
BLOOD BOWL®

★ DUNGEONBOWL ★

By Jervis Johnson

Blood Bowl goes underground! With updated rules, teleporters and exploding chests, this classic variation of Blood Bowl has returned.



Over 10 years ago Jervis Johnson designed a game called Dungeonbowl. The game was a supplement for a previous edition of Blood Bowl, and it proved highly popular – so much so that people still ask him about it at conventions and in letters to this day. What makes this especially surprising is that the game was designed over the course of

about a week, when they decided at the very last minute to include a game with two new plastic Blood Bowl teams GW were releasing at the time. In spite of the rather limited amount of time available to develop the game (or maybe because of it!), the game played surprisingly well. Since then the main set of rules for Blood Bowl has been through several changes, most recently to LRB 5.0, and so I felt that this superb idea needed freshening up to make it compatible with the main rules. It also gave me the chance to modify it slightly to allow it to be played as part of a competitive game, for example in a tournament setting. Ladies and Gentlemen, Orcs, Dwarves and Elves of all nations, I present to you... DUNGEONBOWL 5!!!!

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

DUNGEONBOWL TEAMS

There is plenty of material available concerning the special rules for teams in previous Dungeonbowl rules sets, most notably the last Dungeonbowl rules (Appendix "A") and the old, old Dungeonbowl game which can normally be picked up on eBay. I won't dwell on them here though as Dungeonbowl 5 rules are designed to be used with "standard" Blood Bowl teams. The only difference is that Cheerleaders and Assistant Coaches aren't altogether that useful in the enclosed space of a dungeon and so play no part in the game other than their, erm, 'aesthetics'.

THE COLLEGES OF MAGIC

The Colleges of Magic (proud operators of CabalVision) have been a longstanding promoter of Dungeonbowl games, using the games as they did in order to settle an argument that has kept wizards at loggerheads for years; settling the dispute which of their magical colleges is the most powerful.

Being wizards though they brought a whole load of crazy ideas about how the teams should be made up, teleporter pads, exploding chests, etc. However the recent withdrawal by high profile teams from key games citing "unacceptable risks" (and the collapse of the spin off broadcaster "ICU Digital") has meant the Colleges of Magic has had to rethink its approach to the game in order to try to bring the revenue back in. They have therefore laid down some new guidelines for organisers wishing to hold their own Dungeonbowl games which are more acceptable to the modern day, risk adverse, Blood Bowl teams.

DUNGEON SET-UP

In order to play a game of Dungeonbowl you first need a dungeon. There are several different ways to set up a dungeon; you can use dungeon floor plans, such as Warhammer Quest (the easy way), draw it out on paper (the hard way) or physically build your own dungeon from scratch (the really hard way). Warhammer Quest dungeon floor plans are available from GW Mail Order or alternative plans can be found for sale on eBay. Dungeonbowl teams play in



all kinds of different dungeons, so you can really set up a dungeon in any way you like, within the guidelines given below. A couple of example dungeon set-ups are included at the end which you can copy if you wish, but there is really no need to ever play two games in the same dungeon. When designing your own dungeon both players should build it as a joint effort. The aim is to make an interesting dungeon – remember that this part of it is not a competition!

All dungeons must include an 'end zone' for each team, which must be placed in the dungeon as far apart as possible from each other and with at least 24 squares between them. In addition, all of the corridors in the dungeon must be at least two squares wide, and any doorways are always assumed to have had the doors removed (i.e. they are simply openings). As a general guideline, a dungeon containing approximately 250 to 280 squares will provide a reasonable length game.

TREASURE CHESTS

At the start of the game the ball is hidden in a treasure chest, and the players will obviously have to find it in order to score a touchdown. Unfortunately the chests that don't hold the ball are fitted with a spectacular – though not usually lethal – explosive spell that goes off when the chest is opened. Each dungeon must include 6 Chests. Chest counters are best to represent them, though some people go the extra mile and buy miniature chest models. Five of the counters must have a picture of an explosion on the reverse side and one a picture of a ball. Treasure Chest counters are placed in the dungeon before the game starts. To place them, first arrange all of the counters so that the chest side is showing and shuffle them. Next, either follow a pre-set guide or take turns to place them in the dungeon. A Chest can only be placed in a square that is at least eight squares from an end zone and at least four squares from another Chest. It is important that neither player can tell from the Chest markers which one has the ball.

