

The Rules of

# TATIBALL

As written for Wumpmas  
by Thomas Wolfgang Bouwer

for Tatiana

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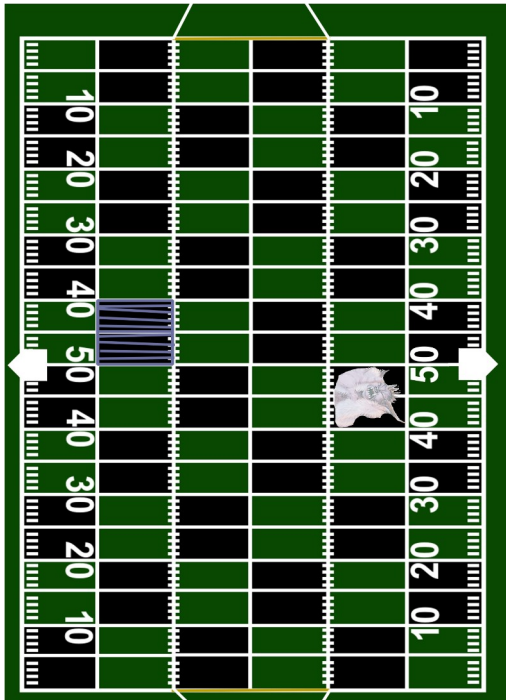


Figure 1: The Tatiball Field

## 1. The Game of Tatiball

The game of Tatiball is a sport based heavily on American Football. It is played between two teams of 13 players with a neutral agent of chaos (The Alaskan Grizzly Bear). The goal is the acquisition of points within a particular time limit. Each team has 6 different roles that must be filled by differing players:

1 Quarterking- who can move the way a King traditionally does in chess, and is the only player on the field allowed to attempt a Forward Pass.

1 Queenback- who can move the traditional way a queen does in chess. The Queenback can also kick a field goal if within 3 spaces of the opponents endzone and carrying the ball.

2 Knightbacks- Who can move the traditional way a Knight does in Chess. Knights can also intercept if the line of a pass moves over a space they occupy.

2 Bishopbacks- who can move the way bishops traditionally can in chess.

1 Designated Hitter- who is positioned at Home plate at the 50 yard line, counterclockwise from your team's endzone with a baseball bat. They can move on the field two spaces in any direction.

6 Linepawns- who cannot intercept the ball, and move the same way a pawn does in chess.

The primary goal of the game is to score points by conquering your opponents territory.

## 2. The History of the game of Tatiball

### I. Friqueball

Tatiball was invented by New Orleans sports maniac Jebediah Frique as “Friqueball” in 1894. An idea he had come up with that the game should be named after whoever was making up the rules. Frique would perish in the first ever game of Friqueball as he immediately ran to the cage to release the Alaskan Grizzly Bear. As such, nobody was ever able to ask him questions about the design of the game, questions such as “why is there a bear on the field?” and “why would you release the bear as the first ever play in the sport?”. His position as commissioner of the game would be taken over by a passerby named Larry Pierce

### II. Pierceball

Pierce would not change a single rule as the game became Pierceball, a controversial decision, as the game’s founder had been torn viciously to pieces by a bear in the very first play of the fledgling sport. The result of this is that players simply did not release the bear very often, and it was more often than not just sort of a nuisance that was also on the field.

Pierce would manage the game for 22 years until 1916, when he retired after having been paid a remarkable salary from a mysterious benefactor who has bankrolled the sport for its entire existence.

### III. Bastardball

Pierce would be succeeded by Cruel Bastardman, a Philadelphia business magnate who was somewhat of an adventurer. Obsessed with fictionalized images of US president Theodore Roosevelt, Bastardman’s only major rule change was that the commissioner himself must capture the Alaskan grizzly bears used in the game. He also implemented the Wump Bowl, the

game’s championship bout played in December, in 1919.

These changes would of course lead to the tragedy of November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1925, wherein a linepaw for the Akrotiri Idol Pigs named Gerald would be turned into stone by a mistaken soviet warlock who had been captured by Bastardman. Although he would hold onto the position for a few more years, Bastardman would eventually be ousted by the team owners in 1929, with that very incident being cited heavily in his dismissal, having only stewarded the game for 13 years.

### IV. Rockefellerball

After Bastardman’s ousting, the sport was inexplicably managed by various different members of the Rockefeller family for the following 26 years. Managing the sport seems to have been mostly a curiosity for the family, who again did very little to change the sport, aside from axing the rule that said the commissioner themselves must capture the game’s signature bear. This was met mostly with ignorance with the owners of the sport, as they were more concerned generally with the country’s various economic troubles and war efforts. The Rockefellers walked away from the game in 1955.

### V. Huntball

Although better known for his efforts in the sport of American Football, the game would next be stewarded by Lamar Hunt, who took over as one of his very first attempts to challenge the market dominance of the NFL. Hunt was reportedly frustrated with the sport saying on multiple occasions “What the hell am I supposed to do with this thing? The game’s a deathtrap and for some reason the money keeps coming in but it’s not what I wanted.”

