

# Gridiron Gazette : Vampires & Tomb Kings

---

15 Vorgeheim 2523  
Issue #29

It's a double header this month as we creep around in the dark to take a peek at Vampire teams. Then we step back in time for a sunny break and tan in far-flung Khemri as we tackle the Tomb Kings.

## INSIDE

---

### The Count

*Midnight star on and off  
the pitch*

---

### Dome and Dusted

*The unfortunate case of  
the Vasey Vamps*

---

### Craggen Counts

*Thirsty for revenge*

---

### Jim Johnson

*The voice of Blood Bowl*

---

### Ramtut III

*Old and angry*

---

### Who's Who

*The full player and staff  
directory*



## Graceful 8

*The 8 were a group of fans who loved the Thirsters focus on the passing game. There is nothing more pleasing than a high arcing pass through the air. They met their demise when taunting some Norsca Rampagers for their baser form of play. The Norse fans heavily outnumbered the Graceful but numerically unwise 8 and the 110 of them started a riot, killing the Vampire supporters.*

## Deadly diet

*Vampire teams now all employ food tasters after a string of mysterious garlic fueled deaths has seen a great many of their number meet a nasty off the pitch.*

*The Duke himself is rumoured to have killed off the original vampires on the Thirsters as they wouldn't give up their decadent ways. They certainly all met a terrible end in 2462 feasting on garlic laden blood.*

*It remains a mystery of who sent the Greycloaked Gargoyles a tray of garlic heavy eclairs which the team greedily consumed and then all exploded rather messily.*

*The Waldenhof Varghulfs were similarly assassinated when their blood oranges were tampered with. Who knew feasting was so dangerous!*

# The Drakfang Thirsters

- By Dolf Ungerhaagen

**Vampires are a breed obsessed with tradition, which is understandable for creatures of the night who are so long lived. Naturally the most gifted players on their pitch, their constant hunger was to hold them back until the Thirsters stepped out of the shadows and began innovating.**

*The Thirsters are coached and owned by Lady Valeria Pavalenca who wasn't afraid to try something new. Realising the red hunger is holding her team back, the Thirsters were the first team to introduce the mid game drinks break. In between plays they would help themselves to 3 or 4 of the opposition as a mid-game snack. It did wonders for their results but was pretty damaging to the opposition and so the NAF soon banned the practice.*

*Not to be outdone, Valeria realized if her team needed mid-game drinks and weren't allowed to use the opposition, there was only one solution. The NAF couldn't complain if the Vampires were to eat (mostly) their own team. With that in mind, thralls were introduced in 2459 and proved to be a huge success. Most drives finished with the vampires on the field - other blood sucking teams soon followed suit.*

*In 2462 the Thirsters hired Luthor von Drakenborg and the rest as they say is history. In his 10-year tenure he led them to 4 trophies and became a household name. He left to pursue a freebooter career in 2472.*

*From that point on, the team were to take a downward spiral. In 2477 they suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Pieboys, a halfling team. It all started to go wrong when Matthias von Marin shattered his canines trying to bite a treeman and things never recovered from there.*

*Worse was to follow in a later match against the Skavenblight Scramblers. The Skaven were playing an unusually sluggish game, seeming to drag their feet at every opportunity. After such a bad run of form the Thirsters were fixated on the win against top tier opposition and so literally took their eye off the clock. The cunning rats were actually delaying things until dawn when the sun rose. At dawn many of the Thirsters exploded as sunlight cascaded over the pitch - they weren't wearing any Sun Protection Fetish (SPF) cream. The team temporarily disbanded as most of their starting lineup were reduced to ash.*

*By the early 2490s, the Thirsters were back in action and growing as a team again. They won the Sylvanian Nighttime League and Crimson Chalice Challenge in quick succession. However, they failed to really make an impact in the majors because they lacked the cutting edge of true star player talent. All of that was to change in 2503 when they re-hired Count Luthor for a season and went on to lift the Blood Bowl itself in imperious fashion. What's next for the Thirsters really depends on the Count. If he sticks around then there's a good chance the Thirsters can expect some silverware. Without him? Who knows . . . .*



# Cunning opposition

- By Gerhardt Schtumpf

**For all of their awesome powers, Vampires as we have seen have a number of weaknesses that it's hard to avoid. Frequently it proves to be their undoing.**