TELEPORTER PADS

The Teleport Pads (or Teleporters) represent special teleport gates set up by the magicians at the start of the game. You can use them to move players around the dungeon very quickly. Unfortunately you can't be sure where a player will re-appear. Older versions of Teleporters were not quite as reliable as those used today, and it was following the almost wholesale loss of the Karak Zorn Crushers to "teleporter accidents" in the Dungeonbowl Final 2506 that forced the wizards to upgrade the Teleporters used.

Each dungeon must include at least 6 Teleporters, plus 1 extra per team. Again you could use counters for this, or be creative and scratch build your own. Each Teleporter is single sided and uniquely numbered. Teleporters may either be placed following a pre-set guide or players may take it in turns to place them. These may be placed in any empty square you like. In 2 player games it is strongly recommended that each end zone contains a Teleporter.

THE PLAYERS

Finally you can set up your players. Each coach sets up 6 available players of their choice before the game starts. If there are less than 6 players available then all of them are set up for the game starts. Taking turns (randomise who goes first), each coach selects a player from their roster and then either randomly selects an empty Teleporter onto which they place their player or places them in an empty square in their own end zone.

During a game of Dungeonbowl a coach may have any number of players in the dungeon at any one time. In practice, however, a coach may not be able to get all of his players into the dungeon before a touchdown is scored.



STANDARD RULES OF PLAY

Dungeonbowl uses all of the standard Blood Bowl (LRB 5.0) rules, except those noted below:

- The object of the game is to find the ball and get it into the opposing end zone in order to score a touchdown. The first team to get a standing player who is holding the ball into the opposing end zone is the winner
- The turn marker is not used, and that the game is not split into two halves. Play is continuous until a team scores, and that team is the winner!
- Weather is not rolled, instead treat as "Nice". It really doesn't matter what the weather is like when you're 50 feet under solid earth!
- The Kick-Off table is not used as neither team starts with the ball
- Team Wizards are not allowed. Let's face it, with many of the fans being wizards things would quickly get out of hand if they all started casting spells!

DUNGEON SET-UPS

THE END ZONES

THE COUNTERS

Six teleporters numbered one to six.

Six chests

Five explosions on the reverse of five Chest counters.

One ball on the reverse of one Chest counter.

SPECIAL DUNGEONBOWL RULES

Although Dungeonbowl uses many of the standard Blood Bowl rules, there are a couple of amendments unique to playing in an enclosed space underground:

- The skills “Leap” and “Very Long Legs” do not work as normal. Instead they modify the roll for “Jumping Over Things”
- The skill “Leader” will only provide a single reroll (as there are no “halves”). Replace the wording “at least one player with the Leader skill is on the pitch” with “at least one player with the Leader skill is in the dungeon”
- As there are no restarts to the game, secret weapons are instead ejected on the roll of a dice. At the end of each players’ turn, that player rolls 1D6 for each of their players with a Secret Weapon; on the roll of a ‘6’ that player has been spotted by the referee and ejected. Players ejected are treated in the same way as if they had been ejected from a normal game.
- If all other eligible squares are full, players may be pushed back into the wall in the same way as they could be pushed into the crowd in a normal game of Blood Bowl, the only difference being that they remain in the same square as they started. If they are pushed back but not knocked over then make an armour roll for them instead as they are slammed into the rather unforgiving dungeon wall

★★★ *Did you know...*

A simple misunderstanding of the rules marred the exchange matches between the Dungeonbowl team the Blood Axes and the Marauders Blood Bowl team. The first match was a classic game of Blood Bowl, ending with a huge sixteen-nil defeat for the Blood Axes. The Blood Axe team captain complained that the Marauders had cheated by starting with the ball and, by the way, where were all the teleporters?

When the return match took place underground the Marauders lost. Their team captain complained there was no kick-off, no ball and on finding a treasure chest, guarding it against the Blood Axes and finally getting the chest to the surface, it exploded when opened.

THROWING UNDERGROUND

Throwing the football in a dungeon creates a number of unique problems which are covered by the following special rules.

THROWING RESTRICTIONS

Only quick and short passes are allowed when playing underground – the ceiling is too low to attempt longer passes. Obviously the ball cannot be thrown to a player if the red line in the centre of the passing template has to pass through a wall in order to reach him.

WAYWARD BALLS

The ball cannot scatter, bounce or become inaccurate into a wall; if this happens then roll for direction again.

