

# Gridiron Gazette : Imperial Nobility

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1 Kaldezeit 2522  
Issue #19

Old families making new teams - are the Nobility teams an innovative idea or just a rehash of an old one? You decide!

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*Many of the pictures in this edition are courtesy of Knut\_Rockie*

## Going on crusade

*The (self) righteous attitude of the Bright Crusaders, who want to play the game in the correct way, is not exclusive to the Bretonnians.*

*The Averland Earls are very much cast from the same mould. They are fanatically sticking to the same calling of taking to the pitch with honour and integrity, never cheating. Madness!*

## Elf-like, but not in a good way

*When the Hochland Highborns were founded in 2496, they were to have a lot in common with the Dragon Princes of Ulthuan.*

*Both teams are made up exclusively of members of the highest echelons of their respective societies.*

*Both teams deemed only sides of equal standing were worthy meeting on the field. The Highborns have actually played a handful of games when the opposition were considered acceptable, unlike the Dragons who never made it on to the pitch at all.*

*This pickiness however has cost the Highborns dearly as they never play a whole season of matches and so are frequently near the bottom of the Nobility League.*

# An unmatched rivalry – Bretonnia and the Empire

- By Dolf Ungerhaagen

**Many would argue that politics and sports should never mix. However, in the modern age where massed warfare is all but forgotten, where else can the great leaders compete? The obvious place is the Blood Bowl pitch of course.**

*It is well known that, with the collapse of the NAF, one of the responsibilities the RARG was to enforce team rosters. However, pretty soon rules slipped, and the gateways opened to new and innovative outfits to step forward. One such example of those as the Imperial Nobility teams representing the pomp and splendor of the Empire's finest. When glory on the battlefield is no longer an option, the astrogranite equals arguably an even bigger and better opportunity. In the old days of martial prowess, only your colleagues and peers who survived a great battle could tell of your deeds. In the modern world of magical transmission, countless thousands can see dashing young lords take the ball (and the fight) to the opposition. Who needs a bard to sing tales of your great deeds when poor folk can watch it live or on an endless rerun of highlights shows?*



*Controversially, it's the opinion of the Gazette that in actual fact the Imperial Nobility teams were a little slow on the march. Teams lead by one or two adventurous aristocrats with a handful of sturdy men at arms or yeoman to guard your flanks along with peasants to do all of the dirty work is not new . . . the Bretonnians have been doing it for generations.*

*A lot of Blood Bowl is a marketing exercise, if you proclaim you are different to the 'norm' then it would of course lead to unwanted official interference. Instead, Bretonnia has been using teams full of errant knights and young lords since Blood Bowl first entered the lands of the Lady of the Lake . . . they've just been subtle about it.*

*The astute reader will realise that at the Gazette we already included all of these Bretonnian teams way back in our very first issue. However, as the focus here is on the Imperial Nobility, we will revisit some of these teams and players again as there really are a number of remarkable similarities between what the Empire started doing from 2488 onwards and what Bretonnia had quietly always done. Two of the best known Bretonnian teams are the Bright Crusaders and the Port d'Acquitaine Power. Those two teams in this issue will only get a passing mention as we'll focus on the lesser teams of fair Bretonnia.*

*In terms of team make up, both nations are remarkably similar. Lords and knights lead the way, flanked by their personal guard and with commoners making up the numbers. Where the Bretonnians are steeped in honour and glory, the Empire lords are a more pragmatic lot. In their case at times the end justifies the means, if fielding a large, lumpen Ogre to bash a hole for their Lords to dash to glory through, then why jolly not? Minor differences aside, they both operate in a remarkably similar way. One could ask, what took the Empire so long to catch up?*

# Bogenhafen Barons

- By Gerhardt Schtumpf

**With the advent of the Imperial Nobility came not only new and somewhat exclusive teams but new and exclusive tournaments too such as the Nobility League and the Imperial Invitational. The Barons, as we'll see, have been the most successful of the newcomers.**

2494 - Dietrich Lugendorf is a man with a passion for Blood Bowl. Hailing from a wealthy family, his lineage of rank and power is barely a generation old. Lugendorf inherited vast sums of money his father made selling accidental Ogre insurance to Halflings. It was probably here that his exposure to the game started. He chose the name Barons for his team; the lowest rank of noble was apt for a family who only recently started to mix in such high circles.

Lugendorf is shrewd by nature with his father's business sense. Many young nobles try to manage their own teams and play as well. Rather than commit to such folly, Lugendorf appoints ex-Reavers player Tobias Rheinlich as head coach, someone who spent their formative years schooled in the 'New Order' of Hans Zwimmer and peer to Griff Oberwald, Mighty Zug, Jacob von Altdorf et al.

