition more easily claiming cards such as Tie Them Up! or Take Them Down!, or opening up running lanes for a Touchdown.

Note that while Run is most commonly used to claim these two cards, either card can be claimed via a Sidestep Action, and GT via a Mark Action as well.

Note that Prone Players do not count towards/against the claiming of these cards; in other words, Rules As written, a Run adjacent to a Prone Team-mate can also claim Spread Out!.

Reserves

The Bonus Play for these cards, Reserves, can be useful for purposes of solidifying a defensive line to stop a touchdown. Moreover, Reserves is especially useful for Players with action efficiency Blocking skills such as Frenzied or Headbutt. Reserves also grants a free Action towards claiming Play As A Team!. As such, it can be wise to not necessarily use Reserves right after claiming GT/SO, but rather wait until Play As A Team! is available on the Challenge Card row.

Reserves is more important for dash-oriented teams; as the game progresses, these teams will start to hemorrhage Players either through Touchdowns or Injuries.

Get The Ball!, Move The Ball! & Showboat For The Crowd!

Get The Ball! (GTB), Move The Ball! (MTB), and Showboat For The Crowd! (SFTC) total six cards worth six points total, as there are two copies of each in the Challenge Card deck. They are grouped together here as oftentimes the Coach has to make the decision on which of the cards to claim and which to forgo.

Claiming GTB or MTB is usually superior to claiming SFTC. GTB may yield one of the most powerful Bonus Play cards in Step Aside while MTB may yield the valuable Dodge Bonus Play. In addition, it is much easier for the Opposition team to claim GTB or MTB on the ensuing turn compared with claiming SFTC.

Get The Ball! (1 pt, x2)

GTB, although worth only 1 point, may grant a Coach the valuable Step Aside Bonus Play card. While all Players with a Throw Statistic can claim this card, Players with such skills as Elusive, Handling Skills, Leap, or Lithe Creature are more adept at claiming this card.

Note that Rules As written it is indeed possible to claim multiple GTB during the same turn.

If one has possession of the ball, and GTB is up next or in the Challenge Card row, one tactic is to make a Risky Throw attempt with the goal to lose the ball on purpose in order to claim GTB in a future turn.

Rules as written, note that both GTB cards can be claimed in a single turn!

Shadow

Shadow (known as Shadowing in Ultimate Edition) is less powerful in UE2, as it cannot be applied to Interrupt Step Aside.

Shadow can be used at one's goal line, forcing an Opposition Player to Block rather than Side Step for the Touchdown. If the defensive Player has Stand Firm/Hulking Brute, or if one has the

Tough Enough card, it then becomes a coin flip 50-50 for the Opposition Team to have a successful Knock Down for the score.

Even better is if the Opposition Player tried a Run + Mark + Side Step combination, as Shadow is guaranteed to prevent the Touchdown in this case.

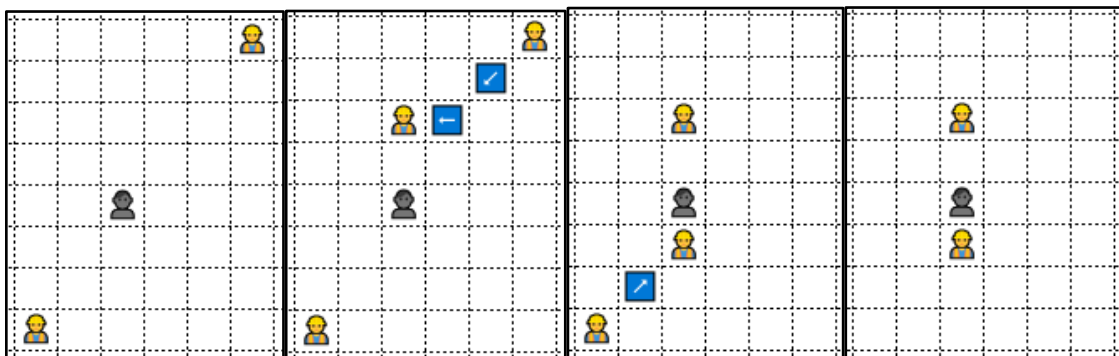
Another use case of Shadow is to prevent an Opposition Player with the ball from escaping. By Marking that Opposition Player with two Players, the Opposition Player is unable to escape during the ensuing turn, even if Knocking Down one of the Marked Players.

Step Aside

Step Aside makes it possible to negate the Opposition from claiming such Challenge Cards as Free Up The Ball!, Tie Them Up!, or Take Them Down!.

Moreover, with Step Aside, the team with the ball can boldly storm forth with the ball carrier towards the Opposition end zone, as the first Mark attempt can be negated via this Bonus Play. Keep in mind that if one's Player is in a square bordering the pitch, the Opposition Player can Mark such that it is impossible to use this card.

To counter Step Aside, the most common technique is to use two Players. Here, in the schematic below, P1 is in the top-right corner and P2 is in the bottom-left corner. If P2 makes a Mark Action, the Opponent can play Step Aside to prevent a Knock Down. However, if P1 first makes a Run Action, and then P2 makes a Mark Action, there is no free square to which the Opposition Player can Side Step, allowing for an Open Field Block by P2 for the final action.



Move The Ball! (1 pt, x2)

MTB is generally claimed via a Run Action over a Throw Action as the former does not require a dice roll.

One sneaky tactic to claim MTB is to Throw the ball backwards to one's own end zone, then make a Run Action from the back line, which does fulfill the requirements of claiming the card, rules as written.

If the Opposition team has the ball, one effective countermeasure is to position Players three squares away from the Opposition Player carrying the ball, such that they can neither Run with it nor Mark your Player, Block/Sidestep, then Run.

There are two Bonus Plays associated with MTB: Dodge and Raw Talent. Of the two, Dodge is the gamechanger and can open up the game in many creative ways.

Dodge

Dodge is a potent Bonus Play that allows for a loose ball to be easily scooped up, defensive lines to be broken, and unforeseen Touchdowns to be scored.

Given that Dodge is used on a Run Action, Players/Teams with higher Move statistics benefit more from this Bonus Play. In particular, teams with Players of Move 7+ can wreak serious havoc via Dodge, especially when combined with the Sprint or Aggressive Mark Bonus Plays.

If facing off against an Opposition team that has claimed MTB/Dodge, playing defensively by positioning multiple Players in the end zone might be the best option to limit a Touchdown score.

If one's team doesn't have the ball, Dodge can still be useful to Run past a defensive line for purposes of claiming cards such as Free Up The Ball!, Tie Them Up!, or Show No Fear!, to name a few.

Raw Talent

The use cases of Raw Talent are varied - it may be applied to an Armor check, Throw check, or Block Dice roll. In general, Raw Talent should be used if there is a reasonable chance of success (i.e. 1/3 or more) and would then lead to claiming a Challenge Card (i.e. Show Us A Completion!) or prevent the Opposition team from claiming Break Some Bones!.

Keep in mind that re-rolling a 6+ Throw or Armor check is not very feasible (increasing success from 0.167 to only 0.306). However, re-rolling a 5+ check raises success from 0.333 to 0.556, better than a single 4+ check.

Raw Talent is also useful for the cases when an unexpected die roll (i.e. failing a 2+ Armor Save) is made.