## Arterial Jets

*The Arterial Jets played their Blood Bowl in the Tilean leagues. They failed to win a single game however because opposition teams cooked with so much garlic, the Jets players couldn't go near them!*

## Craggen Counts

*The Craggen Counts are one of the most famous Vampire teams. They played the Blood Bowl in the vampire infested Border Principalities leagues until 2485. At half time while the opposition was feasting on their half time oranges, the Counts systematically worked their way through the crowd. They drank so many fans that it began to impact the gate and so the commissioners were forced to protect their profits and temporarily banned the Counts.*

*In a more recent game against the Elfheim Eagles, star player Count von Clant shape shifted into a fine mist to move up the pitch unhindered. The Eagles wizard conjured a magical wind and blew the mist away, scattering it far and wide; von Clant was never seen again! Not finished, the wizard then focused his attention on Sir Christopher Lear. He was reduced to a pile of ash, caught in a powerful ray of magical sunlight. Luckily Baron Vortias was saved a similar fate having elected to wear sun block 5000 and jet-black shades, he escaped heavily singed! The Eagles kept the wizard well-guarded, beyond the Vampires' grasp. In revenge, the Counts carried away and ate half the Eagles cheerleaders. They then grabbed the Ref and turned him into a Vampire to ensure that any future calls in the second half went their way. It will of course surprise no-one that the Vampires ran out 2-1 winners!*



## Roof-topped Revenge

*The Vasey Vamps were the first Vampire team to have a dome fitted to their stadium, the illustriously named Sylvanian Castle-Stadium of Royston Vasey. The dome was magical in nature and would allow the Vamps to play during the daylight hours. They had contracted out the creation and maintenance of the dome to the wizards of the CBS network (Crystal Ball Sportscasting) in return for rights to show their games and a regular fee.*

*Clearly the Vamps didn't take the financial side of the deal too seriously and went 14 days without making any ongoing payments. It was a classic case of pay your bills or else suffer the consequences. In their next home game against the Orcland Raiders, the CBS network dropped the dome mid-match. In an instant the Vamps imploded, wiping out the team. Sad as their end was, it was a ratings smash for CBS!*

## Fans bite back

*Even the most patient fans can get to a point where they snap. Everyone accepts that teams have peaks and troughs and that you support your team through thick and thin. However, how deep does the trough have to get before fans have had enough?*

*The Streissen Vampires found out in 2473 when they completed their 7<sup>th</sup> winless season in a row. Even worse was that for the last 3 years they were bottom in every category imaginable - most touchdowns, most casualties, best defense, most passes etc. The Vampires gave their team nothing to hold on to. It reached a point therefore where the few fans who were left just couldn't take it anymore. Rather than face another new season, they hunted down all of the players and killed them one by one.*

## Going out with a bang

*The Branislav Bloodsuckers are another team who took their eye off the clock and all exploded as the sun dawned on their game. They did however win the posthumous award for Biggest Post-Match Fireworks Display!*

## Aye Aye Captain!

Not all players are drafted into the pro-leagues following a successful college career. Some like 'Captain' Karina von Riesz find more unusual entry points - in her case it was piracy.

Leading the Shadowed Opal, they were causing all manner of mayhem in the world's busy shipping lanes until one day they boarded a vessel containing the Sea Elf team the Elfenstorm Eels who were in the middle on a practice session on deck. Intrigued, the pirates forestalled the looting and general rampaging to watch. Karina was instantly hooked, using her guile she persuaded several of the Eels players to join her crew and they set off looking for a game.

This began a 6-year voyage of boarding ships and forcing the crew into a game or face certain doom. They even landed the ship and many a tall tale is told of their deep run in the Imperial Cup, ending with Karina killing the Ostermark Nobles head coach. Or that time, short on thralls, she somehow recruited most of the Blitzburg Stealers starting 11.

Eventually Karina sold the ship and team and set out by herself on the freebooter market. Who knows where she will turn up next!

