



DARKSIDE COWBOYS

The twisted, degenerate Dark Elf race is infamous for the worship of weird and deviant violence, and Blood Bowl fits into their religious beliefs very well indeed. The Cowboys are a cruel, ultra-violent team, and consequently do very well at the game. The combination of high intelligence, natural grace, degenerate violence and hatred of all living things has helped them to the top several times.

2422 The Overearth (Dark Elf word for the surface world) first learns of the existence of the Darkside Cowboys when the Halfling Pinkfoot Panthers visit them for a friendly match and don't return!

2438 Several teams threaten to boycott the Cowboys when they apply to join the NFC, but the pale-skinned assassins are admitted anyway. Instantly, sordid revelations start to appear about their peculiar habits, such as using small trussed-up Troglodytes as balls to save wear on expensive imported ones. These rumours only seem to heighten the Cowboys' mystique with thrill-starved fans.

2461 The Cowboys play in the very first Blood Bowl, beating the Chaos All-Stars in a very sloppy game (literally – the Cowboys used illegal magic to turn most of the All-Stars' front row into slugs!).

2473 The Cowboys nearly disband after the infamous match against the Kishago Werebears (which lasted for 19 days before being abandoned at 2-2 on

the death of the last player on either side). New NAF rules limiting the time of games come too late to save the Werebears, but the Cowboys manage to reform and rebuild their team under the skilled leadership of Jeremiah Kool. Their drive culminated in glory when they win Blood Bowl XXI, during which Kool set his unbroken passing record.

Present Although Kool retired in 2487, his place was more than filled by Hubris Rakarth, the latest in a long line of glamorous Darkside players. In his first season as team captain Hubris earned immortal fame by leading the Cowboys all the way to the Blood Bowl championships that were to prove to be the last organised by the old NAF league. While the match was in progress the NAF commissioner disappeared, along with the entire NAF treasury and most of the Cowboys cheerleaders! The Cowboys recovered from their loss very quickly – the NAF, unfortunately, did not and went into receivership before the next Blood Bowl championships were held.

Any other team which lost Jeremiah Kool from the active list would surely face a season of retrenchment, but not the Cowboys. Even while Jeremiah was setting all-time Individual Single Game Player Fatalities (3 *fatalities*), and Individual Career Passing (8,198 *paces*) records, not to mention club records for Single Game Passing (298 *paces*) and Season Player Fatalities (12 *fatalities*) – they were grooming his successor. And, sure enough, Hubris Rakarth came good just in time to take over as captain, having set an NAF Individual Season Interceptions record in 2485 along the way (plus club Interceptions Leading to Touchdowns and Tackles That Injured records).

(Former) Conference: NFC

(Former) Division: Central

Team Colours: Blue and Yellow

Symbol: Crescent Moon

Owner: Prince Derren ar-lolovia

Head Coach: Luxen Tuentir

Home Stadium: The Darkside Cavern, Underearth (capacity c.90,000, surface astrogranite)

Players: Dark Elves

Rakarth insists that comparisons are pointless. As a Blitzter, his is a different skill to the long arm of the great Kool. Rakarth likes to play from deep, hence the interceptions. He is, foremost, a defensive player who makes the crowd gasp with shattering tackles to halt breakthroughs or which send Catchers into the fifth tier from the back of the stands. "There's only one way to make the ball come loose in a tackle," he says. "Rip his arms off!"

The Cowboys are a dangerous team with him in the side. They are an even more complete team for the blossoming of Hawthorn Tullaris, who provides more attacking blitz options, and Moravis Curfew, who was taught by Kool himself. Expect to see Curfew and Asperon Thorn connect at least three times a game when the Cowboys are on song.



Are the Cowboys still potential Blood Bowl Champions? They won the last Blood Bowl in 2488, and this squad compares favourably. If they have a weakness, it is that unfortunate losses have caused them to bring some rookies in (remember the sad end to Nathan Greyfire's days as a Catcher when he was squished by the Mjolnir brothers' Double Whammy tackle?). Their Linemen look short of staying power, and Curfew may not have the time to weigh up the throw that Kool once had.



Hubris Rakarth ploughs into an unfortunate Elf thrower.

Even so, I think we have to expect them to be part of the semi-final line-up of any serious new Blood Bowl trophy. Major challengers might be the Warhammerers, Reavers, Champions of Death or the All Stars.

In the very first Blood Bowl, the Cowboys beat the All Stars by turning many of their leading players into slugs, and then insisting that the ground be sprayed with insect killer. However, other shape-change magic led to them being first suspended by the NAF, and then subjected to a barrage of contract killings by jealous rivals. Jeremiah Kool's 'retirement' to the Offensive Magic Co-Ordinator's role is bound to lead to more subtle chicanery. Watch out for some wierdness in the last few games of the regular season as they try out their play-off techniques.