Showboat For The Crowd! (1 pt, x2)

The upside of claiming SFTC is that it means that one's turn has yielded at least five points, which is a good turn by any definition. As with any score, it is important to ensure that the Opposition team cannot easily score an answering Touchdown on the next turn. That usually means moving one's Players to guard the squares adjacent to the pitch trapdoor(s), or making Reserves Actions to leave no Open square within one's end zone - the entire end zone can be guarded with four Players, if properly positioned.

The two Bonus Play cards associated with SFTC are Raw Talent and Hail Mary Pass; the former is covered in the discussion in MTB, while the latter is presented forthwith.

Hail Mary Pass

Hail Mary Pass is a coin flip's chance of making a Throw anywhere on the pitch. Given that a Long Throw can range up to 8 squares, the added range usually doesn't add much by way of tactics. It is rare to have an Open Player in the Opposition's end zone, but that would be the most glorious use case of this Bonus Play.

Keep in mind that a 4+ Throw is actually quite solid for many Bash teams, so this card may be their best chance of claiming Show Us A Completion! or Make A Risky Throw!.

Show Us A Completion & Make A Risky Throw!

There are three pure Throwing cards within the core Challenge Deck, though keep in mind that many other cards can also be claimed via a Throw Action, including Move The Ball!, Get The Ball!, Free Up The Ball!, Play As A Team!, and Show Them How It's Done!.

Show Us A Completion! | 1 pt (x2)

Show Us A Completion! (SUAC) comprise an exciting pair of cards that can only be claimed via a successful Throw / Throw Team-mate Action. On the back of one of the cards is Inspiration, one of the strongest Bonus Play cards in the game, while the other, Nerves of Steel, does offer some unique tactical possibilities.

Even unsuccessful Throw Actions can serve a critical role in certain game states. For example, if one attempts to make a Throw to claim SUAC and is unsuccessful, oftentimes an Inaccurate Throw is sufficient to score a Touchdown on the ensuing scatter, as the target Player can then scoop up the ball and Run it in.

Inspiration

Blitz Bowl is all about action efficiency. At a maximum, there are 26 turns in a game (assuming 1 card gets discarded starting from turn 2), meaning that each team at most only has 13 turns, or 39 actions, to impress the Coaches and crowd. As such, any free Action is valuable, whether through a Player ability, Emergency Reserves, or Bonus Play card.

What sets Inspiration apart is that it can be used for any Action whatsoever. A less-experienced Coach might find themselves itching to burn an Inspiration card as soon as the Challenge Card is claimed, but it is worthwhile to hold on to Inspiration for purposes of claiming multiple Challenge Cards, a Touchdown, or a Clean Sweep!.

There are many tactics that arise with a 4th Player Action, and below are a couple of my personal favorites:

Get Moving - If only two Open Players, make a Reserves Action to be able to make three Run Actions.

Free Up The Ball!, Take Them Down! - If the Opposition Coach has Step Aside, force them to burn it by making a Mark Action with one of your Players, then Run + Mark + Block with another Player.

Nerves of Steel

Nerves of Steel allows for a Throw (or Throw Team-mate) Action while Marked. The use case for this ability is somewhat limited, though it can save an Action (Side Step or Block) that the ball-handler would need to otherwise free themselves up for a Throw.

An uncommon but useful tactic is to use a Player with Handling Skills to Mark into a square with a ball, thereby picking it up. Via Nerves of Steel, this Player would then be able to unleash an unlikely pass.

Likewise, a Marked "big guy" (Ogre, Treeman, or Troll) can use Nerves of Steel to Throw one of their Team-mates as well.

Make A Risky Throw! | 2 pts

As the name implies, Make A Risky Throw (MART) involves making a Throw impacted by a negative modifier. For some teams, their rosters full of Players of Throw 5+ or Throw 6+, attempting to claim this card likely will result in disappointment and headache. However, for the Dashy teams with excellent Throw value (i.e. Elf Union), claiming this card can be a good way to offset the predicted losses of the Block cards (Take Them Down! or Break Some Bones!) to the Opposition team.

Keep in mind that even for the most adept Throwing teams, a Risky Throw involves 0.333 probability of a Fumble (roll of a 1 or 2), so it is generally preferable to make a Throw Action on the first or second Player Action of the turn, so that even an undesirable outcome can be salvaged into a more favorable game state before turn's end.

Accurate Throw

Accurate Throw is the Bonus Play on the backside of MART, allowing a Player to make a Throw Action as if they had a 2+ Throw statistic.

Accurate Throw is most useful with SUAC on the board, and a common tactic is to first attempt to MART with a Player that Throws reasonably well, and then use the ensuing Accurate Throw Bonus Play to claim SUAC in the same turn.

Keep in mind that this Bonus Play can also be used for teams with the Throw Team-mate ability, making the so-called Halfling Howitzer tactic even more viable.

Free Up The Ball! & Show No Fear!

While it is usually favorable to have possession of the ball, Free Up The Ball! (FUTB) and Show No Fear! (SNF) are Challenge Cards that require the Opposition team to have ball possession. There are two copies of FUTB and one copy of SNF in the Challenge Deck totalling six points in all.

Free Up The Ball! | 2 pts (x2)

FUTB is often claimed via a standard Block Action, though certain teams can make use of the Throw Team-mate ability to claim FUTB.

Note that on rare occasions it is possible to claim FUTB twice in the same turn, if the ball scatter from the Opposition Player bounces into the arms of another Opposition Player, who in turn loses it by turn's end!

If one's team has possession of the ball, it can be better to attempt to "lose" it purposefully via a (Risky) Throw, such that the Opposition Team is unable to claim this card on their turn.

Another defense against the Opposition claiming FUTB is to set up a defensive line of Players such that there are no Open lanes to reach your ball-carrying Player, but watch out for Throw Team-mate or Player abilities such as Elusive to circumvent this.

In addition, both Dump-Off and Safe Hands are useful in limiting FUTB. Tactical discussion is found in the corresponding section covering Player abilities.

Blitz!⁴

Blitz! is a Bonus Play that is analogous with the Headbutt ability. In isolation, Blitz! can be powerful, given that it provides a Free Action. However, given how Open Field Blocks are a coin flip's chance of success, principles dictate that this Bonus Play should be used to set up an Assisted Block or Block against an obstacle whenever possible.

Blitz! is also useful to get slower, heavy-hitting Players (e.g. Treeman or Mummy) towards the center of the action.

Intervention

Intervention is an intriguing Bonus Play with several tactical possibilities. For one, it can be potent in denying a Touchdown score, if an Opposition Player is hoping to Run their way to a seemingly Open square in the end zone.

⁴ One easter egg of Blitz Bowl is that Blitz! is the only Bonus Play card within the Challenge Deck to have an exclamation mark appended to the end.

Another tactic is to use Intervention to deny such Challenge Cards as SNF or Tie Them Up!, Marking the Opposition Player so that they themselves cannot make a Mark Action themselves.

Intervention can also be used to set up a Block on the ensuing turn, especially if used during the final Action of the Opposition team's turn.