# Count Luthor von Drakenborg

- By Dolf Ungerhaagen

**The Count is undoubtedly a Vampire for all seasons, leaving fans asking if there is anything he can't do. A player, a renowned socialite, a lover of fashion and style icon, he moves in many different circles and is hugely in demand. With all that going on it's a wonder he gets time for the game!**

*The problem with having so many interests is that it's easy to get distracted from your main one . . . playing Blood Bowl.*

*Luthor is a renowned fashion lover and is always, even for a vampire, exceptionally well turned out. This, and the host of sophisticated soirees where he has been known to entertain his guests with renditions of his one hit record, you would expect him to be a little vacuous or vain. Far from it!*

*Luthor makes almost daily appearances on the kids NBC cabal-vision show 'Ses-kill-me Street'. It's his way of giving back a little. On the show he helps his little fans learn to count. They all count with him and try and guess how many virgin necks he will sink his teeth into. When not hungry, Luthor gets the kids to count the number of screams along with him as he terrorises the local peasants.*

*It's understandable though why someone who seems to be seen more with top undead rock band Dead Leopard should be perceived as not taking the game seriously. After all, we're a long way from the 2460s when he made his stunning debut and he was plain old Luthor. Now he has his noble title, millions of devoted fans, an amassed fortune, his own fashion range and is the most in demand socialite in the old world. You can be forgiven for understanding why a nameless cabalvision show missed him off their list of 25 greatest Blood Bowl players. To them, he had taken his eye off the ball as it were.*

*The Duke is of course a cultured man who enjoys the finer things. By the same token, when his ego is bruised, he is more than capable of playing rough and tumble with the deadliest players the game has to offer. The slander of being overlooked due to not winning a major trophy and being too focused on things outside the game was too much to bear. Luthor returned to the Thirsters in 2503 and soon whipped them into a team of championship contenders. Able to resist the urge to feed constantly, nobody knows how he does it, he was at the centre of everything the Thirsters did on their run into the final. Here was a Vampire with a point to prove! In the final they took on Altdorf team put together especially for the big trophy that year, containing humanity's best and boldest, including Griff Oberwald. Who better to get one over on? Plus, earlier Griff had also dismissed the vampire's talents calling him 'Drakenburb'. The flying headbutt that put Griff out the game was sumptuous and with their talisman gone, the Altdorf team crumbled. The Duke had most certainly proved his detractors wrong. With this newfound love of the game, the future is bright . . . well perhaps heavily shaded may be better option for this prince of darkness.*



## Castiron Knights

After the success of the Drakfang Thirsters, the eyes of the Vampire world are casting around to find another team to succeed.

Current favourites to step up are the Castiron Knights. They have proved to be remarkable resilient, unlike most Vampire teams, by entering a number of tournaments and not being kicked out for their eating habits. Instead, they have remained disciplined, actually played tactical Blood Bowl and very nearly won a number of events.

## Using protection

Until relatively recently Vampires had been restricted to just playing in the Sylvanian night time leagues where the matches take place under moon light. That was until the invention of SPF – Sun Protection Fetish. There are different levels of SPF but the high-grade stuff prevents Vampires exploding in an unsightly fireball.

This has allowed Vampires to leave Sylvania and playing during the day time. Will we now see a new dominant race . . . ?

## Jim Johnson – the voice of the game

- By Rusty Hoelle

**Little is known about the first 600 years of Jim Johnson's life, in fact we don't know anything about him before he became the pre-eminent Blood Bowl commentator along with his hulking co-host Bob Bifford**

Jim, like any good Vampire, lurked in the shadows for countless years, following the career of Bob Bifford. There were a number of times when Bob quietly helped steer Jim's career or gave clandestine appearances on the pitch. One year, for example, Bob was signed to the Averland Knights against the Doom Lords. The minotaur Rut Slamdunk was terrorising the Knights who were struggling to contain him. Then in the second half, some unknown figure (well, Jim) filled the sprinklers with blood and turned them on. That sent Slamdunk into a feeding frenzy as he attacked his own team leaving the way clear for Bob and the Averland boys to take the win.

After Bob retired in 2471, he was approached by Jim for what turned into an infamous night out on the town in Altdorf. The kegs of Bugman's, an obscenely large blood sausage and an unseemly run in with a trade delegation from Cathay later, Blood Bowl's greatest bromance was born. Who knows what pact the two of them swore that night, but it's held firm ever since.

