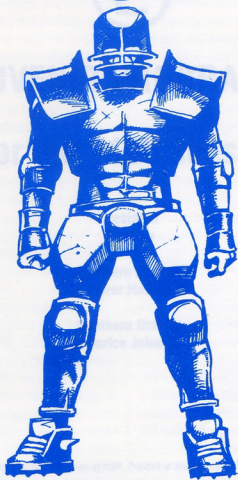


SOUVENIR PROGRAMME

SPEEDBALL™

2



2100 season

SPEEDBALL™

2

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME

for the 2100 season

President
Bim Tap

Northern District
Rover Hostile

Southern District
Maurice Johnson



Designed by Alix McLaren at KDP. Printed at the Ferrotech Laser Labs using Pagemaker HappyPress V9.0. Thanks to Bim, Maurice, Rover and all at Brutal Deluxe for their assistance. Correspondence should be addressed to Bim at Reply Box SL-1.



The President writes...

Welcome, Speedball fans worldwide, to a whole new ball game. It's been two years since the last face was smashed in, the last neck broken, and the last goal scored. We've taken the game apart and rebuilt it: that means new grounds, new rules, new leagues - and even a new name: Speedball 2.

Those of you who've been following the action for the last 80 years are going to find that things have changed around here. The most important point for the supporters concerns the teams: there are now 16 professional squads shared between two divisions of the Speedball League (SL). The names have changed, too - it won't be too long before we're screaming for Revolver, Baroque, Steel Fury and even Brutal Deluxe where once we applauded Perseus and Pavo.

In line with technological advancement, the action on the pitch has been modified. For more information, true devotees should consult the Speedball 2 Coaching Manual, issued by the Speedball Players Association (SPA); but here are just a few concepts to whet your appetites: a double playfield, star bonuses, electrobounce, legalised weaponry... and more!

Finally, Speedball 2 has become more media-friendly than ever before, with a 10-year contract to broadcast every game live worldwide. Inside the new purpose-built stadia giant diamond vision screens will provide instant replays and close-ups of the action.

But don't go thinking these are changes for the worse. We've kept the traditional values of violence, lawlessness and goals - we've just given them a kick in the pants. It's still Speedball - but it's better than ever before!

Bim Tap

Speedball President

THE ORIGINS OF SPEEDBALL

No one knows quite how Speedball began, but the most popular story is this. Exactly a century ago in the year 2000, a teenager was wandering through a crowded, narrow city street (the location varies), and happened to pass by the house of an industrial ball-bearing manufacturer. The manufacturer had brought home some recently crafted steel ball samples to show his wife but, finding that she wasn't home, absent-mindedly left them by an open window. A freak gust of wind dislodged one of the balls, and it fell 20 feet to the street below, striking the young man squarely on the head.

When he came round, he found that a sizeable crowd had gathered. Far from asking if he was all right, these people were pointing their fingers, rolling around, doubling up, and laughing so loudly that some were in tears. Understandably aggrieved and feeling that the world was against him, the teenager picked up the ball and threw it randomly at the group, where it struck a frail old man in the chest. The laughter stopped as everyone turned to see what the old man would do. His head was spinning with pain, he returned the throw wildly, and it missed the youngster by a mile. However, it did hit a third man on the nose, and from there the contest escalated inevitably until almost a hundred people were involved in a free-for-all ball-throwing brawl.

Over the next two hours legs, noses and arms were broken, bodies were bruised and teeth were knocked out; however, everyone later declared (at the police station) that they had had "a good time" and didn't regret any of it. The contest had only finished when the ball disappeared into an open storm drain at one end of the street.

THE PIONEERS

During the next decade rumours of the brawl spread, and the idea of the new 'game' went with them, men and women everywhere ritually re-enacting the contest with increasing sophistication. The early pitches were simply copy-cat narrow streets, with a couple of manholes acting as 'goals'. The fastest players in both teams were often chosen as keepers, and they typically resorted to sitting over the holes to prevent scores. These goalies were among the earliest victims of the street-based sport: many were trampled or severely beaten, some were even squeezed into the manholes and never seen again. It was a rough time - there were no written rules - and crude armour-plating was developed out of necessity: dustbin lids and tin trays served as chest and back plates, motorcycle helmets predated modern armoured headgear, and reinforced wellington boots made adequate leg armour. Teams were generally ten-a-side, with no substitutes allowed: some games ran to a time limit, some until one side sustained crippling injuries - very few featured goals as the main attraction.