Note that rules As written, Players with the Frenzied ability can use Intervention to make a Block during the Opposition team's turn. The Bonus Play Step Aside is unable to be used in this instance, as one cannot interrupt an interrupt.⁵

Show No Fear! | 2 pts

SNF is a card that often is the cause of a tactical struggle. For the team with the ball, it can often be difficult to prevent the Opposition team from claiming SNF, especially if there are two trapdoors. If there is a single trapdoor (Pitches 1, 3, 5, 7), then the Coach may place a Player flanking on either side of the trapdoor to make it impossible to Mark onto the square. In addition, the team with the ball can simply Run a Player directly on the trapdoor itself, with the only way to dislodge the Player being a Shove result on a Block Action. Moreover, those Players with the Stand Firm or Hulking Brute ability may step on to the trapdoor without fear of being Shoved, making claiming SNF improbable to claim.

On pitches with two trapdoors, it may be necessary to get rid of the ball through a planned failed Throw Action to prevent the Opposition Coach from claiming an easy two points.

Jump Up

Jump Up is one of the more slept-on Challenge Cards in the game; Prone Players are for all intents and purposes non-participants, with the rare tactic of serving as a roadblock obstacle far outweighed by the danger of being on the receiving end of a Foul Action. Moreover, Prone Players do not count towards Emergency Reserves. In addition, the Jump Up Bonus Play can prove to be quite useful for purposes of claiming such cards as Get Moving! or Play As A Team!.

⁵ Intervention may even be combined with Aggressive Mark and Frenzied to set up the rare Mark 4 Block during the Opposition team's turn

Get Moving !, Play As A Team!, & Show Them How It's Done!

Get Moving! (GM) has long been a mainstay of Blitz Bowl since the first edition, requiring three Run Actions (by three different Players) to claim. Coaches who are familiar with Blitz Bowl: Ultimate Edition will note that Play As A Team! (PAAT) and Show Them How It's Done! (STHD) exist in that edition as well, albeit within the Endgame Challenge Deck. Contrasting UE with UE2, the UE2 Challenge Deck removes the pair of Gang Up! cards from UE in favor of adding two copies each of PAAT and STHID.⁶

What separates GM, PAAT, and STHID from the other Challenge Cards is that these cards require at least three Actions to complete. As such, whenever at least two differing cards from this set are represented on the Challenge Row, it is nigh-impossible to claim a Clean Sweep! except under very specific circumstances.

However, as seen below, all three types of Challenge Cards can yield impressive Bonus Plays that make going after them worthwhile.

Get Moving! | 2 pts (x2)

GM is a straightforward set of cards - simply make three Run Actions during one's turn to claim. Therefore, as GM does not require a dice roll to claim, one can reliably determine at the onset of one's turn whether it is possible to claim it.

If GM shows up at the start of the game, it is a no-brainer that the second Coach claims the card when the Challenge Card Row first opens up. As the game progresses and Players fall Prone on the pitch or exit to the dugout, it can be more and more challenging to claim this card. Of course, teams with more than six Players generally have an advantage in claiming GM, as sheer numbers mean that a higher number of them are Open.

Much of the tactics surrounding GM have to do with how to claim or deny it to the Opposition Coach. One common way for denial is to Mark Opposition Players such that their number of Open Players drops below three. Note that making Mark Actions necessarily decreases one's own number of Open Players (and chance to claim GM) as well.

It can be useful to keep a Reserves Bonus Play in one's hand for the purposes of hunting for GM.

⁶ The inclusion of PAAT and STHID within UE2 has been a source of debate, given the relative ease of claiming these cards, such that an imbalanced card draw of these (four) cards between the two Coaches can greatly favor one at expense of the other.

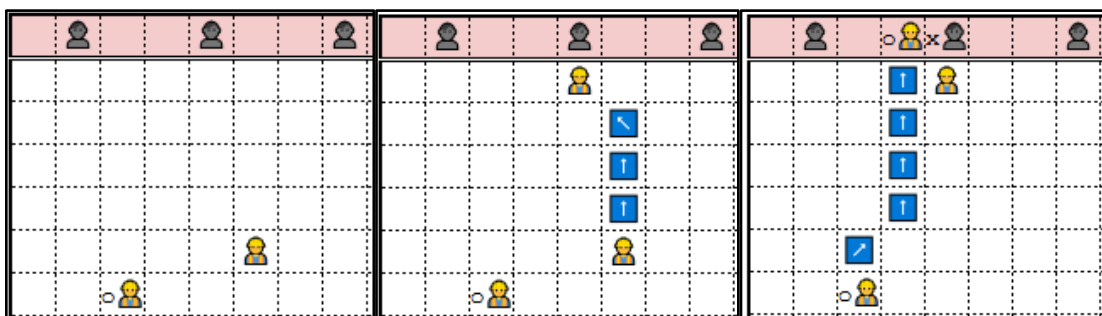
Sprint & Aggressive Mark

These Bonus Plays add two to Move and Mark, respectively. For fast Players, such as the Move 9 Gutter Runner of the Skaven team, the additional speed makes them extremely dangerous scoring threats. In fact, with either Bonus Play, the Gutter Runner can score a Touchdown from their own end zone via a Run + Mark + Sidestep Action.

For hard-hitting Players, the additional movement can allow the Coach to bring them more readily from the end zone towards the center of the pitch where presumably all the action is occurring.

A useful tactic is to combine such skills as Dodge/Elusive with Sprint for purposes of claiming the ball or scoring a Touchdown.

Aggressive Mark is the sneakier of the two Bonus Plays. Even though UE2 nerfs the Mark Action significantly, Aggressive Mark can still be used to punch holes in the Opponent's defensive back line to free up open running lanes for a Touchdown score, as seen in the schematic below in which the first Player makes a Mark + Block, followed by the ball carrier Running it in for the Touchdown.



This is extremely useful in cases where the Opposition Player has more than 6 Players on their team (i.e. Halving, Ogre, etc) and is clogging up their end zone.

Play As A Team! | 2 pts (x2)

Playing as a team is something that every Blitz Bowl team needs in order to win. No one Player can do it all themselves, at least not for the entire game!

PAAT is generally an attainable Challenge Card to claim, unless at the start of the game or towards the end when many Players are in the dugout.

The wording of PAAT, in that Free Actions also count towards the total, make abilities such as Frenzied or Catcher's Instincts more potent. Moreover, given that only one Challenge Card can be claimed per Player Action, the order of Actions taken during the turn is also of importance - save the third Action for claiming PAAT.

The likely most common ways of claiming PAAT are via a Run/Mark/Block or Run/Mark/Reserves, but don't forget about Foul, Stand Up, Side Step, and Throw Actions as well.

Note that teams with the Throw Team-mate ability can claim PAAT in the opening sequence of the game via a Throw, Run, and Reserves/Standup sequence.

Note that Inspiration, one of the Bonus Plays associated with PAAT, has previously been discussed under Show Us A Completion!

Tough Enough

Tough Enough essentially functions as the Stand Firm ability, whereby Block 1 results in a Miss half of the time. Moreover, given that Block Actions cannot be Assisted, usage of this Bonus Play can prove to be critical, such as if the Opposition Player needs a Knock Down to score or if they are trying to free up the ball.

The Bonus Play becomes much less useful, however, against Opposition Players with Block 2 or Offensive Specialist, as seen in the Knock Down to Wall Table (simulating Stand Firm), below.