2497 - The Barons make a steady if unspectacular start to their playing careers. Lugendorf is approached by a group of investors from the east who purchase a 50% share of the club. This injection of cash helps improve facilities, bring in fresh talent and begins a marketing frenzy. This is further helped by the Barons games appearing on cabalvision for the first time - although Lugendorf denies any bribes were involved. This in turn brings in new sponsors and new money as Air Oberwald, McMurty's and Blitzer Best all sign lucrative deals with the team.

Success breeds success. The Barons win the Nobility league for the first time and make their debuts in the Chaos Cup and the Spike Magazine trophy. Their performances in both proves to be mediocre, but their name is now firmly in the spotlight.

2498 - More silverware as they win the Ostland Open. All wins are good, but the team have bigger ambitions and so plans are hatched . . . .

2499 - The coup of the century as the Barons sign Griff Oberwald. Many ask how and why he would sign for such a relatively inexperienced team. Griff stated he wanted a fresh start and some point to an old teammate as head coach and Air Oberwald as sponsors being further factors to lure him in. Dark rumours also indicate that Griff was being blackmailed for something . . . however he always lived a life of scandal in the open. What could be so bad the public wouldn't forgive him?

With Griff in tow, they win the Nobility League again and the Imperial Invitational for the first time.

2500 - Winning the Nobility league for a third time becomes almost routine, but this time the big prize is also theirs. They take home the Blood Bowl itself, defeating the Thunder Valley Greenskins 3-1 in the final. This was no fluke, they beat a host of established teams on the way including the Athelorn Avengers, Grudge Bearers and Chaos All-Stars. The Barons are definitely the team to watch at the turn of the century. Further success rests on the shoulders of talisman Griff Oberwald. Can they keep hold of him or will the freebooting market come calling once more?

## You can Count on it!

*The number of teams with noble titles in their name seems . . . well . . . countless.*

## Imperial Counts

*The Counts were formed after seeing the heroics of noble sons like Dirk Heldmann and Dunkel Hoffnung on the pitch. Their careers were cut short in a legal dispute when a Vampire team also bearing the name 'Counts' took them to court. Before the case could be settled properly it was withdrawn. The Vampires paid the other Counts a visit one night for a bite to eat . . . .*

## Carroburg Counts

*Blood Bowl is about spending your money wisely. What may start out as a pet project is actually a business and many only realise that when it's far too late. The Counts ploughed huge amounts of money into having one of the plushiest stadiums in the Empire that would be the envy of all. The velvet lined chairs, water closets of gold and waiter service at the games smacked of sheer opulence. However, when the team, which lacked the same level of investment, got drubbed game after game, the match day experience was ultimately tainted. As the fans ceased to attend, the money dried up and the team was forced into administration. Now the most luxurious stadium in the old world is simply gathering dust.*

## Wissenland Viscounts

*The Viscounts are another case of unwise investments, but arguably done in the correct spirit. The blue and whites had a stunning debut season, reaching the semi-final of the Nobility League. This encouraged the owners to spend big in search of success, pouring out thousands of crowns on unnecessary equipment and players big on reputation but light on talent. Bankruptcy loomed as they couldn't reproduced the same form, but mysterious Lustrian investors have pulled them back from the brink. Now what . . . ?*

## Character flaws...

*If there's one thing Imperial Nobility players have in common, it's arrogance. . . .*

## Cresswell Cardinals

*Nobles are very prone to petty jealousy and rivalry. Ilyan Vorgeroff was convinced he should be the one in charge of the Cardinals rather than their current owner. To that end he hired an assassin to permanently remove his great rival. Vorgeroff was also a vain creature and this was to be his undoing. Rather than hand the assassin a picture of his intended victim, he accidentally handed him the picture of himself which he always carried.*

*No doubt the assassin was a little surprised . . . but this would be the fastest job of his career. The assassin instantly killed Vorgeroff, job done!*

## Grenzstadt Granddukes

*Keserlich of the Granddukes was instrumental in a win against the Steel-Toof Smashas. Afterwards, in his arrogance, challenged any of the Smashas to a drinking contest. The challenge was accepted by Big Grug the troll who had a keg of the highly acidic Tasty Goblin ale. Keserlich dissolved from the waist down after 5 mouthfuls. That'll teach him and his sense of superiority!*

# Ostermark – the land of bullish nobles!

- By Rusty Hoelle

**Ostermark has always been a region with a fervent love of Blood Bowl but rarely has produced a team to match their passion. The Bulls were to fly the Ostermark banner for many years, but ultimately the team would take a different direction.**