There was even a basic form of media coverage - home videos of early contests can still be accessed in selected media archives from as far back as 2008. The name of the new sport varied from place to place, but the tag which caught on was 'Streetball'.

It wasn't long before the sport, without an official governing body, degenerated into gang warfare and an excuse for acts of revenge and territorial gain. After the

infamous Happy Street Massacre in 2009, authorities worldwide clamped down on further participation. Even so, the spirit of competition survived, and illegal teams continued to play in subterranean car parks, on old tennis courts, abandoned all-weather football surfaces and ice hockey pitches. It was a hard game, but it was fair and well organised - and it was popular enough to survive and grow as an underground sport over the next seven years. When governments discovered that the game's appeal and following could not be crushed, they were forced to legalise it.

THE PROFESSIONALS

The SPA was formed in 2018, and set



about conducting a two-year experiment to sort out

the finer points of rules, pitch and ball design, number of players and punitive measures. A couple of ideas from the newly-created Speedball

Referees' Association (SRA)

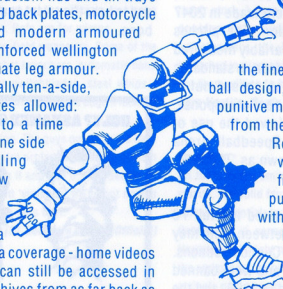
weren't implemented in the final game: the first involved

punishing miscreant players with a 15-second session in a

high-voltage electric chair; the second was an

automatic 20-year prison sentence for

dependents of players who questioned refereeing decisions. (The stringency of the early officials didn't last: by the mid-2040s, referees and timers widely advertised that they were open to bribery and corruption). In the two years before 2020, equipment was also standardised and softened: heavy-



duty knuckledusters were fleshed out into Powergloves similar to those in use today, and spikes were added to the body armour. One of the aspects we now take for granted - players competing on roller skates - wasn't implemented until 2019, when provisional concrete arenas were built. Skates were an instant success: they significantly increased the speed and excitement of the game. In 2020 the game was officially made legal, and Streetball became Speedball. The first minor professional league was established with just five teams - Perseus, Ursa, Castor, Volans and Pavo - and they were accompanied by the first rule-pamphlets (copies of which are now collectors' items). These rules didn't change much in the next eight decades, simply because there were so few of them; however, modifications were made in 2047 to accommodate corruption. The pitches throughout this period invariably measured 160 x 90 x 30 feet - small by today's standards - but in 2039 concrete was phased out in favour of steel, which gave a better response, was more durable and allowed the use of on-pitch bonuses. The Speedball arena became affectionately known as 'The Pit'.

THE PAST AND FUTURE

Only Perseus and Pavo lasted the full 78 years of the old League - between them they won 61 League titles and 49 Cup competitions. Ursa dug their own grave and were banned in 2039, Castor disbanded in 2096, and the entire Volans squad disappeared in 2091 after an accident involving a robo-trolley and a stack of soup tins. However, lowly Mira are generally regarded as being the most unfortunate team in Speedball history: almost their entire team and staff were wiped out in a brutal contest with Perseus in 2069,

and they didn't rejoin the league until 2080. As long as there has been Speedball, there have been spectators. Crowds peaked in the mid 2060s, with well over 160,000 (maximum capacity) at every match. They dwindled to an average of 30,000 by the end of the 2098 season, forcing the SPA and SRA to examine the possibilities of reform. The capacity of every stadium is now 200,000, with media coverage at games taking audiences into the billions. Tickets sell for 10,000 credits (for the top pitch-side seats), down to 500 for the back rows, almost half a mile from the action; giant diamond vision screens ensure that everyone gets a look in. Now entering its second century, Speedball is fitter and meaner than ever before. It will last as long as the fans pay to see heads roll, and to hear the sweet sound of steel crushing bone.

UGLY? ASHAMED OF YOURSELF?