The last word has to come from Hubris Rakarth. As the new glamour boy of the Cowboys, what did he think his chances were, as a Blitzler, in keeping his good looks for as long as Jeremiah Kool? The answer was sharp and to the point – a broken bottle followed by "Better than yours, stupid!". Yep, those Cowboys are ready for the new season!

HUBRIS RAKARTH

Despite his age, Hubris is one of the younger players on the highly experienced – and very successful – Cowboys side (Elves take time to mature). A perfect product of the Darkside Academy in western Underearth, Rakarth is clever, courageous but also an evil and cynical player. Like the rest of his team, he is

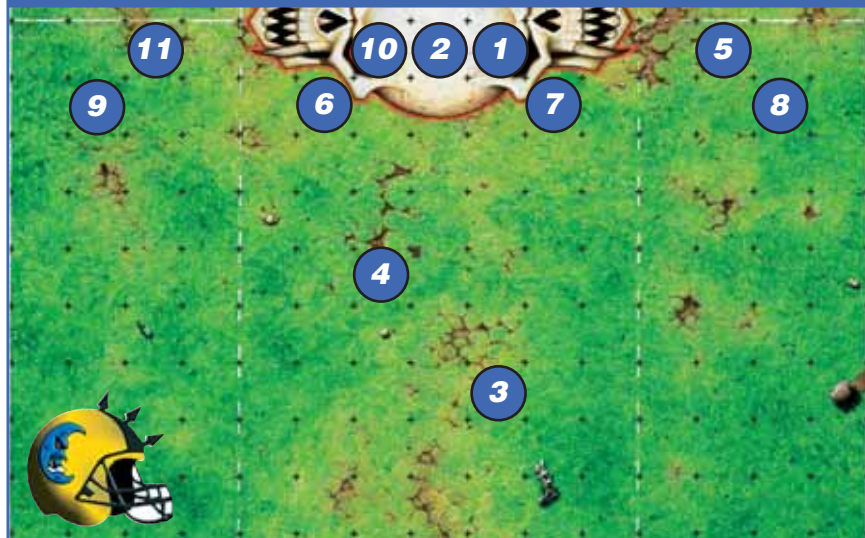
perfectly prepared to cheat and foul to win, a fact that far too many of Darkside's opponents still fail to take into account.

Hubris Rakarth made his debut for the Darkside Cowboys in 2482, after being chosen in the Crush by the Dark Elf team (the other team bidding for him, incredibly, were the Holy Crusaders – he wouldn't have fitted in there!). Under the patronage of then-captain Jeremia Kool, the Flashing Blade, he soon developed into an excellently well-rounded player, able both to run with the ball and to throw with extreme accuracy. There were other strings to his proverbial bow too...

MAGIC

In 2479, the Darkside Cowboys team were the first to illegally use magical spells on the Blood Bowl field. Previous to this date, all magic had been confined to sneaky uses from off the field – sleep spells cast on an opponent's blockers before a vital manoeuvre, plagues of rats inflicted on the substitutes' bench, that sort of thing. But after years of experimentation in the rarefied atmosphere of the Underearth University research labs, the Cowboys perfected small, portable spells to be carried by individual players, which could be discharged at will, zapping a vital player into his constituent atoms with the point of a finger! The spells were banned from championship matches almost immediately, but when the Cowboys feel they can get away with it, they'll often zap someone anyway!

Darkside Cowboys' 'Poison Blade' Offensive Line-up



Hall of Fame

Rokudan Fey

Jerimia 'Flashing Blade' Kool

Team Honours



**Chaos Cup Winners
2491**

**Team of the Year
2481**



**Blood Bowl Winners
2461**

*Blood Bowl I
2481
Blood Bowl XXI
2488
Blood Bowl XXVII*

Cowboy's Starting Eleven

1. **Hubris Rakarth**Captain
2. **Hawthorn Tullaris**Blitzer
3. **Maravis Curfew**Thrower
4. **Ithaca Benoin**.....Thrower
5. **Asperon Thorn**.....Catcher
6. **Autavic Hellebronn** Catcher
7. **Elon Surespite**.....Catcher
8. **Venom of Praetta** Lineman
9. **Isiah Sulphuret**.....Lineman
10. **Odiun Khan**Lineman
11. **Eli Dwarfmalice**Lineman

Substitutes

- Rancour Orvarrin**Lineman
- Malachi Pique**.....Lineman
- Elijah Doom**.....Lineman
- Jeremiah Malice**.....Lineman

Hubris prepares to receive a pass from Ithaca Benoin.



Team Rating

319