*2481 - The fans of the Ostermark Bulls needed more excitement on the pitch. The human team were boringly predictable in their play, it could at times be effective but lacked the razzmatazz and evisceration that other sides enjoyed. In a bid to spice things up a bit, the Bulls management decided to get in on the secret weapon craze and purchased a new, fangled chainsaw. It found a very happy home in the hands of Bryce Cambuel. He earned his nickname, 'The Slice' in an early game against the Skulls of Katam when he beheaded a minotaur in a single, gore smattering, swing. The Skulls swore their revenge . . . .*

*2484 - The newfound excitement the Bulls presented to their fans lasted a number of seasons but was ultimately short lived. Bryce was to meet a nasty ending at an away game against the Athelorn Avengers. Determined to really cement his fame, Bryce had his eyes set firmly on Jordell Freshbreeze as his next high-profile victim. At the crucial second though he slipped on some wet leaves and as he fell, he neatly removed his own head! It was to set to be on the blooper highlight reel for many years afterwards, shaming Bulls fans and inspiring Bryce in his new career as an undead looney.*

*2488 - A series of calamities saw the Bulls tumble into administration and fold. Firstly, they faced the Skulls of Katam again, only this time with no Bryce to aid their cause. The Skulls hired Grashnak Blackhoof for the game who led the stampede through the Bulls ranks. The irony of the Bulls being gored by a minotaur was not lost on those who survived. The cream of the Bulls lineup died on the field that day, memorials were constructed to Hans 'Safe Hands' Greta and Jager Lightfoot. Team captain Kurt Leitzig made it through the match, but his soul was tainted by the touch of chaos. He would leave the club soon after and take over the captaincy of another Chosen team, the Claws of Chaos.*

*With the team decimated, the collapse of the NAF could not come at a worse time. Without the NAF one of the main revenue streams was cut off from the Bulls. They lacked the funds to rebuild the team and so were forced to close down, one of the premier Blood Bowling franchises in Ostermark looked to be no more.*

*Fate though had other ideas, enter the Hergwig brothers, scions of one of the most illustrious local noble families. The brothers bought what was left of the team with grand ideas of their own. As soon became apparent, each of the brothers had their own ideas and not one unified plan. It wasn't long before petty arguments and sibling rivalry broke out and each brother went their own way. The franchise was ripped into two and suddenly fans had a choice, they could support the Ostermark Dukes or the Ostermark Nobles. As many regions have shown around the world, there is nothing fiercer than a local rivalry. One of the highlights of the Ostermark sporting calendar is now the derby clash when the Dukes take on the Nobles to decide which of the brothers was right in their vision. The outcome doesn't only hold bragging rights for players and fans alike, it also decides which of the two brothers sits at the head of the table at formal, state occasions. Overall the Dukes have been more successful, but the battle for superiority continues.*



# Over in fair Bretonnia . . .

- By Gerhardt Schtumpf

**"Victory through Virtue" was the motto used by Arik Sternright and sums up the attitude of many Bretonnian teams. When Bretonnian outfits play outside of their native lands, victories tend to be much harder to come by. Yes in recent times the Bordeleaux Ravens won the Spike! Magazine trophy in 2502, but you won't find any other major cup with a Bretonnian winner.**

*Gerhardt the Penitent, star Blitzer for the Bright Crusaders, embodies everything that one imagines from a Bretonnian knightly player. The problem is religious extremism is on the rise and Gerhardt takes his noble virtues to the extreme. A former monk of St. Apologia of the Immaculate Piety, he appeared to be the perfect player when he debuted. Scoring 4 touchdowns against the Khazad Steelers, many wondered if finally Bretonnia had found their own Griff. Those hopes were to be dashed when Gerhardt's sense of fair play and justice then kicked in. After scoring against the Iron Tusks he had to be prevented from sawing off his own leg to make the game more balanced. In a similar act of contrition against the Athelorn Avengers he briefly set himself on fire! How do you celebrate a player who insists on playing attached to a bed of nails to make it harder for himself?*

*There is of course a reaction to all of this. Some players simply want to win. They want to see the opposition for what they are, mostly a bunch of blood crazed psychopaths. Not everybody is cut out to be the next Lance Goodfellow who even after being kicked in the head repeatedly insisted on calling the opposition "Jolly nice chaps".*

*In this reaction to the increasing levels of fanaticism, you can see the rise of players like Erik Kantona (see opposite). It's not just the players who are increasingly prepared to turn their back on their heritage to get an edge, it's even happening amongst the officials.*