The two have become a ubiquitous part of Blood Bowl, as much a part of the game as pitch invasions and referees taking back-handers. They not only commentate on games, but have appeared on countless Blood Bowl related shows such as 'Where are they now' (Where Jim was almost staked by a guest!), 'Half-time Half-hour' and the 'Wide World of Blood'. It was on the latter where Jim actually made a few appearances with a different partner – Jim had been recovering following an incident in the Gouged Eye's dressing room. Nick Nickson stepped in, a presenter very much in the shadow of the dynamic duo.

In 2502 Jim finally did the unthinkable . . . for one drive he became a player! Signing on for the Drakfang Thirsters, Jim made a once in an un-lifetime appearance. Upon stepping onto the pitch, the Thirsters handed him the ball and provided a protective ring of fists and fangs around him. Jim was escorted up the pitch to step over the score line and instantly retire. He got to experience the thrill of the pitch for a very brief moment!

Outside of the game, Jim tends to be a very shady person and keeps a veil of secrecy over his private life. What little we do know is from various gossip papers. Jim has been married a number of times but is currently single. He has dated pretty much the entire Champions of Death cheerleader squad, the old rogue, sometimes more than one at the same time! Jim also claims his favorite drink is Hater-Aid as they use real blood . . . but he may just be saying that as part of a secret sponsorship deal.

It's impossible to imagine the great game without the stat obsessed Vampire. That's just as well, he's technically immortal and so his cultured, clipped tones will continue to haunt the ether waves for countless years to come. Jim Johnson, we salute you!



## Ramtut III & the Match-Ra Tomb Raiders

- By Lastiges Weisschen

**The tale of Ramtut is actually quite a sad one - an eternal pawn in the machinations of others, he has rarely steered his own destiny.**

-1650 - Khemri and Numas were peaceful desert lands of high culture with a deep love of Blood Bowl. Ramtut was a star in the Black Pyramid league while actually alive, winning it many times. History tells us a 'Great Necromancer' led a team which had a terrible season and faced relegation. Rather than let that happen, he brought down a curse that killed all of the people of the lands including Ramtut. However, the Necromancer raised him again to carry on playing Blood Bowl so death was only the beginning of his career.

2456 - Tomb robbers in Khemri find an ancient sarcophagus and steal it. Unable to open it, it still fetches a high price on the black market and is bought and sold several times over the next 8 years.

2464 - The sarcophagus is briefly returned to Khemri and the great lord of undeath, Tomb King Match-Ra. The malignant Khemrian has his own Blood Bowling ambitions and a long-term plan. He hatches a deal with Tomolandry, head coach of the Champions of Death. He would loan the necromancer the sarcophagus (and Ramtut inside) on the basis that Ramtut's onfield victims are themselves shipped back to Khemri. Tomolandry agrees and is able to slip the magical bindings which have kept it long sealed. Ramtut III is awoken from a deep sleep, placed into armour and almost immediately pushed out onto the pitch to begin the clandestine recruitment drive.

2485 - Over time Tomolandry's powers begin to wane and Ramtut is able to gain a measure of control back in his un-life. In an act of rebellion, Ramtut attempts to kill Morg 'n' Thorg, who had been hired to appear for the Champions for a game. Morg survives the encounter and vows never to play for undead teams ever again. It remains a mystery if Ramtut was acting under his own bidding or if he was still being controlled by Tomolandry. It was more likely the former as, after the game, Ramtut was able to negotiate a more satisfactory contract with the necromancer.

2488 - Despite his great size and brute strength, Ramtut was not invulnerable. In a game against the Underworld Creepers, Split Tedoncutter, star skaven blitzer, performs a flying tackle where he literally splits Ramtut into two! Tomolandry is able to save the Mummy and binds him back together again.

2489 - With the collapse of the NAF, Ramtut takes the opportunity to leave the Champions of Death. By this stage the undead have enough players to field several teams and commonly do, entering tournaments all over the old world. Tomolandry realising that his control over Ramtut is gone, reluctantly agrees to release him.