Kepler's Beauty and Confidence Parlour has just opened fifty new branches worldwide. Courses in Self Motivation, Plastic Surgery, Assertiveness & Levitation, How to Cope with Injured Relatives, etc. Personal attention guaranteed. Credit available.

LETTERS

During the extended close season we received tens of thousands of letters from Speedball fans worldwide, including plenty of suggestions on how to improve the game.

Some of them were more helpful than others. A special note to E.M.: though it would indeed make great television, the practice you suggest involving camels and live yoghurt is rightly prohibited by the new rule book. Please send us your address!

Dear Bim,

Just thought you'd like to hear some of my suggestions about how you could improve Speedball in the coming year. Obviously you don't have to take any notice of what I say, but I'm sure that a majority of the fans would agree with my opinions.

Firstly, get rid of the referee. What are we playing here - tiddlywinks? If you shunt out the officials, you get a more competitive game. Refs are for wimps.

Secondly, legalise all on-field weaponry. Some of the latest stuff - pocket rocket launchers, automatic hand machine guns, six-foot switchblades, steel whips - would give the game that unpredictable edge it lacks at present. Think about it.

Lastly, ban armour plating. The guys out there are hard - they don't need any extra protection. Just give them a shirt with a number on it and you'll soon see some real action. The so-called 'violence' we've got now is all a sham: nobody really gets hurt.

Maurice 'Axé' Johnson (SL Southern District Official)

Dear Bim,

Just a note to ask for the fans' help in rooting out Speedball collectors' items.

I currently own a complete set of 1:10 scale Mira dolls, except for the captain himself, Xenon. If anyone out there has Xenon either as a model or in kit form (complete with visor), I am willing to trade it for cash or a first edition copy of the SL rules from 2051.

There are a couple of other items you may be able to help with. The first is an early boardgame version of the sport, complete with 10 metal figures, each with an articulated 'punching' arm; if anyone can supply these in good condition (box not necessary), we can talk serious money. The second item is more a request for repair work. I have a full-size Holo Reflector which doubles as a limited edition mobile robo-bar; unfortunately, the high quality glazing work was scratched in a recent accident. If there's a halo-polisher out there willing to help, give me a call.

Lars Hostile, Reply Box SL-701

Dear Bim,

On the whole, I am satisfied with the game as it now stands. It's solid family entertainment, and it teaches values essential to a properly functioning society (teamwork, a sense of honour, competition, etc). However, if I might make one suggestion, it is this. At the end of each game, any team that has failed to score a single goal should be lined up in their defence zone and hacked to death. Hopefully this (and the action replays, broadcast worldwide) would provide an incentive for other teams to avoid those unnecessary and irksome 'tactical goalless draws'.

Jon X (Brutal Deluxe fan)

INJURY CORNER

One of the paradoxes of Speedball is that whereas everyone loves a crunching tackle, no one likes an injured player: he's a burden on the team, on the medical staff and on the patience of the crowd. By 2045, all Speedballers had life insurance included in their contracts; it's now an unwritten rule that if a player goes in for a challenge, he's aiming to kill or be killed. As a result, most of the following records were established after 2045.

MOST DEATHS IN A MATCH: 7 (the infamous Perseus vs Mira grudge match, 2069). The tally consisted of four Mira team members (most of them disembowelled), the Mira team manager (broken neck) and two irate members of the crowd who thought they could tackle Kepler. They couldn't.

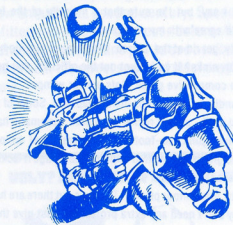
MOST VIOLENT TACKLE EVER: (awarded by the Viewers and Listener's Association): Kepler on Xenon, in the same Perseus-Mira contest. Half of Xenon was removed with a shovel, the other half has still to be found (it's thought to be lining the ventilation ducts in the new Brutal Deluxe stadium).

MOST VIOLENT PLAYER: Copernicus (captain, Castor Reserves 2066-70). Copernicus was known as the 'Iron Man' because of his habit of using iron bars to club opponents when the referees' backs were turned. He was eventually discovered in 2070 attempting to stun his own goalkeeper; he was subsequently jailed for life (minimum), taking into account 170 other offences.