*Mortimer D'Arthur was one of the most celebrated referees on the circuit. That was until he was outed by Skellig Queem (the same writer as frequently featured here at the Gazette!) for cheating. Referees have long been known to accept all manner of bribes and backhanders to look the other way at the right moment. It's such a common practice, the RARG even have rules in place to govern the size of a bribe. However, the notion that a Bretonnian would stoop to such levels was almost unheard of. While many would expect that of other races, or men from Tilea, Estalia or the Empire . . . but a son of Bretonnia? Mortimer is still involved in the game today, but no longer works as a referee. Instead, he is a freelance fixer who teams hire to deal with troublesome player issues as his solutions can be best described as innovative. Will the purity of Gerhardt continue to hold sway or will the need to compete on a level playing field see more fall from the righteous path?*



## Kicking it with Kantona

*Erik Kantona is in many ways the antithesis of a typical Bretonnian player. Famed for his short temper, it was to get him in trouble a number of times, forcing him from team to team.*

*Originally Kantona was signed by the Bright Crusaders as the Crush. What made him stand out was the way he manhandled Ogres and Minotaurs to get through the Crush and again in the exhibition games of Blitz Bowl afterwards to find a suitable team.*

*He quickly became an important Blitzer for the Crusaders and played for 2 seasons in the AFC Eastern division.*

*However, he was to leave in somewhat acrimonious circumstances. Erik rarely demonstrated the attitude required of a Crusader and he was confronted about this by their board of directors. Reacting angrily, Erik lost his temper and an almighty fight ensued. Throwing a series of drop kicks, Erik broke noses and knocked out teeth before he was restrained and kicked out of the Crusaders for good.*

*Leaving Bretonnia, Erik's life as a freebooter began. He was to end up traveling over Albion and the Empire. Playing a season or two for Leitdorf United he again left in poor circumstances and was signed by their archrivals Middenham United. There Erik found a team where his anger and rage were encouraged and he became an influential player in the lower leagues.*

*Eventually, a Bretonnian team came calling once more, despite the Crusaders efforts to stop him playing in his homeland again. He had a brief spell with Port D'Aquitaine Reavers before hitting the freebooter market once more; his fits of temper and rage preventing him from settling anywhere for long.*



### Who's Who . . . Exclusive is the word

*These are all players who have hit the pitch for Imperial Nobility teams.*

#### Noble Blitzzer

**Name**

Heinrich von Duisgart  
Lietpold Hegunden  
Mikhael Baxoff  
Terry Keserlich

**Team**

\*\* Freebooter \*\*  
Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons  
Grenzstadr Granddukes

**Status**

Alive  
Alive  
Alive  
**Dead** - died in a drinking contest



#### Imperial Thrower

**Name**

Friedrich Herbenhoff  
Ziegvald Reiger

**Team**

Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons

**Status**

Alive  
Alive



#### Imperial Bodyguards

**Name**

Heimlich Klopff  
Jorge Bergen  
Streya Gurgen  
Turgen Beckenheim

**Team**

Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons

**Status**

Alive  
Alive  
Alive  
Alive



#### Imperial Retainer Lineman

**Name**

Dominick Schrunger  
Hanna Drorglich  
Jurgen Breinhoven  
Maria Schergen  
Piotr Reikgurden

**Team**

Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons  
Bogenhafen Barons

**Status**

Alive  
Alive  
Alive  
Alive  
Alive



## Gridiron Gazette - Imperial Nobility

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### Ogre

#### Name

Orgrug Kneecapper

#### Team

Bogenhafen Barons

#### Status

Alive



### Staff

The below are Imperial Nobles who have worked on any team.

#### Name

Dietrich Lugendorf

#### Position

Team Owner

#### Team

Bogenhafen Barons

#### Status

Alive

Ilyan Vorgeroff

Aspiring Owner

No team

**Dead** - assassinated

Lord Driego Koloroff

Team Owner

Persiastadt Princes

Alive

Tobias Rheinlich

Head Coach

Bogenhafen Barons

Alive



### Other 'famous' Imperial Nobles

#### Name

Baltazar Krussenfalt Schweiger III

#### Position

Noble & Spike Editor

#### Status

Alive

Dirk Hoffnung

Child

Alive

Emmanuelle von Liebwitz

Elector Countess

Alive

Fritz

Match Fixer

Alive

Greta Hoffnung

Noble

**Dead** - Killed by a peasant mob

Helgreta Brecher

Noble

**Dead** - Poisoning

Karl Brecher

Noble

**Dead** - went missing in the Grey Mountains

Karl Franz

Emporer

Alive

Klaus

Match Fixer

Alive

Kugel Brecher

Noble

**Dead** - killed by a Bloodletter daemon

Maus Sauerhess

Emporer

**Dead**

Nusse Brecher

Noble

Alive

Rutger Guterfiend

Noble

Alive

Sir Geoffri Prodd

Knight

**Dead** - killed by Glotl Stop



### Bretonnian teams

Averland Earls  
Cresswell Cardinals  
Holzbeck Heralds  
Ostermark Nobles

Bogenhafen Barons  
Grenzstadt Granddukes  
Imperial Counts  
Persiastadt Princes