INJURED PLAYERS

Injured players are placed in the appropriate box in the dug-out, as in normal Blood Bowl. However, as Dungeonbowl is only played to a single touchdown, in early matches many coaches complained that their best players didn’t get a chance to return to the dungeon after being injured. What is the point, cried the dismayed wizards, of paying 200,000 gold pieces for a star player if he’s only out there for a couple of minutes? In response to this the magical colleges pooled their resources and came up with a magic item called Ed’e Warrings Magic Sponge, named after its inventor. All Dungeonbowl teams are issued with this extraordinary item. At the start of their turn, a coach may opt to use the sponge to treat an injured player instead of using the dug out Teleporter; moving one player from the KO box to the Reserve box. Sadly the sponge has no effect on players that have been Badly Hurt, Seriously Injured or Killed.



FINDING THE BALL AND OPENING TREASURE CHESTS

A player may open a chest that is in an adjacent square (a square with a chest is classed as occupied). Opening the chest is a free action and can be combined with any other action, though opening a chest will end that player’s movement. Flip the counter over; if it shows the ball, remove the chest and replace with the ball, allowing the player that discovered it to make an unmodified AG roll to snatch the ball as it magically transforms. If they fail the roll then place the ball in the square previously occupied by the chest but do not make a bounce roll. If the chest is trapped it explodes (remove it). All players adjacent to the square the chest was in are automatically knocked over. Make armour rolls as normal for any player knocked over. Note that this will cause a turnover as the player that opened the chest has been knocked down.

LOST BALLS

If the player carrying the ball is ever lost for any reason (for example by falling into molten lava, down a hole, into a pit trap, etc) then the ball will be magically rescued and returned to play. Randomly roll to see which Teleporter the ball is returned to. If there is a player on the Teleporter then they may roll to Catch the ball as normal, otherwise it will bounce from the Teleporter as normal.

TELEPORTERS

TELEPORTING

When a player moves onto a Teleporter, randomly select a new Teleporter to move them to. The player is immediately moved to the Teleporter with the same number. If the number of the new Teleporter is the same number as the Teleporter they are currently on then make an Armour Roll for the player instead. It then 'costs' the player one square of movement to gather their senses once they materialise, and they may then carry on with their move as normal. Players may 'Go For It' in order to recover.

If a player who has teleported ends up being teleported again before the start of the next turn (either theirs or their opponents), the huge strain on his body causes dreadful internal injuries; immediately roll on the injury table immediately to see what happens to the player. This is in addition to any other results.

CHAIN REACTIONS

If a player is teleported to a square already occupied by another player, the player who was originally there is teleported away in a chain reaction. Randomly determine where the second player is teleported to (which may, in turn, cause another chain reaction).

In the unlikely event that the second player is teleported back to the Teleporter where the first player now is, then the first player is teleported off, etc. Remember though that this will mean an armour roll for the second player.

TELEPORTER ACCIDENTS

If a player carrying the ball is on a Teleporter and is removed from the dungeon for any reason then the ball will immediately bounce once from the Teleporter and (if the ball carrier is a member of the active team) cause a turnover

If the ball lands or bounces onto a Teleporter then it is immediately teleported. Randomly generate a Teleporter and place the ball on that Teleporter. Note that this may be the same Teleporter it is already on. If there is a player on the destination Teleporter then they may attempt to Catch the (bouncing) ball, otherwise it will bounce once from the destination Teleporter. Note that balls which teleport never cause chain reactions, never disappear and never stay on empty Teleporters.

DUG-OUT TELEPORTERS

Each teams' dug-out contains a special Teleporter that can be used to move players from the reserves box to the dungeon. At the start of each of their turns a coach may teleport one player from the reserves box to the dungeon. This may either be the Teleporter in their own end zone or a Teleporter at random (the coach decides). A coach does not have to bring on a player if they don't want to (though the post-match interviewer may ask some searching questions if they don't!). Note that you can't teleport players from the dungeon back to the dug-out.

★★★ *Did you know...*

Early games of Dungeonbowl didn't have teleporter pads. This meant there was a tendency for the action to concentrate around doorways, which was entertainingly violent but meant that games often ended in draws after all the doors got blocked with dead and maimed players – something had to be done! Without any other solution springing to mind, the Wizards fell back on the thing they knew best – magic. "Wouldn't it be a good idea," they reasoned, "if the players could teleport around the dungeon. Just think of the tactics they could use." Their knowledge of teleportation, however, was, and still is, severely limited, with a real risk of losing the odd player somewhere in the warp. "Still," they said, "the players won't know if we don't tell them." And, in a remarkable tribute to the bone-headed stupidity of your average Blood Bowl player, they still have not twigged to this day!