MOST BANNED TEAM: Ursa. In 2039, after

a string of crimes which included greasing their Powergloves, torturing referees and moving the goalposts, Ursa were finally banned from the SL for 200 years.

MOST INJURED PLAYER: 'No Legs' Brahe, who played six matches in ten seasons for Castor, from 2051-60. He was injured in every single game, suffering two broken collar bones, a smashed skull, a bad back, a twisted arm, a disembowelling (which he survived due to swift medical aid), a sore finger, and a double on-field amputation (which prematurely ended his career).



GOAL-DEN MOMENTS

At the end of the day, ramming the ball home is what it's all about. It doesn't matter how they go in: off the keeper, thrown backwards through your legs or via an opponent's alimentary canal: it's the team that scores most before full time that takes home the prize, and no mistake. If the managers have done their jobs, goalmouth incident is guaranteed at both ends - and, when all's said and done, that's Speedball. Here are some all-time goalscoring records (for the old-style game).



MOST GOALS SCORED IN A GAME: 92 (Pavo 89-3 Mira, 2090). It wasn't until a public enquiry later in the same week that the reason for the excessive scoreline was revealed: not only had the timer been bribed, he'd also been drugged and parcelled to an off-world colony, where he turned up two weeks later, considerably annoyed. The game was only ended when an irate driver waiting outside for one of the fans beeped his car horn - which the players took to be the signal for full time. Since there was no rule to say otherwise, the score was allowed to stand.

MOST OWN GOALS SCORED IN A GAME: 6 (Volans 0-6 Ursa, 2036). All six goals were scored by the Volans goalkeeper, Dummkopf: every time he received the ball, he threw it into his own goal. After two minutes, his own players stopped passing the ball to him

- however, it wasn't until full time that the truth was revealed: he'd been drugged prior to the match by the Ursa team coach, the substance inducing a habitual nervous tick in his right (catching) arm. Unfortunately, it's a condition from which he still suffers.

MOST GOALS SCORED (LEGALLY) BY A SINGLE PLAYER: 31 (Dorado 30-34 Ursa, 2029). In a desperate attempt to save a Cup tie with his team 30-3 down, Ursa's captain, Gastro ('Big Mouth' to his friends) swallowed the ball and simply walked into Dorado's goal 31 times, the scores being registered by the electronic equipment. After a swift post-match operation Gastro was hailed as Ursa's Player of the Year. The Law was subsequently changed, and now states that all Speedball players must hold the ball in view of at least one of the referees.

ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT

Speedball equipment isn't just a matter of enhancing your own power, it's a question of survival: over the years, the best players have been the ones who attacked first. These five items (outlawed by the old game) were the most powerful that black market money could buy.

THE ATTRACTOR

Secreted into the lining of the Powerglove, this handy powerful magnet allowed players to hang onto the ball even when heavily tackled. Banned after a player's arm was ripped off by a frustrated opponent.

ACID PAK

Acid is a perennial Speedball favourite. Because of their small size and convenient flexible packaging, A-Paks could be hidden anywhere. They were often used to create holes in the playing surface to trip opponents; however, the Referees' Association clamped down when acid was used against Speedballers themselves.

SPIKES

Six-inch steel knee spikes, powered by a motor attached to the player's personal PSU and activated by a switch in the Powerglove, were often used to 'dissuade' opponents from tackling. Outlawed after the incident involving 'No Legs' Brahe.

THE INQUISITOR

Although it only appeared for six months before being banned, the Inquisitor proved

a great hit both with players and crowd alike. It was an automatic portable buzz-saw attached to the thigh armour: a simple button press withdrew it from the holster and powered it up ready for use. A safer version is currently being manufactured.

DRUG DARTS

One of the most advanced bio-technological sports weapons to appear, the GiftCo Drug Dart was activated and directed by brain waves. It came as a helmet-based unit, consisting of electrodes, ten darts and a malleable brain interface. It was banned when one of its users gave out the wrong signals and injected himself with all ten darts. He is now a famous poet and dramatist.