Knock Down to Wall Table

Knock Down to Wall Table	Number of Block Dice		
Block Type	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
Normal Block	0.833	0.972	0.995
Normal vs. Stand Firm	0.500	0.750	0.875
Off. Specialist	0.972	0.999	1.000
Titchy / Insign.	0.667	0.889	N/A
Violent	0.861	0.977	

Show Them How It's Done! | 2 pts (x2)

STHID requires that one Player do it all, with Free Actions not included. For most game states, aside from the start of the game, it is highly likely that at least one Player on the team will be able to fulfill the requirements, making this card one of the easiest to claim.

Note that there is a rare tactic where a Free Action (i.e. Reserves, Frenzied) as Player Action 4 could trigger claiming this card, provided the three previous Actions were sufficient to claim STHID. This means that multiple STHID could theoretically be claimed in one turn without use of Inspiration.

Bladed Knuckle Dusters

Bladed Knuckle Dusters levels the playing field against teams with excellent Armor. In particular, this Bonus Play card should be used to headhunt for BSB and its associated 3 points. The other main use case for Bladed Knuckle Dusters is in the defensive role, when one needs to Injure a ball carrier looking to score a go-ahead Touchdown, lest they Stand Up, Block, and Run on the ensuing turn.

This Kid's Got Moxy

While this card is useless for the Snotling Team's Pump Wagon, Block 3 is quite handy for most other Players. With a 0.875 probability of Knock Down, Block 3 is excellent at claiming Free Up The Ball! or TTD, while the much higher Injury rate inflicted makes it favorable in claiming Break Some Bones! as well.

In assessing the Normal Block Injury Table, below, note that while Block 3 Injures 4+, 5+, and 6+ Armor Players at rates more than half the time, the Foul Action is actually more successful at causing Injury for Armor 2+ and 3+ Players.

Normal Block Injury Table

Normal Block Injury Table	Number of Block Dice		
vs. Armor Statistic	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
2+	0.111	0.176	0.216
3+	0.194	0.301	0.362
4+	0.278	0.426	0.508
5+	0.361	0.551	0.654
6+	0.417	0.625	0.729

Tie Them Up!, Take Them Down! & Break Some Bones!

To round out the core UE2 Challenge Deck, we have three pairs of cards in Tie Them Up! (TTU), Take Them Down! (TTD), and Break Some Bones! (BSB). These cards either indirectly (TTU) or directly (TTD, BSB) involve close-combat fighting in the form of Blocks.

These cards also chain together well, and a turn that comprises a Run + Block + Foul sequence which claims the Clean Sweep! for nine points is hard to beat.

Tie Them Up! | 2 pts (x2)

The wording of TTU has shifted from UE to UE2. In UE2, a Player claims the card if they Mark two or more previously unmarked Opposition Players. Thus, by keeping one's Players more than one square apart, it makes it nigh-impossible for the Opposition team to claim TTU.

An overlooked method of claiming TTU is the following: if a Player is Marking two Opposition Players at the start of the turn, one can make a Side Step followed by Mark Action to claim the card.

Note that Raw Talent, one of the Bonus Plays associated with TTU, has previously been discussed under Move The Ball!

Defensive Play⁷

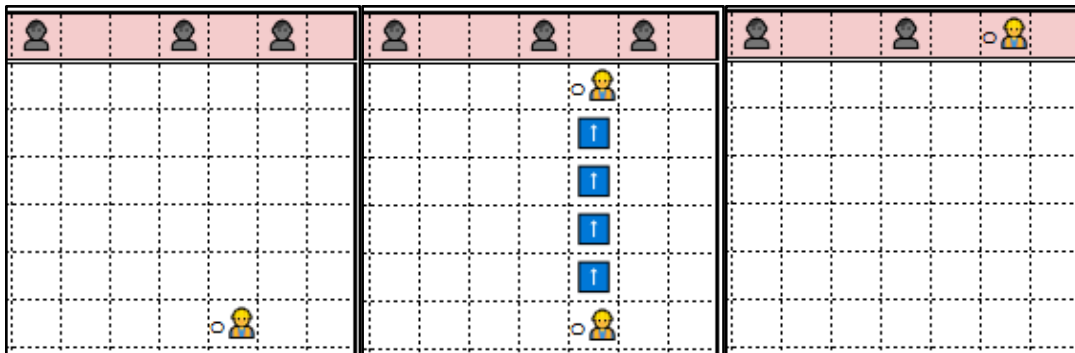
Defensive Play allows a Player to make a Run Action that ends with the Player in the Marked state. Those Coaches who have played or coached against the Ogre team will know just how powerful this Bonus Play can be.

⁷ Rules as written, Defensive Play does not specify the duration of use, but rules as intended surely means it to only take effect for one turn.

Defensive Play can be used to negate Step Aside, as the Mark Action is bypassed via this Bonus Play. In addition, Defensive Play is useful for setting up an Assisted Block, if claiming a card such as Free Up The Ball! or Take Them Down! is the priority.

Using Defensive Play to claim Get The Ball!, if the ball is surrounding an Opposition Player, is also a powerful tactic. Even better if the resulting Bonus Play is Step Aside!

Finally, Defensive Play can be used to score a Touchdown with a Run + Block + Side Step sequence of Actions. Note that this is a risky endeavor as it depends on the Opposition Player failing their Armor Save.

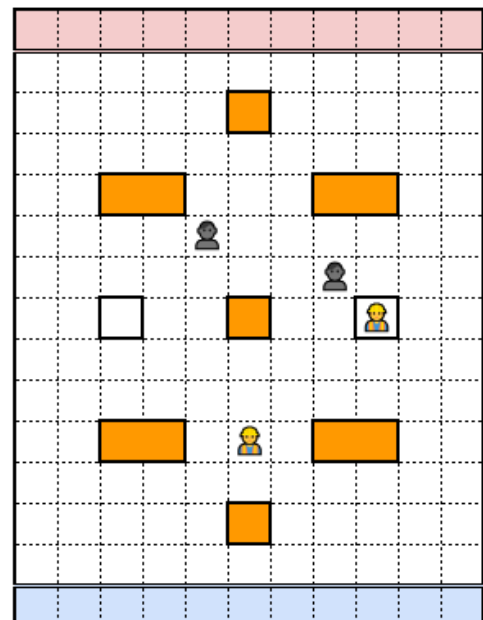


Take Them Down! | 2 pts (x2)

Without Blocks in the game, no one would pay for Cabal Vision, so it is little wonder that TTD plays a central role in Blitz Bowl. There are some teams that go for Knock Downs each and every turn, even if their Coach is calling for something else!

In many game situations, there is a choice on who to Block and with whom to Block. If the ultimate goal is to claim a TTD, it may be worth it to spend more Actions to set up a Block with higher probability of success. For example, in the situation below, we find three options.

1. Block with the Marked Player



2. Make Run then Mark Action with the Open Player, then make an Assisted Block

3. Use the Open Player to make a Run, Mark, and Block against an Obstacle.

Which is the best option?

In the first option, there is a 0.500 probability of Knock Down, though only one Action is burned.