Hunt would eventually found the American Football league to more directly challenge the NFL, although he would remain

commissioner of Huntball until 1972, when he would walk away saying “I actually forgot I was doing this I guess. Just had a lot on the table, guess sometimes you forget something or other. I forgot Huntball for the better part of I guess fifteen years. Anyway. Bye.”

## VI. Tatiball

Hunt’s exit in 1972 would leave the door open for the game’s only true renaissance into the cultural juggernaut it is today. When Tatiana took over as commissioner in 1972, fae immediately swept in several key changes to the sport that made the game much more enjoyable to watch and less lethal to play.

Firstly, Tati did away with the real live Grizzly Bears. Although now they are replaced by a complex machine intelligence, initially they were replaced with local professional wrestlers.

Secondly, Tati implemented a change to the field- the famous Statue of Gerald in a mirror position to the field’s cage. This has done wonders in making the game more balanced, as both sides of the field now had a large obstacle in the way of play as opposed to before where the side without the bear cage had a clear offensive advantage.

Lastly, Tati implemented by far faer most controversial rules change: she declared that none of the positions would be allowed to carry onto the field the Handguns which had always been commonplace in the game. Although this caused a massive uproar, it also lead to far fewer player fatalities. In 1971, 42 players died playing Huntball. A lower number to be sure, but still an indicative one. The first year of Tatiball, this number dropped to 0. Still, to this day some fans still petition the league to give the players “If not a revolver like in the good old days at least give the quarterking a bow and arrow or something. Please for the love of god we want the bloodsport please”. Tati, who has held the positions of

commissioner for the past 53 years, has held firm on the point that the expected number of player fatalities should be zero, and any other number is “Why are we debating this?”

Tatiana’s stewardship of the game has seen it reach unprecedented levels of popularity. Last year (2024 at time of writing), twenty people showed up to see the Wump Bowl. A number that had sports writers in shock, with one of them saying “twenty people is a record number? How is this game still alive? How is this league still going? It’s been going for almost 150 years?”

On the following page, you will find a listing of the winner of the game’s championship series, played each year in the week before Christmas, ever since the very first Wump bowl was played in 1919.



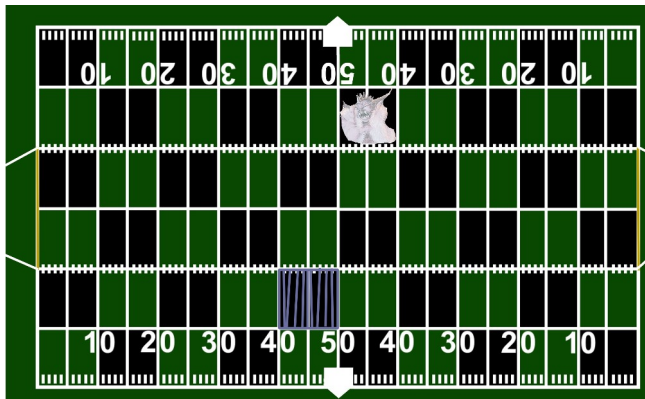
*Figure 2: The famous "Ball" of Tatiball made of*

Year	Winner	Year	Winner
1919	New Orleans Freakboys	1974	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1920	Philadelphia Groomsmen	1975	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1921	London Lions	1976	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1922	Akrotiri Idol Pigs	1977	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1923	Moscow Miners	1978	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1924	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1979	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1925	Akrotiri Idol Pigs	1980	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1926	Cairo Sailors	1981	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1927	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1982	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1928	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1983	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1929	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1984	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1930	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1985	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1931	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1986	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1932	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1987	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1933	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1988	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1934	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	1989	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
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1947	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2002	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1948	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2003	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1949	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2004	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1950	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2005	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1951	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2006	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1952	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2007	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1953	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2008	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1954	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2009	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1955	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2010	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1956	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2011	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1957	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2012	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1958	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2013	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1959	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2014	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1960	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2015	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1961	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2016	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1962	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2017	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1963	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2018	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1964	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2019	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1965	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2020	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1966	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2021	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1967	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2022	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1968	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2023	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1969	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2024	Hatchetfield Nighthawks
1970	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2025	
1971	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2026	
1972	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2027	
1973	Hatchetfield Nighthawks	2028	
		2029	

### 3. The Rules of the game of Tatiball

Firstly, one must set up

#### THE TATIBALL BOARD



The last couple pages of this document should

Next, you set up the PIECES which are chess pieces

Use Pawns for Linepawns

Use Knights for Knightbacks

Use Bishops for Bishopbacks

Use Rooks for Designated Hitter

Use Queen for Queenback

Use King for QuarterKing

Use something else to represent the BEAR

Lastly, find some way to represent the BALL like balling up a post-it note or something

Here is how play is conducted

First, flip a coin to determine who holds the ball to begin with.

The line of scrimmage is begun at that player's 30 line.

Then normal play begins.

A play starts like this:

First, both players line up their linepawns at the line of scrimmage.