THE SPEEDBALL 2 COACHING MANUAL

is available NOW for a mere 10,000 credits (free to SL members and their dependents).
Features: full illustrations, explanations, computer-generated action shots.
Payment by bar code or credit download accepted.

ARE YOU A QUALIFIED DOCTOR?

No? Then you could become a Speedball 2 medic. If you have any familiarity with RoboDoc liaison techniques, OR you can stitch a player's face/thighs/stomach within ten seconds, you're the person we're looking for. Apply in joined-up writing to Maurice, Reply Box SL-666.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

One of the most popular questions we're asked is this: What do Speedballers do when they retire? As a curtain-raiser to the coming season, we thought we'd take a look at what the stars of yesteryear are doing today. The three players you most wanted to know about were (in reverse order):

TYCHO (Vela)



After leading Vela to two SL championships (2055 and 2069), as well as a pair of knockout runners-up spots (2053 and 2066), Tycho retired in 2071 at the age of 39. He passed through a variety of jobs including part-time chicken sexer, bouncer and potter's wheel manufacturer, before setting up his own Speedball Souvenir and Sports Shop (Tycho's Place). His range includes the latest in banned weaponry (Spinickler and FaceCutta knives a speciality) plus a selection of fake Blood 'n' Tooth capsules, squirty 'Kepler-mask' faces, and four varieties of 'HappyRef' palm-held electric shock devices for officials.

KEPLER (Perseus)

The mystery man in the titanium mask was also the sport's most successful team captain, leading Perseus to nine knockout victories and eleven SL titles (including five consecutively from 2057-61). Often thought to be an android because of a reluctance to remove his disguise, he retired early (and bitterly) in 2069. However, few people know the truth: Kepler is a chronically shy person with poor eyesight and an unnaturally high voice, who has led a miserable life due to congenital ugliness. He now runs a beauty and confidence parlour, with modest but profitable sidelines in flower arranging and caring for small animals.



BROD (Tucana)

Brod was Tucana's most revered captain, even though he only won one knockout title in 2059. One of the league's smaller players, he nonetheless commanded great respect, not least for his on-field humour and sense of fair play. However, after his retirement in 2077 he established a worldwide arms corporation, dealing mainly in chemical, genetic and nuclear weaponry. He was arrested for smuggling in 2096, and is currently serving a 150-year prison sentence.



ADVANCED TACTICS

A new game requires new playing techniques. To help you, the fans, understand more about the on-field strategies you'll be seeing in the coming season, we asked the Brutal Deluxe coach for advice on Speedball 2's tactical side. New team managers take note! 'Deluxe won't be the only team with a lot to prove in 2100: the new equipment, weaponry, gym facilities and points system will be a shock to all the traditionalists. This is basically what I'll be saying to our new team manager: we're determined to make Brutal Deluxe the first name on the new league and cup trophies.

MANAGEMENT

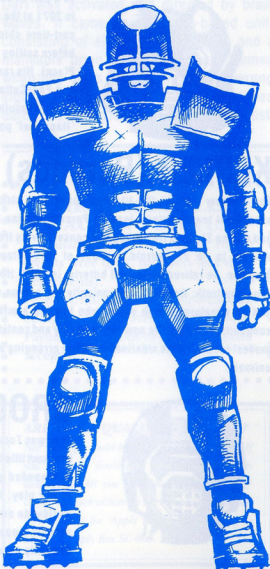
Getting the strategy in the dressing room right is the first priority. Our staff comprises ex-players from Auriga, Castor and Mira, so we're not the hot favourites - this means a lot of training and a lot of hard cash spent on improving every department of the team. We'll be looking at enhancing very specific areas of our defence, midfield and attack: Speedball is notoriously short of on-field money, so all round statistical improvement, though the ideal solution, isn't always practical. We might even splash out on a Star Player from the beginning, he could be an essential investment.

THE NEW EQUIPMENT

So what can the fans expect from Speedball 2? Well, the major change is that each game is now based on points, rather than goals - and this alters the way teams will play. One of the major differences will be both sides' attempts to gain control of the DOUBLE PLAYFIELD: a quick glance at the points table in the Coaching Manual tells you that a rating of +DP2 on every score is pretty

handy! If one side illuminates the DP first, it's up to the other to cancel it out.