2491 - Alas, any freedom that Ramtut may have had is short lived. The ancient Khemrian Tomb King came calling and Ramtut is held thrall once more. Over the last 30 years scores of bodies have been sent to Khemri, victims of Ramtut on the pitch. Now he returns to the Blood Bowling world, team captain of the Match-Ra Tomb Raiders, ready to carry on smashing knee-caps and records and eager for a match up against the Champions of Death!

## In the name of the gods

What makes Tomb King skeletons stand out against those found shuffling around the old world is the helmets they wear. The ancient Khemrians knew that they needed to enhance their limited players and so called down the aid of the ancient desert gods.

Specially selected skeletons were bound with magical helmets which would link the wearer to the patron god the helmet was dedicated to. Blitz-Ra was the Khemrian god of strength and speed while Thro-Ra the god of accuracy and keen eye-sight.

Eventually the names of the gods became associated with the players positions. Over time the words were corrupted and are the origins of the modern terms we use - Blitzers and Throwers.



## A glimpse into the past

If you visit ancient Numas or Khemri today, you may well find crumbling, sandy stadiums with barely animated skeletal players shuffling around the pitch. Historians believe that they are actually playing out games from millennia past and so we're seeing echoes of games long since finished.

### Who's Who . . . . a nibble of Vampires

*These are all players who have hit the pitch in the dead of the night.*

#### Vampires Blitzers

Name	Team	Status
Artur Appenzeller	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Count Luthor von Drakenborg	** Freebooter **	Alive
Matthias von Marin	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive



#### Vampires Runners

Name	Team	Status
Captain Karina von Reisz	** Freebooter **	Alive
Kristina Petrovna	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Natasha Ilyich	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive



#### Vampires Throwers

Name	Team	Status
Lord Serban Pavalenca	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Raul Cosmesca	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive



#### Vampires – position unknown

Name	Team	Status
Barron Vortias	Craggen Counts	Alive
Big Bad	Black Sabbeths	Dead - killed by Zara the Slayer
Count Luthor von Drakenborg	** Freebooter **	Alive
Count Van Clant	Craggen Counts	Dead - Hit by magical wind
Fang Batwing	*8 Freebooter **	Alive
Grizmund	Arterial Jets	Retired
Orlokk Darkthunder	Hellbound Headbangers	Alive
Sir Christophe Lear	Craggen Counts	Alive

## Gridiron Gazette - Vampires & Tomb Kings

---

### Vargheists

Name	Team	Status
Duke Vladimir von Lorch	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive



### Thralls

Name	Team	Status
Crazy Igor	** Freebooter **	Alive
Floris Leferts	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Gregor Strovnich	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Henry Borque	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Horace Hahn	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Kaleb Mathesius	Sanguien Seekers	Dead
Matthew 'Matty' Staudenmaier	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Niet Tempert	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Piotr Steel	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Sebastien Triego	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive



### Staff

The below are Vampires who have worked on any team.

Name	Position	Team	Status
Big Bad	Head Coach	Black Sabbeths	Dead - Killed by Zara the Slayer
Dr Piotr Klenblud	Blood cleaner	** Freebooter **	Alive
Duke von Castiron	Team Owner	Castiron Knights	Alive
Igor	Apothecary	** Freebooter **	Alive
Lady Cordellia Belladonna	Team Owner	Deadly Nightshades	Alive
Rann Ice	Head Coach	Deathmasques	Alive
Valeria Pavalenca	Head Coach	Drakfang Thirsters	Alive
Viktor Vonescu	Head Coach	Sanguine Seekers	Alive

\* In an alternative universe, totally separate to our own, the Drakfang Thirsters are actually owned and coached by Count Vlad von Drakfang.