In the second option, there is a 0.750 probability of Knock Down, whereas the third option, though unassisted, yields 0.833 probability of Knock Down!

The math changes if one has a Raw Talent or if there are Block 2 Players or Offensive Specialists in the mix, but in nearly all cases, Blocks made against an obstacle are far superior.

Note that Inspiration, one of the Bonus Plays associated with TTD, has previously been discussed under Show Us A Completion!

Diving Tackle

Diving Tackle allows for a short-term gain in action efficiency at the expense of leaving a Player Prone - thus, in the long run, action efficiency is net neutral. As such, it is one of those Bonus Play cards that is more often discarded if the Coach has too many in their hand at the end of their turn.

However, it can be useful in some instances, such as when an extra Action is needed after the Opposition Coach uses Step Aside to negate a Block attempt.

One of the most annoying sequences in a game is when one uses the Diving Tackle Bonus Play in an attempt to claim a card only to have the Block result in a Miss and the Blocking Player down as Prone.

Break Some Bones! | 3 pts (x2)

BSB is the only Challenge Card that yields three points when claimed, so there is much importance in either claiming the card for oneself or denying it for one's opponent.

Usually, BSB is claimed via a Block Action whereby a Knock Down and failed Armor Save meets the criteria for claiming it. However, keep in mind that a Foul Action Injures with 0.500 probability, though it often results in loss of a Player after being spotted by the referee.

Therefore, when playing against teams with strong Armor, it is generally more favorable to target Prone Players with Foul, whereas when playing against teams with poor Armor, often a Knock Down is all that is needed. This also means that if one is coaching a Bashy team, aim to keep one's Players upright if possible, as any Prone Player is liable to be Fouled.

One great Bonus Play card to use for claiming BSB is Bladed Knuckle Dusters, found on the backside of Show Them How It's Done!, as 6+ Armor saves are not easy to make, even with Nuffle's Blessings. Notes that Rules as written, Throw Team-mate cannot be used to claim BSB.

Note that Step Aside, one of the Bonus Plays associated with BSB, has previously been discussed under Get The Ball!

Blocking Play

Blocking Play and Defensive Play swapped names going from UE to UE2, and now Blocking Play refers to gaining Assisted Blocks for the duration of one's turn.

This means that Blocking Play is most useful for the Dashy teams that have all Block 1 Players, or teams such as Snotling and Ogre with their Insignificant and Titchy Players, respectively.

There isn't much by way of tactics for Blocking Play, as it purely affects dice roll probabilities, but nevertheless Blocking Play should be saved for instances when successful Knock Down is critical.

Tactics: Abilities

No discussion of tactics is complete without diving into specific Player abilities. Abilities come in all forms and flavors - some influence action efficiency, others improve dice probabilities, while others affect gameplay in even more zany ways!

Below are all the Player abilities of Blitz Bowl: Ultimate Edition - Season 2, grouped together by categories.

Abilities are given marks: - if negative, + if minor, ++ if moderate, and +++ if strong.

Action Efficiency Abilities

Defensive (+)	Offensive Specialist (+++)
Enforcer (++)	Safe Hands (+)
Expert Passer (++)	Stand Firm (++)
Hulking Brute (+++)	Violent (++)
Mighty Blow (+)	Woodland Aid (+)

Extra Action Abilities

Catcher's Instincts (++)	Pick-Me-Up (++)
Dump-Off (++)	Regenerate (++)
Frenzied (+++)	Running Pass (++)
Head-Butt (+++)	Wardance (+)
Hit and Run (+)	

Frenzied is the most powerful of the Extra Action abilities, followed by Head-butt.

Gameplay Abilities

Bloodlust (-)	Leap (+++)
Bomber (++)	Lithe Creature (+++)
Elusive (+++)	Minion (+)
Ethereal (++)	Throw Team-mate (++)
Handling Skills (++)	Titchy (-)
Insignificant (-)	War Machine (+++)

Let's dive deeper into specific abilities and their tactical possibilities.

Bloodlust & Minion

These two Player abilities are inextricably tied together as they are unique to the Players of the Vampire team. Bloodlust (-) makes the consequences of a Block quite detrimental for a Vampire Player, while Minion (+) sacrifices a lower-valued Thrall Player instead.

Note that Minion requires the Vampire Team-mate to be adjacent for its effect to work, so this makes strong understanding of Player positioning crucial for a Vampire Coach, as adjacent Team-mates make Opposition Block Actions more likely to result in a Knock Down.

The interesting aspect of Bloodlust is that the more Block dies rolled by the Player, the more likely they will trigger the ability. Block 1 triggers with 0.167 probability, Block 2 triggers with 0.306 probability, while Block 3 triggers with 0.421 probability.

Rules as written, Prone Players are not participants in the game such that Minion would not be able to applied if the Thrall is Prone and an adjacent Vampire triggers Bloodlust.

As the Vampire team does not have any abilities aside from these two, the game can be decided on the results of a single (in)opportune Block.

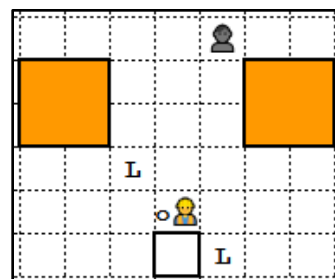
Dump-Off & Safe Hands

Dump-Off (+) and Safe Hands (+) are two abilities that only have effect if the Player has possession of the ball. They work slightly differently in that Dump-Off allows for a free Short Throw Action while Safe Hands allows the Player to decide on the direction for the ball bounce.

Dump-Off offers better tactical flexibility compared with Safe Hands, as one can also make a Hand-off to a Team-mate as well as the Short Throw.

Note that in UE2, Free Up The Ball! is now worded such that these two skills can prevent the Opposition Team from claiming the card, as even if the ballcarrier would lose possession of the ball, the team does not lose possession. To expand, the tactic of placing a Team-mate adjacent to the ball carrier works well for continuing team ball control, though the Team-mate must remain Unmarked.

In the diagram here, the ball carrier is flanked by two Linemen Team-mates such that any Block against them is in the Open Field. Moreover, if the Opposition Player is able to Knock Down the ball carrier, either Dump-Off or Safe Hands would allow for a Hand-off to an Open Team-mate. Thus, Free Up The Ball! is impossible to claim.

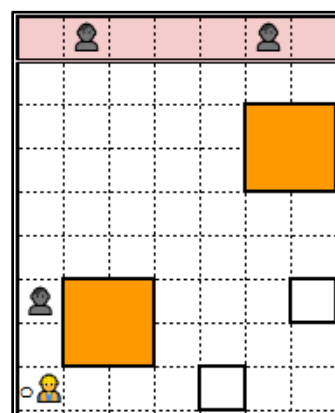


Elusive, Ethereal, Lithe Creature, & Leap

Elusive (+++), Ethereal (++), Lithe Creature (+++), and Leap (+++) are similar abilities in that they allow the Player to make a Run Action adjacent to Opposition Players. As written, Ethereal is the most powerful, but its use on the Necromantic team's Wraith is limited as that Player cannot get a hold of the ball.

