

Gridiron Gazette : Old World Alliance

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This month we step back in time to the very beginnings of Blood Bowl under the steady gaze of Roze-El and trace the history of the Old World Alliance team. Unlike the other new teams which emerged following the collapse of the NAF, the Alliance are more of a reimagining.

INSIDE

Heroes of Law

An original, classic
cocktail of a team

Middenheim Maulers

Ever changing, always
improving

Pop goes the Weasel

Manfred Weasel's grisly
end

Terrible team-mates

Saying the wrong thing to
a Dwarf can be lethal

Who's Who

The full player and staff
directory



It's never too late

Some players never retire, there's always a team or two ready to hire them . . .

Auld Worlde Warlords

Owner and Head Coach Magnus the Piles was a man hell bent on revenge. He had coached several other teams before the Warlords were formed. Each of those teams had performed well until they had played those bully boys, the Chaos All-Stars. Each time Magnus' teams were on the same pitch as the All-Stars they had been slaughtered.

Determined to play the All-Stars at their mixed race own game, Magnus set up an Old World Alliance team, hiring retired players who had played for human, halfling, dwarf and even elf teams. They had their first game in 2499 where they managed to beat the Champions of Death 3-0 in match scheduled at midnight. A promising start, the All-Stars had better beware!

Averland All-Stars

These All-Stars are made up of former players who were too mean, too dumb or too broke to retire! They play on the seniors circuit and are famed for their cantankerous behavior, constantly moaning at the referee and stamping their feet in a foul mood.

An old idea remembered

- By Dolf Ungerhaagen

After the collapse of the NAF, several new teams emerged from the ashes, including the Old World Alliance outfits. However, strictly speaking, it would be more accurate to say Old World Alliance teams re-emerged because in actual fact they pre-date many of the teams already playing the great game.

Creating mixed race teams isn't exactly a new concept in Blood Bowl. One only needs to look at the original Dungeon Bowl teams to see that they were all mixed race. The Underworld Creepers and the Chaos All-Stars pre-date Dungeon Bowl by many decades and are teams who have been the beating heart of the mixed-race experiment. It may however, surprise readers to know that there is one team type who are actually older than all of them . . . a very early version of the Old World Alliance.

When Roze-El was commissioner of the NAF and the rediscovery of the game was in its infancy, the original league he set up had 16 sects or teams in. One of those teams is still playing all these years later - the Dwarf Giants (although they went by a different name then, they were the Illuminated Seers of the Sacred Orb of Nuffle). Another of the initial set of 16, all but forgotten in history now, were the Champions of Law, sometimes called the Heroes.

The Champions were a team with a holy mission - to face evil on the pitch and to defeat it. Their make up was slightly different to what we would see as an Old World Alliance team now, but the same core of players were present. Both modern and old teams were mostly built around a tough spine of Humans and Dwarfs, using the strengths of both races. Today we also see Halflings scampering around on the pitch, dodging the larger players and trying to steal the ball - back then this role belonged to the Elves. The game and the world were different during the early Blood Bowl ages, it wasn't uncommon to see players and teams of unusual races mixed together. In less enlightened times, Half Elves and Half Orcs weren't widely accepted in the homes of either of their ancestors and so they banded together into their own teams. Troglodytes came out of their caves and played Blood Bowl before the great unknown event which has since caused their near extinction. Gnomes put down their tinkering tools and took up gridiron. A different time for all involved.

The Champions only lasted a few seasons and were the first of the original teams to fold and have since been seemingly forgotten. When the NAF began to codify the game after the time of Roze-El, it was very much based upon which races were playing and added value to the game at that point in time. The cross-breed Elves and Orcs fielded very few teams, the Troglodytes were in alarming decline and the Gnomes found the game too brutal. They weren't therefore included in the NAFs official team rosters and nor were the Old World Alliance as we call them today, as the Champions were no longer playing.

Jump forward in time to the collapse of the NAF and the tight strictures around who can play for which teams have mostly fallen away. Halflings suddenly find themselves an asset to human teams. The Old World Nobility, especially in the Empire and across Bretonnia, form their own teams. Large cities, a melting pot for a host of different races and cultures, see new mixed races begin to appear . . . the modern-day version of the Old World Alliance has returned. Let's hope they last a little longer than the original version did. However, if rumours are true, then even the Champions of Law may be about to be resurrected . . . look out for them in a cabal vision show coming soon!

Middenheim Maulers

- By Gerhardt Schtumpf

Cast your mind back dear readers to issue 1 of the Gridiron Gazette where we looked at the history of the Middenheim Marauders. We left them just as the NAF collapsed

We pick up their story again in late 2489 / early 2490. Forced to sell their stadium they drop Middenheim from their name and become a touring team, known simply as The Marauders. This was nothing more than a band aid to cover the gaping wound that their financial crisis had become. Spiraling debt and huge wages crippled the team, even trying to live in reduced circumstances, the end was in sight. The Marauders couldn't win enough small tournaments to make ends meet and so it looked like the once mighty mainstay of premier Blood Bowl was about to vanish forever. They even made the final of the 2491 season Blood Bowl where they lost to the Reikland Reavers. The highlight of the game was the confrontation between Karla von Kill and the ageless Mighty Zug. This boost to her notoriety was enough to convince Karla it was time to move on from the Marauders and so she left to become a freebooter.