The other equipment is more subtle. Teams will often go for the ELECTROBOUNCE when they're looking for an alternative way of scoring: a fortuitous deflection sends the ball spinning to the opposition goal, disabling the keeper and making the attacker's job easy. BOUNCE DOMES and STARS are both



worth a couple of points - it might not seem much, but it can make the difference in a tight contest. But these are reaction bonuses - teams will take advantage when they can; it's true that lighting a 5-STAR BONUS can give you up to 40 points in total - but any team worth its salt will cancel out your illuminated stars at the earliest opportunity. One more thing: the crowd-pleasers will go hard on injuring the other team. Intense periods of tackling on one weak opponent will soon get the RoboDocs ready for action.

GOALS

You might be wondering where goals fit into the scheme of things. In fact, goals are more important than ever before, since goal difference now counts in the League - it's as simple as that.

On top of that, they could be worth up to 20 points a time! Sensible managers will concentrate on goals in the easier games and go for the match-winning bonuses in the harder contests.

Scoring goals can be as complex as you are. Some teams will favour the direct punch and throw method; good teams will make use of deflections, warp gates, electrobounce

and bounce domes, as well as the standard shimmy, pass and throw techniques. Remember: practice makes perfect - as long as you've got the cash.

THE NEW RULES

For the 2100 season, Speedball 2 has been standardised into 5 basic Laws. These are quoted directly from the SPA pamphlet, available before every match during the opening season.

Law 1. Games last for 180 seconds (90 seconds per half).

Law 2. At the end of the day, the team that scores the most points wins.

Law 3. Punching, kicking, spitting, maiming and killing are all encouraged.

Law 4. The use of banned weaponry will mean automatic off-world exile for both management and players involved.

Law 5. Players discovered illegally interfering with the RoboDoc circuitry, referee's klaxon, or any of the Speedball League (SL) equipment will be fined one credit.

On sale for a limited period only...

SPEEDBALL - THE BOARDGAME

Relive the excitement of the classic sport. See how random dice throws can mean the difference between a league title and a prematurely ended career. Featuring flexible metal cloth, referee's klaxon, 12 players (10cm high) with articulated throwing arm, grandstands (Deluxe edition only), and a fully illustrated rulebook. Dice and batteries not included.

Coming soon...
INQUISITOR II

Now fully compliant with SL rules, this hand-held buzz-saw interfaces snugly with any part of the body armour. Don't be deceived: it's still guaranteed to draw blood, remove fingers and send the crowd into a frenzy. Kiddies version available. Send for catalog. Reply BOX SL-111/A.

THE PITCH

The old days of playing Speedball on concrete and steel are gone. Concrete was phased out with the introduction of on-pitch flip-bonuses, and the standard steel pitch universally in use until the season closed two years ago, was unsuited to the requirements of Speedball 2. The new playing surface - specifically designed by the Pitch-U-Like Corporation for the 2100 season (rivets supplied by Rivets International) - incorporates FOUR warp/bonus gates (see the official Coaching Manual for more details), is compatible with RoboDoc hover technology, and is 100% larger. The need for maintenance has been eliminated by the development of a biosynthetic metal compound which automatically heals itself within minutes of major damage; this new 'living' material also allows on-field bonuses to be generated without having to disturb the surface.

THE BALL

During the course of Speedball's 100-year history, steel balls have invariably proved most popular on all surfaces. However, experiments were made in the early 2020s with oak wood (which split during the course of a season) and reinforced leather (which proved too soft). Even further back, there are records (from 2104) of gangs throwing rounded rocks at each other - however, this 'ball' was liable to fragment as it struck the pitch or walls, leading to crippling compensation claims. For the 2100 season, we've decided to continue with the riveted stainless steel projectile used for over 60 years, hand-crafted by the engineers at Ferrotech and inscribed with the Speedball 2 insignia. New friction generation techniques

have additionally allowed players to apply aftertouch after release, providing greater control over direction. Bounce, shape and durability are guaranteed for a lifetime, and every ball comes complete with its own legally-binding disclaimer, making it a suitable Christmas present for children.





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