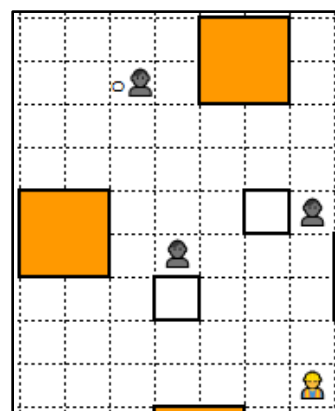
Therefore, of all these abilities, Leap > Elusive > Lithe Creature > Ethereal, but all are strong abilities.

The one advantage of Leap is that it allows for going over an Opposition Player, whether upright or not. For example, in the schematic below, a Move 6 ballcarrier with Leap (Fun Hoppa) would be able to Run (Leap) over the first Opposition Player, then Mark and Side Step for the Touchdown, whereas a Player with Elusive or Lithe Creature would be unable to accomplish this feat.



One powerful way that Elusive, Lithe Creature, and Leap can be used is to scoop up a loose ball that is adjacent to an Open Opposition Player. Keep in mind, however, that a Player with Lithe Creature (i.e. Fox) would then be unable to give up that ball via a Throw/Hand-off!. If one is the Gnome Coach and there is a Free Up The Ball! available for the Opposition team to claim, one option is to launch the Fox with the Treeman to lose the ball.

All of these abilities can be used in an offensive capacity to free up the ball held behind enemy lines as well. In the diagram presented, a regular Player would be unable to reach the ball carrier, but a Player with any one of these abilities can Run through the defensive line to target the Opposition ball carrier.



The Black Orc and Goblin teams have multiple Players with the Elusive ability, making a loose ball easy to scoop up. One useful tactic is to have multiple Goblin Players adjacent to the trapdoor(s) if the Opposition team is threatening to score, as usually the ensuing new ball can be claimed by an Elusive Player via a Run Action.

Two Bonus Play cards that synergize especially well with these abilities are Aggressive Mark and Sprint, found on the backside of Get Moving!. Both of these Bonus Plays effectively extend the ability usage range.

Throw Team-mate also synergizes with Lithe Creature. The Gnome Treeman can simply Toss the Fox towards the pitch center, as even an Inaccurate Pass can allow the Move 7 Fox to Stand Up and Run the ball in for a score.

One last plug for Ethereal - given that the Wraith cannot pick up the ball, an interesting but unreliable tactic is to Run with the Wraith into a Marked ball in effort to repeatedly scatter it to a favorable square.

Expert Passer, Handling Skills, & Running Pass

Expert Passer (++) , Handling Skills (++) , and Running Pass (++) are abilities found on various team Throwers.

Expert Passer differs from the other two skills in that it does not directly affect gameplay, only Throw probabilities. That being said, given that Throw is an inherently risky play, Expert Passer (with Throw 2+ of the Elf Union Thrower) can serve well in risk mitigation, driving down Fumble rate on a Short Throw from 0.167 to 0.028 and Fumble rate on a Long Throw from 0.333 to 0.111. The interesting part of Throw 2+ Players is that they never make Inaccurate Passes, so correspondingly completion rates are 0.972 and 0.889 for Short and Long Throws, respectively. If one needs to make a successful Throw, the Expert Passer is who should be making the toss.

Throw (with Reroll) Tables)

Short Throw (w/ Reroll) Table	Throw Result		
Throw Statistic	Fumble	Inaccurate	Completion
2+	0.028	0.000	0.972
3+	0.056	0.056	0.889
4+	0.083	0.167	0.750
5+	0.111	0.333	0.556
6+	0.139	0.556	0.306

Risky Throw (w/ Reroll) Table	Throw Result		
Throw Statistic	Fumble	Inaccurate	Completion
2+	0.111	0.000	0.889
3+	0.167	0.083	0.750
4+	0.222	0.222	0.556
5+	0.278	0.417	0.306
6+	0.278	0.417	0.306

Handling Skills has been a mainstay Blitz Bowl ability since the first edition of the game, and it is indeed a solid skill to possess. Handling Skills allows the Player to pick up the ball on a Mark and Sidestep Action in addition to the typical Run Action, improving ball control and thereby allowing for more Throwing opportunities.

One common tactic in using Handling Skills is to Mark to pick up a ball adjacent to the Opposition Player, then Side Step and go for a Throw attempt.

Running Pass is a new Player ability introduced to the Noble Thrower. Whereby Handling Skills in effect grants a Free Action, Running Pass directly gives a Free Action to the Player, making it especially useful for claiming Play As A Team! or chaining Challenge Cards to go for the Clean Sweep! (e.g. Run to claim Move The Ball! then Free Short Throw Action for Show Us A Completion!).

There are several teams (Elf Union, Human, Wood Elf) that combine a Throwing ability with a Player that has Catcher's Instincts. This is a strong synergy in the hands of an experienced Blitz Bowl Coach.

Throw Team-Mate

Throw Team-Mate (++) is an ability unique to the Treeman, Ogre, and Troll.

The first thing to mention is that a Throw Team-mate is inherently risky, with a Short Throw resulting in 1/6 probability of Injury and Long Throw resulting in 1/3 probability of Injury. That is, of course, if one is not Throwing at a square occupied by a Player in which case the Thrown Player is either going to be eaten or hauled out on a gurney to the dugout.

A major use of Throw Team-mate is to Throw a ball carrier with the goal of scoring a Touchdown. This can be done directly to an Open square in the end zone, but succeeds on a 5+ (Short Throw) or 6+ (Long Throw). A better option is to allocate three Player Actions to the task. Throw Team-mate on the first Action, so then even if the result is an Inaccurate Throw, the Thrown Player can still Stand Up and Run the loose ball in for a score as they complete the turn.

Throw Team-mate is also useful to claim Show Us A Completion! or Make A Risky Throw!, even if one does not have possession of the ball. Note that the Bonus Play card associated with Make A Risky Throw!, Accurate Throw, can then be used to further the use of this ability.

An excellent tactic is to use Throw Team-mate to claim Play As A Team!. This can be done at the first opportunity of claiming Challenge Cards - no other teams beside those with Throw Team-mate can claim Play As A Team! on their first turn (if the Opposition Coach plays optimally).

Halfling Howitzer is a tactic that involves using Throw Team-mate when one is at the cusp of Emergency Reserves. If the Thrown Player is Injured, then on the next turn the Coach is able to get another Player back to the action, thus creating a seemingly endless supply of "Player ammunition" that could be used to fire at Opposition Players. While Halfling is the team best at this tactic, with their outrageous Emergency Reserves Value of 2, Gnome, Goblin, and Ogre can also make good use of the Halfling Howitzer.

An exceptionally rare tactic allows for Throw Team-mate to be used to score a Touchdown on one's first turn of the game. The Opposition team must have left Open at least one square in their end zone and cannot have possession of the ball.

This tactic is only viable for the Move 6 Goblin of the Goblin team and the Move 7 Fox of the Gnome team. Fox is able to score on any of the eight pitches, while a Goblin is only able to score on Pitch 4 and 6, though technically they could score on any pitch if the Opposition team misplays the ball on Turn 1 of the game.

In rare circumstances - such as when attempting to prevent Break Some Bones!, it may be optimal to Throw Team-mate at another Team-mate, Injuring both in the process but limiting the Opposition team from targeting the poorly Armored Player.