Despite the boost their cup run had to their coffers, it still wasn't enough. Enter Johanns von Middenland with a solution. He proposed a merger with his Dwarf team, the Middenland Maulers, which the Marauders had no choice but to accept. A number of older players were shown the door and at some point soon afterwards there was a change in management.

In the following season the newly named Maulers reached the final again. On their way they beat the Dwarf team Bugman's Best in the play offs 7-0, setting a record high score for play-off games. It helped of course that the Best had drunk so much of their own beer they could barely stand. This time in the final they were triumphant; they were back in the big time!



The following season the Maulers rampaged through the early stages of the Blood Bowl tournament again, reaching the semi-finals. They were everyone's favourites to win again but then fell suddenly short against the Evil Gits. Sneakily, the Gits hired the star players from all of the teams the Maulers had beaten on their way to the final, turning the mixed team table against them. It was to be a very one-sided affair, so much so in fact the Maulers refused to play the second half. This loss was to prove the end of Maulers manager Goran Slaver who lost his jobbut not before getting a measure of revenge. The Gits lost the final to the Skavenblight Scramblers thanks in part to Slaver putting laxatives in their half time barley water!

The new coaching appointment was none other than former Marauders captain and fan favourite Uthar Hagg. He immediately began an astonishing run of form which saw the Maulers win the Luccini Open (2494), the Worlds Edge League twice (2495, 2496), the Spike! Trophy (2499) and the Chaos Cup (2500). Success in the Blood Bowl itself still evades them, but with current form it can't be too much longer before they lift the trophy again.

Home at last

When Johanns von Middenland took control of the newly merged Maulers, he bought back the Marauders stadium for the team to play in.

The Karl Fanz arena can seat 83,000 fans and boasts it has one of the oldest Astrogranite pitches in the old world. This sounds impressive, doesn't it? When you look at their crumbling pitch, it's more likely to be plain old granite rather than the fancy new stuff. The first team to get an astrogranite pitch were the Darkside Cowboys and that only happened a little while ago in 2485!

Rookie Mistakes

All teams lose players in games but the Maulers lost 2 potential bright new stars in one match in 2503 against the Gouged Eye.

Jegal Torp

Varag Ghoulcwewer had reconciled with his old team and was back as a freebooter for a game. When Varag had the ball, Jegal was the last line of defense before an almost certain score. Varag blitzed into him, tusks first, huge maw gaping wide. He made such a mess of poor Jegal that the only thing left afterwards recognizable as a body part was two solitary fingers!

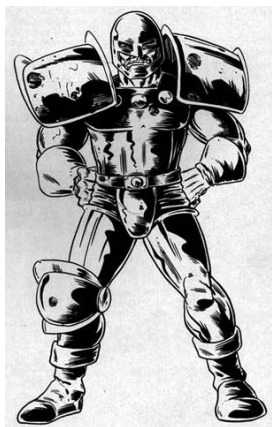
Manfred Weasel

Manfred had made a brilliant start to his career having scored five touchdowns already. This included one in an earlier game against the Gouged Eye.

The Maulers started brilliantly and were already 2-0 to the good. On their next drive, the 'Eye threw a suspiciously loose pass which Manfred picked off easily and sprinted up field for his hat trick. Just before the scoreline he exploded in a fountain of blood, entrails and floppy body parts, showering all nearby. The cunning Orcs had tossed him a bomb!

Like H'resh All-Sorts

The All-Sorts are a team inspired by the original Champions of Law. They don't roster halflings, ogres or treemen. Instead, a typical match fit roster would consist of 8 humans, 4 dwarfs and 3 elves. The tensions in the dressing room tend to be quite high we would imagine!



Nuln Doom-Forgers

The Forgers were formed to brutally defend the academic honour of the Imperial Artillery School. They had been challenged to a match by the Engineering School of Aلدorf and there was no way they were going to let those upstarts from the capital get one over on them.

Nuln is full of dwarfs to work the many forges there. The local dwarfs were just as keen to play as their human counterparts and so the Doom-Forgers are a combined team, sporting the talents of both races.

Short Tempered

- By Rusty Hoelle

Some people forget just how belligerent a dwarf can be. You should never assume that just because a dwarf is on your team, he won't be lethally upset if you happen to say the wrong thing.

Take the coach who tried to get his team an edge by saying that two dwarfs should only count as one player due to their lack of height. It's not clear how many of the dwarfs on the team were involved in his demise or indeed where all of his remains are.