The backline can be arranged however the players want, as long as they are behind the pawnline.

Then, starting with the ball carrying team, each player takes turns.

A player can only do two things on their turn:

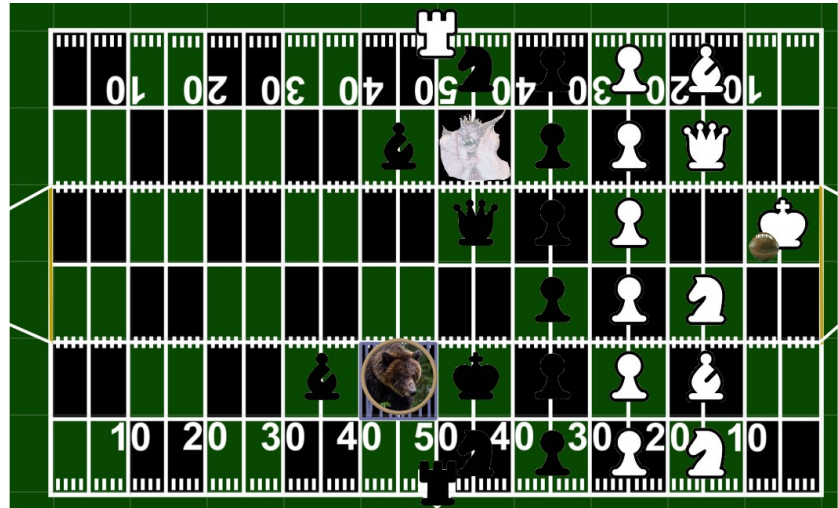


Figure 3: A standard white territory opening, with the white team taking an aggressive bearside attack strategy, and the black team setting up the classic Grisham backbishop defense.

Move a piece, in the way that piece can traditionally move in chess.

or Pass the Ball. Passing rules are very simple: any piece can carry the ball, but most pieces can only pass them laterally (that means not forward, towards the opposing endzone. Only to the side or behind them). The Quarterking can make one forward pass during a play. If a pass move over a space occupied by an opposing Knight, that Knight intercepts the pass.

Only one piece can occupy a space at a given time, and if a piece is moved onto a space with an opposing piece already there, that piece is captured. Some rules are slightly different here than in chess: Firstly, linepawns cannot capture at all, merely hold the line. Secondly, a play ends either when the carrying team scores, or when the ball carrier is captured, in which case the line of scrimmage is redrawn at that space where they were captured. Thirdly, the Bear cannot be

captured, and captures any player they land on. Lastly, all captured pieces are returned to the field at the beginning of the next play.

Lastly, we have the Designated Hitters. When the ball is passed over a square adjacent to Home Plate, the DH *may* attempt to hit the ball into play. They flip a coin. If heads, the ball is hit into play, and the DH may do one of two things. First, attempt to run downfield to the opposing endzone. If they make it, they score 4 points. Second, swing for the fences. They automatically score one point. The DH cannot be captured, move, or capture unless they are running downfield toward the opposing endzone. If the DH hits the ball into play, then they are treated as the ball carrier for the remainder of the play.

Speaking of scoring, there are two other ways of scoring in the game of Tatiball. Firstly, the field goal. A field goal can only be scored by the Queenback, and only when within 3 spaces of the opponent's endzone (past the 30 yard line).

Secondly, the classic Touchdown. This occurs if a ball-carrying piece moves into the endzone, or if a forward pass is successful to a piece in the endzone. This is worth 7 points.

A possession either lasts for 4 plays, until the ball-carrying team scores, or until the ball is intercepted. The game is played over two halves, in which each team gets 4 possessions. When the last possession ends, the winner is declared as the team with the highest score. Overtime rules were abolished by Commissioner Bastardman in 1922, as he could not think of an acceptable replacement to the old rule, in which each team would sponsor a player to represent them in a duel to the death, with the winner taking the win for their team. If the game ends in a tie, then it ends in a tie.

Lastly, let us discuss the Bear. The Bear is locked in a cage on the field at the beginning of play. At any point during the game, a player may free the bear when they move a piece to an adjacent space to the cage. The bear's turn begins right after whichever player freed it's turn.

The Bear can either be controlled by a neutral third party or randomly. If controlled randomly, the bear on its turn immediately captures the nearest piece to it. If multiple pieces are the same distance away, then the players must agree on a way to randomly decide which one the bear captures. The bear does not have movement restrictions, and as stated earlier, cannot be themselves captured. If they end their turn on the cage, a player may relock the cage if they have a piece adjacent to the space, thus removing the bear from play. Players cannot place pieces on the same space as the Bear nor on the space that contains the statue of Gerald.

Lastly, the Commissioner is allowed to change any of the rules of the game at any time for any reason whatsoever.



Figure 4: A game that has deteriorated beyond the point of identifiable attack and defense formations

#### 4. Legal Liabilities

play this shiiiiiiiiiiiiid

if you try to play this in person don't use a real  
grizzly bear or weapons it's a bit

don't sue me okayyyyyyyyyyyyyyy?