OPTIONAL DUNGEON RULES AND TERRAIN

Dungeons are often filled with special types of terrain or obstacle, be it rivers of boiling lava, pits filled with spikes, rickety rope bridges stretching over bottomless chasms, or whatever! If you include such features in your Dungeonbowl dungeon, the following guidelines should help you adjudicate the effect the terrain has on the players. In all circumstances, players must agree before the start of the game which squares are considered holes, precarious and obstacles.

HOLES AND FALLING INTO THINGS

As noted above, dungeons often have things that can really spoil your day if you happen to fall into them. These most commonly include boiling lava, bottomless chasms and pit traps. Now obviously a player won't deliberately fall into such a place, but they can get pushed into them, or fall in by accident (see Jumping Over Things, below). If this happens then roll a D6. On a roll of 1-5 the player is removed from play for the rest of the game but returned at the end unhurt and on a roll of a 6 they suffer a Casualty roll (page 25 of LRB 5.0). Note that no armour roll is required, and that I have deliberately made the chance of anything too nasty fairly low (the player is rescued magically). Loosing a player in this way causes a turnover if the player was a member of the active team. Note: In some namby-pamby dungeons players can fall into non-lethal things, like a pit with no spikes, or a river of water rather than lava (I ask you, what are dungeons coming to these days?!?). If you are unfortunate enough to have such things in your dungeon then players that fall in are automatically removed from play instead of rolling, though it will still result in a turnover if the player was a member of the active team.

JUMPING OVER THINGS

What with all these nasty obstacles getting in the way, players will often be tempted to leap over an obstacle. This is just fine but occasionally they will blow it big time and fall in. Spectators in the crowd, naturally, prefer this second outcome.

A player can jump over an obstacle as part as his move, each "square" of the jump costing a square of movement. Roll a D6 after making the jump, subtracting -1 from the score if there are any enemy tackle zones on the squares being jumped from or to (note that you never get more than a

-1 modifier no matter how many tackle zones are around). If the player adds +1 to the score if they have the skill "Leap" and +1 if they have the skill "Very Long Legs". If the score is greater than the number of squares jumped over then they make it across safely. If the score is less than or equal to the number of squares jumped over, or the dice rolls a '1', the player falls in with the effects described previously. For example, a basic Orc Lineman jumping over a 2 square area will normally require a 3+.

PRECARIOUS POSITIONS

Sometimes a player will find himself in a precarious position, which basically means he is in a square next to something he can fall into. For example, a player crossing a rickety rope bridge is in a precarious position as long as he's on the bridge, and a player standing in a square next to a river of lava is in a similar position. Players in precarious positions must roll D6 before they make a block, or have a block thrown at them, and before they attempt to throw, catch, intercept or pick-up the football. On a roll of '1' the player slips and falls into whatever it is he was standing next to with the effects described above. On a roll of 2-6 the player can carry on with their action as normal.

STATUES, IDOLS, THRONES AND FOUNTAINS

For some reason or another people are always putting things like massive idols (generally with jewelled eyes), fountains, massive thrones, torture racks and such like in dungeons. These have no real effect on the game other than getting in the way. To represent this, a player may not enter a square which has half or more of it covered by part of such an obstacle. The football may be thrown over such squares, but there is a chance it will hit the obstacle; roll a D6 for each such square the red line of the passing template crosses through, starting with the closest to the thrower. On a roll of '1' it hits the obstacle, halting its flight, bouncing once from that square, and causing a turnover.

TIME LIMITS

A "standard" game of Dungeonbowl may be played to a restricted 90 minute time limit, for example in an all-Dungeonbowl tournament. In this case the organisers obviously need to keep games running to a fixed schedule. To do this there are a couple of additional rules specifically designed to ensure this happens. Firstly, after between 35 and 45 minutes of play all chests are simultaneously opened regardless of whether the ball has been found or not. The tournament organiser must clearly announce this, though to ensure that none of the players are "clock watching" the organiser has a 10 minute window in which to keep the players guessing. All chests without the ball will explode as normal. Secondly, after between 65 and 75 minutes of play the players must remove 2 Teleporters at random from the dungeon, plus 2 additional Teleporters per team. The Teleporters nearest to, or in, the end zones cannot be removed, therefore randomise between the remaining. At this point no further players may be teleported into the dungeon. If there is no score after 90 minutes then the game is declared a draw.

OTHER SPECIAL RULES

These rules only cover the tip of a rather large iceberg in dungeon design. If you're playing as part of a league I

highly recommend that you each design dungeons, and come up with your own special rules for devious traps, lurking monsters, multi-level dungeons and such like. You can then control the dungeon while two other players try to play a game of Dungeonbowl in it..!



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