## Other 'famous' Vampires

### Name

Black Oak of Surewood  
Graceful 8  
Jim Johnson  
Professor von Greigich

### Position

Treeman  
Fan group  
Blood Bowl Commentator  
College of Death

### Status

Dead - killed by Merlin Olson  
Dead - killed in a riot  
Alive  
Alive

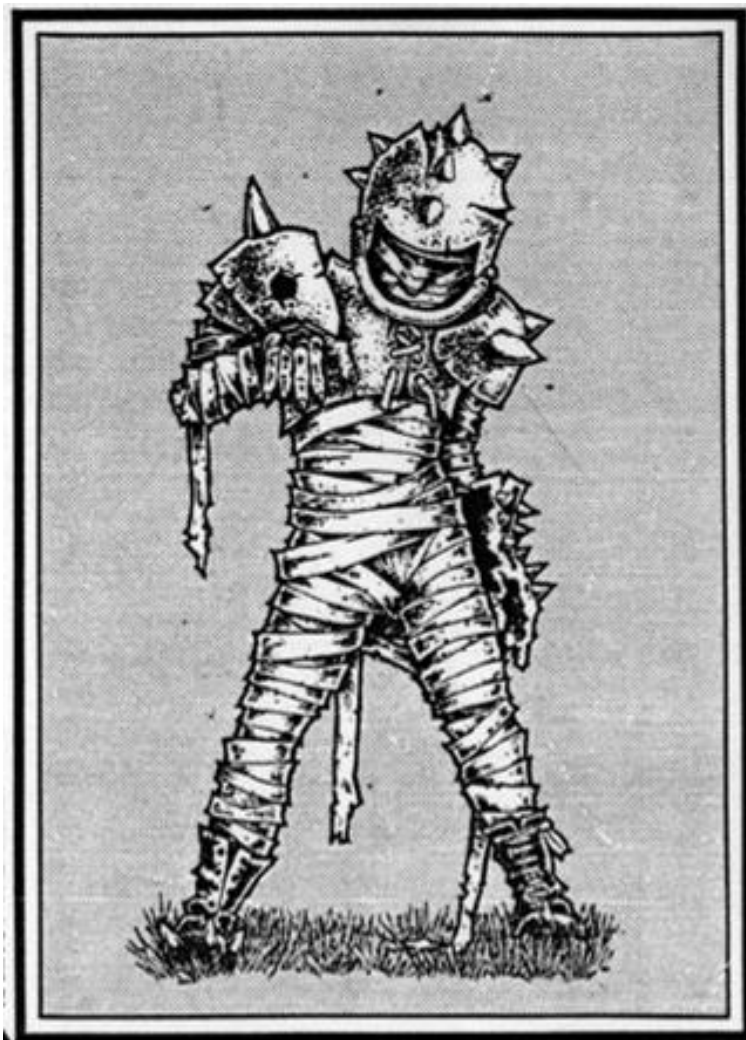


## Vampire teams

Arterial Jets  
Black Sabbaths  
Branislav Bloodsuckers  
Castiron Knights

Craggen Counts  
Crimson Vampires  
Deadly Nightshades  
Drakfang Thirsters

Hellbound Headbangers  
Streissen Vampires  
Sylvain Tempest  
Vasey Vamps



## Who's Who . . . . the ancient and eternal Tomb Kings

*These are all players who have are dune and dusted with the Tomb Kings.*

### Tomb King Players

Name	Position	Team	Status
Ithaca Benoin	Thro-Ra	** Freebooter **	Alive
Setekh	Blitz-Ra	** Freebooter **	Alive
Sinnedbad	Skeleton	** Freebooter **	Alive



### Staff

Name	Position	Team	Status
Igor	Apothecary	** Freebooter **	Alive
Tomb King Match-Ra	Team Owner	Match-Ra Tomb Raiders	Alive



### Tomb King teams

*Desert Kings  
Ka-Sabar Kings*

*Match-Ra Tomb Raiders  
Neter-Khertet*

*Sandshifters*

### Looking ahead

*It's hard to believe but we only have one more issue off the Gazette left. Next month in the 30<sup>th</sup> and final issue we'll be looking at those favoured by the gods themselves - the Chaos Chosen! We'll be asking such questions as . . . .*

- *Which teams has problems with the loo . . . .?*
- *Who is currently dating Zara the Slayer . . . ?*
- *What links a child's playground and a cunning chaos invention . . .?*
- *We review books and Blood Bowl*



### Final Fact

*Lady Cordellia Belladonna was a vampire who struggled for original ideas . . . but she wasn't adverse to stealing one or two. Seeing the success and popularity of the Deadly Nightshades, the all female Dark Elf team she decided to do something similar. So she set up her own all female Vampire team and called them . . . yes you guessed it . . . the Deadly Nightshades!*

*\*\* Please note - a number of pictures used in this issue are courtesy of Knut-Rockie \*\**