Hit & Run, Frenzied & Headbutt

Hit & Run (+) is a minor ability unique to the Amazon Blitzzer. The ability is tough to use tactically, as the Player cannot make multiple Run Actions in the same turn. One tactic is to Block the Opposition ball carrier and then use Hit & Run to pick up the ensuing loose ball, before Throwing it to safety for ball control.

Hit & Run can also be utilized to score. If the Blitzzer is near the Opposition team's end zone, they can Mark, Block, then use the free Run to great effect. This situation, however, is uncommon.

Frenzied (+++) & Headbutt (+++) are among the best Player abilities in the game. Both yield a Free Action, with Frenzied being stronger in that it only requires the prerequisite of making a Mark Action before taking effect. However, often a Frenzied Player needs to make a Run to get into Marking position, such that gameplay is equivalent in that instance.

Though Frenzied and Headbutt save the Coach a Player Action, do not be tempted to simply aim for Block 1 attempts in the Open Field. It is much more reliable to set up Assisted Blocks or Blocks against an obstacle, as highlighted repeatedly in this guide.

Frenzied is most useful when that Player is located near the center of the pitch, Marking to and fro against Opposition Players and taking advantage of the extra Action.

A similar tactic for scoring can be used with Frenzied/Headbutt as with Defensive Play (see that section for diagram). A ball carrier with either ability can Mark multiple Opposition Players in the end zone, get off the Free Block Action; if the Blocked Opposition Player is Injured, the Player can then make a Side Step for the score.

If an Opposition Player is threatening to score, a good tactic is to make a Reserves Action and then go for Run + Mark (Headbutt) or Mark (Frenzied) to get off the Free Block Action. This sequence is especially good with the Reserves Bonus Play or Emergency Reserves.

One of the sneakiest tactics in the game is to use Intervention and Mark with a Frenzied Player, as then they can make a Free Block Action during the Opposition Coach's turn.

Enforcer, Hulking Brute, Offensive Specialist, & Stand Firm

Enforcer (++) , Hulking Brute (+++) , Offensive Specialist (++) , and Stand Firm (++) are all Bash-related abilities that do not grant Free Actions, in contrast to Frenzied and Headbutt.

Enforcer, as written, is an ability with tradeoffs, forcing Opposition Players to make multiple Armor Saves at expense of a high rate of rolling a Miss or Tackle, thus limiting that Player from making additional Actions that turn (0.556 probability of rolling Miss/Tackle with Block 2 and 0.704 probability of rolling Miss/Tackle with Block 3).

Therefore, if the goal is to claim a card such as Show Them How It's Done!, the Player with Enforcer should make a Block for the final Player Action.

The unique aspect of Enforcer is that all Block results must be resolved, such that the Player can actually make multiple Shoves against the Opposition Player, with the last against an obstacle to force a Knock Down.

Hulking Brute is a spectacular ability that combines an extra potent version of Mighty Blow with the defensive capabilities of Stand Firm. By converting a Tackle or Smash! result into a Kerrunch!, Players with Hulking Brute hit extremely hard, making such Players capable of Injuring even those with the strongest Armor.

Keep in mind that a Tackle result means a Player cannot take additional Player Actions during that turn; a Block 2 Player with Hulking Brute only has 0.028 probability of rolling double-Miss that ends that Player's turn, compared with 0.222 probability of a Block 2 Player without Hulking Brute.

Offensive Specialist is all about reliability, turning the hitting rate of a Block 1 Player into that of a Block 2 Player - 0.750

probability of Knock Down. Moreover, if the Block is Assisted (Block 2), the Knock Down rate is an impressive 0.938. From a tactics perspective, there isn't much that Offensive Specialist offers aside from predictable reliability.

Stand Firm (the defensive side of Hulking Brute) is an often overlooked ability, essentially turning a Block against an obstacle into a Block in the Open field. In other words, a Player with Stand Firm does not need to be fearful of standing adjacent to a Team-mate, an obstacle, or the side of the pitch. Blocks targeting such a Player also result in a Miss half of the time, making them surprisingly capable ballhandlers.

If there is a Show No Fear! card available for the Opposition Coach to claim, a nice tactic is to place a ball-carrying Stand Firm Player onto the trapdoor, making it impossible for the other team to claim the card (only works if it is a single-trapdoor pitch).

War Machine

War Machine (+++) is a Player ability unique to the Pump Wagon of the Snotling team. As written, it is one of the strongest abilities in the game, though its strength is tempered in part due to the Pump Wagon's inability to pick up the ball.

The Pump Wagon is uncommon in several ways: Block 3, no Throw, and Move on a D6. On average, this results in an expected Move of 3.5, a poor value, though War Machine allows it to forgo a Mark to extend its range. The Pump Wagon is most useful in the center of the Action, where it is free to Run from to and fro and hit Opposition Players.

Though War Machine does not allow the Pump Wagon to make an Assisted Block, a Block 3 statistic is already superb and results in a Knock Down with 0.875 probability.

As with the Wraith, the Pump Wagon can be used to scatter an otherwise Marked ball to land in a favorable square.

Insignificant & Titchy

Insignificant (-) and Titchy (-) are the worst of Player abilities. They allow Opposition Players to essentially have Dodge and Defensive Play, respectively against Players with these two skills.

It is difficult to determine which of the two Abilities is worse. Titchy is worse off for the Player's Armor, as Opposition Players can Run up to them directly, while Insignificant makes it easier to Run in and steal a loose ball. However, Titchy also makes defense of the end

zone more challenging - as seen in the discussion on Defensive Play. On the flip side, Insignificant Players are unable to form a defensive line past the end zone and must dedicate at minimum a few Players in defense on the goal line.

One way to decrease the negative positional effects of Titchy is to surround such Players with Ogres, as then Opposition Players cannot as easily Run up to the Gnoblers (keep in mind an Ogre has Hulking Brute, so positioning next to a Gnoblar is not an issue).

One way to decrease the negative positional effects of Insignificant is to spread out these Players to cover a wide range of squares, as Opposition Players still have to end their Run Action as Open Players.

Not only do teams with Insignificant and Titchy Players have a positional disadvantage, there is a Blocking disadvantage as well as Tackles are treated as Misses.

Therefore, a Block only results in Knock Down with 0.333 probability, and only 0.556 probability when Assisted. Whenever possible, try to use alternate Players to make Block Actions (Pump Wagon on Snotling team, or Ogres on the Ogre team).

The good part is that teams with these two Abilities have a large roster size, so the Players are relatively expendable.

Bomber, Mighty Blow, & Violent

Bomber (+), Mighty Blow (+), and Violent (+) are all minor skills that affect Block, with Violent also applicable to Foul as well.

Of these three skills, Bomber changes gameplay in that the Fungus Flinga, the only Player with this ability, can make a Block Action while not Marking an Opposition Player. From a tactical perspective, this could save a Mark Action for purposes of claiming such cards as Free Up The Ball!, Take Them Down!, and Play As A Team!. The downside of this ability is that the Block Action is worse than a normal Block, resulting in a Knock Down with only 0.333 probability.

Mighty Blow simply treats a Smash! result as a Kerrunch!, making an ability that purely affects probability to Injure. Violent is similar in that it affects Block Injury rates with the additional boon in Fouling as well.