Another case of death by dwarf is the unfortunate demise of Gedring Crumblewood, the Hopeful on the Hochland Mountaineers. Gedring was beaten to death by a dwarf teammate because he joked that dwarfs spent more time caring for their beards than an elf does for his hair! Just asking for trouble, it was the last joke he ever made.

Talking of issues with height, a number of halfling players have flocked to Old World Alliance teams as they are under the mistaken apprehension that they'll be safer there than on a regular halfling team. Statistically how wrong they are! On halfling teams they can blend in with the other halflings so they don't stand out. In an Old World set up they are clearly the weak link. After all, if an opposition blitz is instructed to start punching the opponents, who is he going to pick on? The Ogre? Unlikely. The Treeman? There's even less chance of that. The belligerent ale stinking dwarf blocker? Why risk upsetting him? The small halfling stood by himself? Ah, he'll do nicely!

Going hire and hire

Hiring the right player can be the secret to success in Blood Bowl, hiring the wrong one can lead to disappointment or disaster. The Maulers have a very mixed record in this regard

Mum's the word

In that very bloody game against the Gouged Eye in 2503, the Maulers had made a new signing hours before kick-off, the Ogre Tog'rath'gurn. When faced with the Gouged Eye it seemed like a sensible decision, it would give the Dwarfs on the scrimmage line some much needed support against the Big 'Uns and troll.

After a bright start, the losses started to pile up for the Maulers and they blew a 2-0 lead to be trailing the 'Eye. Just when they needed Tog the most, he suddenly walked off the pitch and out of the stadium. When asked why on his way out, he proclaimed his mum would kill him if he was home late!

Silver Balls

Manfred Mincer started his career at the Reikland Reavers and rose through the ranks quickly to become the team's starting catcher. Then in 2499, an indescribable accident occurred . . . it involved ball bearings and Manfred losing . . . how shall we say . . . sensitive body parts. This puts Manfred out of the game in recovery for a long time, but by 2502 'Silver Balls' as he became known was back playing. It was as if the injury never occurred . . . and it didn't impact his running . . . as Manfred caught more passes than any other human player that year. However, whispered comments and sniggers in the dressing room with furtive glances were too much. Manfred left the Reavers and took his catching talents to the Maulers where he continues to break records.

Who's Who . . . Alliance Assemble!

These are all players who have hit the pitch in a right mish-mash of players on an Old World Alliance team.

Human Blitzer

Name	Team	Status
Max Horsteman	Middenheim Maulrs	Retired



Human Thrower

Name	Team	Status
Hal Kaperino	Middenheim Maulers	Alive



Human Catchers

Name	Team	Status
Anders Spritling	Middenheim Maulers	Alive
Manfred 'Silver Balls' Mincer	Middenheim Maulers	Alive



Human Lineman

Name	Team	Status
Heinz Ostwald	Middenheim Maulers	Alive
Olaf Gantz	Middenheim Maulers	Alive



Dwarf Blocker

Name	Team	Status
Gunnar Ghrondson	Middenheim Maulers	Alive
Ragnir Steinhand	Middenheim Maulers	Alive

Dwarf Blitzer

Name
Oleg Stoutbeard

Team
Middenheim Maulers

Status
Alive



Dwarf Troll Slayer

Name
Snorri Knee-smasher

Team
Middenheim Maulers

Status
Alive



Dwarf Runner

Name
Gimir the Fast

Team
Middenheim Maulers

Status
Alive



Halfling Hopeful

Name
Gedring Crumblewood
Tuckleberry Trews

Team
Hochland Mountaineers
Middenheim Maulers

Status
Dead - beaten to death by a teammate
Alive



Ogre

Name
M'Gor 'N' Graw
Tog'rath'gurn

Team
Middenheim Maulers
Middenheim Maulers

Status
Alive
Alive



Staff

Name	Position	Team	Status
Goran Slaver	Head Coach	Middenheim Maulers	Retired
Johans von Middenland	Owner	Middenheim Maulers	Alive
Magnus the Piles	Owner / Coach	Auld Worlde Warlords	Alive
Uthar Hagg	Head Coach	Middenheim Maulers	Alive



Old World Alliance teams

Auld Worlde Warlords
Averland All-Stars
Bluchheim Berserkers

Champions of Law
Hochland Mountaineers
Hoffenheim Harlequins

Like H'resh All-Sorts
Middenheim Maulers
Nuln Doom-Forgers



Looking ahead

In issue 27 of the Gridiron Gazette we'll be doing another double header and looking at Chaos Dwarf and Khorne teams. There we'll be asking questions like . . .

- *Why would anyone play for the ill-fated Scarface Scavengers . . . ?*
- *Why does the most famous Chaos Dwarf team not have any Chaos Dwarfs on it . . . ?*
- *Can a chainsaw really change your life?*
- *Scyla Anfigrimm - nice guy or misunderstood homicidal manica . . . ?*



Final Fact!

The Hoffenheim Harlequins are a touring team who have won some success and a following on the road. They were originally masons working in Hoffenheim - a city visually stunning but mind-numbingly dull to work in. Blood Bowl via boredom!