Carroburg Counts  
Hochland Highborns  
Ostermark Dukes  
Wissenland Viscounts

### Who's Who . . . the Knightly Orders

*These are all players who have hit the pitch for Bretonnian teams.*

#### Bretonnian Blitzer / Knight

Name	Team	Status
Arik Sternright	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Baudwin the Strong	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Kurt Brecher	Bright Crusaders	<b>Dead</b> - hit by lightning bolt
Conrad Knightstandt	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Dirk Gallant	Bright Crusaders	<b>Dead</b> - fell into a pit of lava
Erik Kantona	** Freebooter **	Retired
Gerhardt the Penitent	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Jurgen the Upright	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Jules de Bergerac	** Freebooter **	Retired
Pete 'The Paladin' Lowenhart	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Ulfric Holzfelder	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Ulrich the Virtuous	Bright Crusaders	<b>Dead</b> - Eaten by a Rat Ogre



#### Bretonnian Thrower

Name	Team	Status
Siegfried Gutmann	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Willem Tollet	** Freebooter **	Alive



#### Bretonnian Catcher

Name	Team	Status
Brandan van Sant	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Felix the Chaste	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Guilarme	** Freebooter **	Alive
Robin le Sange	** Freebooter **	Alive
Wolfhart Heldenhof	Bright Crusaders	Alive





### Bretonnian Linemen / Peasants

Name	Team	Status
Anton Rikjers	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Ekerd Honurschine	Bright Crusaders	Dead - fell into a pit of lava
Elegast Goedzial	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Frank le Meat	Bright Crusaders	Retired
Ginola le Ponce	Unknown	Retired
Hans the Doubtful	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Harald Goodstar	Bright Crusaders	Dead - killed by a Genestealer
Jacques Rabelaus	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Johann Riko	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Jorn Puresoul	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Joshua le Grand	** Freebooter **	Alive
Justus the Meek	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Klaus the Forthright	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Lance Goodfellow	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Sister Mary Mister	Bright Crusaders	Dead - killed in a bar fight
Soloman Graves	Bright Crusaders	Alive



### Staff

*The below are Imperial Nobles who have worked on any team.*

Name	Position	Team	Status
Dolph 'The Saint' Gutmann	Head Coach	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Ingrid the Pious	Team Owner	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Kurt Heiliger	Team Owner	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Tomas	Assistant Coach	Bright Crusaders	Alive
Wulfe the Drunkard	Grounds Keeper	Bright Crusaders	Alive



### Officials

Name	Position	Status
Mortimer D'Arthur	Ex-Referee	Retired



### Other 'famous' Bretonnians

Name	Position	Status
Beryl Sweet	Actress	Alive
Celine DeLionne	Singer	Alive
Pierce d'Organ	Spike! Editor	Alive
Sir Leonid d'Quenelles	Knight	Dead - hero of ages past
Sister Bertilda	Runs an orphanage	Alive



### Bretonnian teams

*Bordeleaux Ravens*  
*Bright Crusaders*

*Carcassonne Lancers*  
*Lions of Couronne*

*Port D'Aquitaine Reavers / Power*  
*Team Errant*



## Looking ahead . . . .

*In issue 20 of the Gridiron Gazette (yes I know, 20 issues, crazy huh?) we'll be literally doing the lowdown on one of Blood Bowl's more unlikely combination teams - the Underworld Denizens. What can possibly go wrong?*

*We'll be asking questions like -*

- *Creep into the 'Hallway of Victory' - is there anything in it?*
- *Why do the Dirtbags never leave home . . . ?*
- *When is a troll not a troll . . . ? Hint - when it's a Minotaur of course!*

### Final Fact!

*A lot of Imperial Nobles buy and run Blood Bowl teams to fill in time between lunch and afternoon tea. Others like Lord Driego Koloroff aren't born into a rich family, they are self made men who have scrapped their way to the top. In Koloroff's case, he made his money selling insurance and running his Pest-Be-Gone company. The latter, and his team the Persiastadt Princes are a front for his true business - assassinations! Contracts are signed through Pest-Be-Gone and then the Princes arrange a game near where the target lives.*