Below are the respective Block Tables to compare Normal Block, Mighty Blow, and Violent in the Open Field. Somewhat unexpectedly, Violent is among the best abilities in Injury for strong-Armored (Armor 2+ and Armor 3+) Players, while Mighty Blow only adds modest bumps in Injury Rate.

For Fouling, Violent is successful with 0.583 probability compared with the typical 0.500 Foul rate.

Comparative Block Tables in the Open Field

Normal Block Injury Table	Number of Block Dice		
vs. Armor Statistic	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
2+	0.111	0.176	0.216
3+	0.194	0.301	0.362
4+	0.278	0.426	0.508
5+	0.361	0.551	0.654
6+	0.417	0.625	0.729

Violent Block Injury Table	Number of Block Dice		
vs. Armor Statistic	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
2+	0.259	0.313	N/A
3+	0.329	0.417	
4+	0.398	0.522	
5+	0.468	0.626	
6+	0.514	0.688	

Mighty Blow Block Injury Table	Number of Dice		
vs. Armor Statistic	1 Block	2 Block	3 Block
2+	0.139	0.218	0.263
3+	0.222	0.343	0.409
4+	0.306	0.468	0.555
5+	0.389	0.593	0.701
6+	0.417	0.625	0.729

Catcher's Instincts, Pick-Me-Up, Regenerate, & Wardance

Catcher's Instincts (++) , Pick-Me-Up (+) , Regenerate (++) , and Wardance (+) are a collection of non-Blocking Player abilities that grant Free Actions.

All of these abilities can be useful to help claim Play As A Team! though not Show Them How It's Done! , as the latter does not include Free Actions.

Catcher's Instinct is potent when combined with Handling Skills or another Throwing ability. One tactic is to Run the Player with that ability to scoring range, with the implicit threat to Throw to that Player the following turn and have them make a Free Run for a score. If facing off against a Player with Catcher's Instinct, it is crucial not to allow them a running lane to an Open square in the end zone. Better yet, keep them Marked or Knock them Down Prone, or control the ball, as then the ability is completely nullified.

Given that Catcher's Instinct allows for a Free Run Action, the higher the Player's Move statistic, the more valuable the ability is to them and their team.

Rules as written, the Halfling Catcher cannot make a Free Run if they are successfully Thrown by the Treeman.

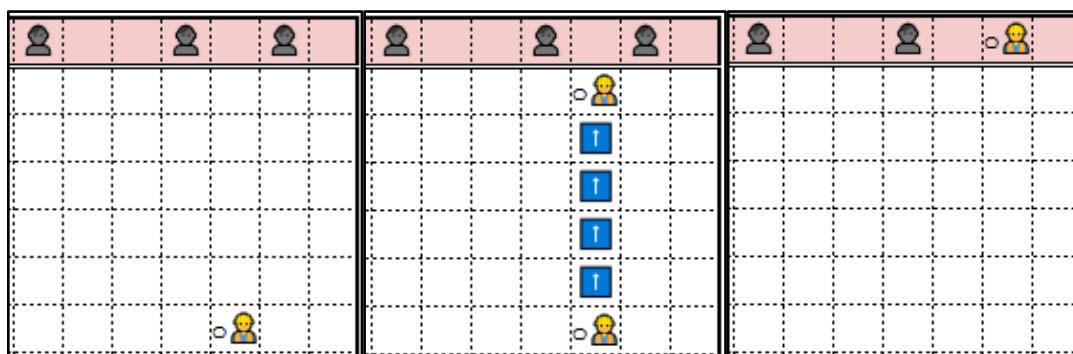
Pick-Me-Up is unique among abilities in that it can actually grant multiple Free Actions, as more than one Prone Team-mate can Stand Up following the Beer Boar's Action. Moreover, the Beer Boar can trigger Pick-Me-Up following any Action it takes. In other words, even a Reserves Action by the Beer Boar can trigger Pick-Me-Up.

Regenerate is found on the Skeleton Players of the Undead team, and it triggers before the first Player Action of the turn. Nonetheless, the Free Action counts towards claiming Play As A Team! . Regenerate is a passive ability that triggers only when the Player is Prone, but it makes targeting Skeletons more daunting for the Opposition Players. It can be worthwhile to use a Raw Talent on a Skeleton after a failed Armor Save, especially if they are well-positioned on the pitch. Diving Tackle is another Bonus Play that is more worthwhile to use on a Player with Regenerate, as they will be upright on one's next turn, while Jump Up is of less use.

Wardance is an ability new to UE2 and found only on the Wardancer of the Wood Elf team. Unfortunately, Wardance is a big step down from the powerful Rush ability found on the UE Wardancer.

That being said, Wardance is useful to disengage the Wardancer from a scrum, and it can also be combined nicely with Defensive Play or be used similarly to Mark multiple Opposition Players in the far end zone in the process of scoring a Touchdown: the Wardancer makes a Run + Mark + Block Action, followed by a Free Side Step (if the Blocked Opposition Player was Injured).

Wardance provides a 4th Player Action for purposes of claiming CHallenge Cards, so it is also an ability that can be used to claim two Show Them How It's Done! Bonus Play cards in one turn.

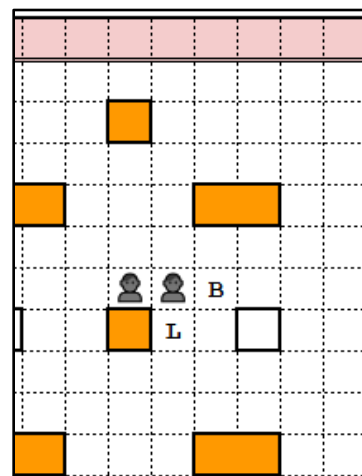


Defensive & Woodland Aid

Defensive (+) and Woodland Aid (+) are two Player abilities introduced in UE2 for the Amazon Blocker and Gnome Beastmaster, respectively. Both limit Assisted Blocks against the Player with the Ability, which is more effective against teams with only Block 1 Players.

Defensive is the stronger ability as adjacent Team-mates may also have benefit as well. However, this generally means that the Team-mate will need to be adjacent to the Amazon Blocker, so they should be positioned in a way that makes it difficult if not impossible to be Blocked into an obstacle, as seen in the schematic where L = Amazon linewoman and B = Amazon Blocker.

Overall, both are minor abilities that affect probabilities to a small extent, but are not gamechangers.



Summary

The goal of this document is to introduce to Coaches of all experience levels just some of the varied strategy and tactics that make Blitz Bowl special.

While there are some guiding principles that have held true, at least in my experience, and are based on pure probabilities, there indeed is no right or wrong way to coach a game of Blitz Bowl. Indeed, those fumbles by Elf Throwers, Kerrunches! by Gnoblar Linemen, and Touchdowns by Treemen show us that the improbable occurs probably more often than one expects, especially when one least expects it. For more documents related to Blitz Bowl analysis, check out the following:

[Blitz Bowl: U2E Automaton \(WIP\)](#)

[Blitz Bowl: UE Team Guide](#)

[Blitz Bowl: Math Edition \(for UE\)](#)

This document was completed on February 1st 2026, but is subject to small changes and edits. The permanent link to the updated document is [found here](#).