

Woodelf Playbook: Tao Parkour Style

This style of play is to embrace the fast paced nature of the game with aesthetics of Parkour and Taoism; these themes require a dedication of thought and procedure.

The style is focused on speed and agility, something that the Wood Elves are good at, but also require a team focus and an understanding of the totality of the game. The team does not just play for the 'here and now' and it requires some confrontation to remove unwanted opposition from the game.

Parkour

Parkour requires: consistent, disciplined training with an emphasis on functional strength, creativity, fluidity, control, coordination, precision, spatial awareness, and looking beyond the traditional use of objects.

The Wood Elf team needs all of these. The first 4 is to simply use your strengths and work on them, remember this is a team effort and requires the team to perform in such away. Protect the ball carrier and move as quickly as you can to put space between you and your opponent. The rest is to think about skill improvements and complimentary skills, working as a team and some times thinking that standing a player up is not as effective as keeping them down.

Parkour movements typically include: running, jumping and balancing. Movements from other physical disciplines are often incorporated so be prepared to blitz.

The team requires everyone to move; a simple technique is to move the players from the back to the front and the front to move forward. Avoid unnecessary dice rolls, especially 'go for its', turnovers are costly. Note the Wood Elves need to perform a least one blitz per turn.

The Tao

Otherwise known as 'The Way' can be broken up into 3 parts: Te is associated with active living and here we are going to live on the edge. Play like a maniac and make your opponent fear to be opposite you.

Wu Wei can be expressed as 'Action without Action'. That is don't get all your players up or the team reforms into a new position and in defence you do not connect, whilst in offence you position for a hold off pass.

Finally, the last part is called Pu, which can be described as 'passive state of receptiveness'. The team requires many active skills but it also requires a good amount of passive skills. The ability to throw an opponent off their game is to disturb their balance and that gives you an edge.

Your Players

Line Elves 6-8:

First Skill: **Wrestle**

The next skill for 3-4 line is **Dodge** (Drestle?)

The other 3-4 Line will need **Dauntless** – this helps to face down some of those S4 players and you will not believe how annoying a dauntless player is for them.

3rd and 4th Skills

Wrestle, Dodge: **Fend, Sidestep**

Wrestle, Dauntless: **Dodge, Diving Tackle**

Doubles: Well it has to be **Guard**

Stat upgrade: **AV+1**

With **wrestle** The Line is going create gaps and therefore will make movement easy, all your opponents who go heavy on **block** will see a shock as they are forced to the ground and your other players can squeeze through the gaps. The **Wrestle Dodge** combo will make a nice solid line of scrimmage. Whilst the **Wrestle Dauntless** players give you some offence it won't use up the abilities of your Wardancers. **Fend** prevents players from gaining ground and that includes **Frenzied** and **Piling On** players too and side step plugs the gaps. If you ever get to a sixth skill for a line elf just add **Sidestep** or **Diving Tackle** to the guy without it... that is if they have guard, otherwise you could end up with 6 normal skills.

Diving Tackle is one of those scary skills. I have pondered how to implement it without detracting from the core Positions' abilities and concluded that this is a Line Elf skill.

Throwers 1-2:

You should split these guys up into plays: offence and defence. You start the roster with an offensive thrower and quickly buy in the defensive one.

Offensive Thrower: **Safe Throw, Accurate, Pro, Sure hands**

Doubles: **Strong Arm**

Stat upgrade: **AG** or **MA +1**

If you are unlucky with **Strong Arm** and a stat boost then use **Sure Feet** and **Sprint**.

Defensive Thrower: **Kick, Nerves of Steel, Accurate, Sure hands**

Doubles: **Strong Arm**

Stat boost: **AG** or **MA +1**

If you are unlucky getting a double or a stat boost then add **Leap** then **Pro**. Note if you have **Strong Arm** before **Accurate** go for **Sure hands** next, then take **Accurate** afterwards.

I would champion **Safe Throw** first skill over **Accurate** due to the multi abilities of the skill. It improves the long passing game brilliantly. As for the Defensive thrower, **Kick** is better on him than 'wasting' a slot on a line elf. **Nerves of Steel** allows the thrower to enter tackle zones, pick up the ball but when passing he can ignore tackle zones.

Note on positioning; after the offensive **Thrower** has 2-3 skills you can think about sitting the **Thrower** 3 squares from the end of the pitch. This covers most of the back field and the **Thrower** can easily toss it a **Catcher**.

Catchers 1-4:

As above but use them in pairs.

Offensive Catchers: **Sure Feet, Fend, Leap, Sidestep, Pro**

Defensive Catchers: **Pass Block, Sure Feet, Leap, Shadowing, Sidestep**

Doubles: **Nerves of Steel**

Stat boost and skills: **AG** or **MA +1**

Offensive to give up **Pro**

Defensive to give up **Sidestep**

The Offensive Catchers need to be everything about movement. The Defensive Catchers need to close down your opponent's game. Preventing the passing game is good and when passing has to be made these guys come leaping in to take possession. Do not underestimate the threat of a **Pass Blocker**. **Shadowing** can keep you on the ball carrier and if the ball bounces after a fall you can have a chance of catching it.

Wardancers 2(!):

Seriously do not start without 2 of these guys. They are by far the most awesome player on the field. The next best are Amazon Blitzers but it is with '**Blodge**' they excel in and **Leap** helps too.

Primary skills: **Tackle, Sidestep, Shadowing, Strip Ball, Fend, Pro**

Doubles: **Mighty Blow**

Stat boost and skills: **AG** or **AV +1**

Give up **Pro**

Taking too many Stat increases may rob you of important skills. **AG** and **AV** ok but in doing so you may have to give up **Fend** too.

I would adhere to these. **Tackle** prevents **dodgers**, **Sidestep** gives you glue and **Shadowing** is really annoying for the opponent. **Fend** will prevent the big guys from chasing the player around, lastly I will concede their next best skill is a decision between '**Strip Ball**' and '**Pro**',

Treeman 0: Do not bother with these guys get used to playing fast and Treemen are really slow.

Starting Roster:

1 **Thrower**
2 **Wardancers**
1 **Catcher**
7 **Line elves**
1 **Apoth**
960
Bank 40 K

If your league pays for Fan Factor then just let the team gain them from playing.

Without rerolls it focuses the game and you will have to get used to getting 'double skulls'. If you are not the highest TV in the league then think about getting a reroll, or later in the League when things toughen up then pick them up. If you win tournaments you may get the trophy rerolls if your commissioner will allow it. There is nothing like facing an opponent with no rerolls and beating them.

Stat up grades

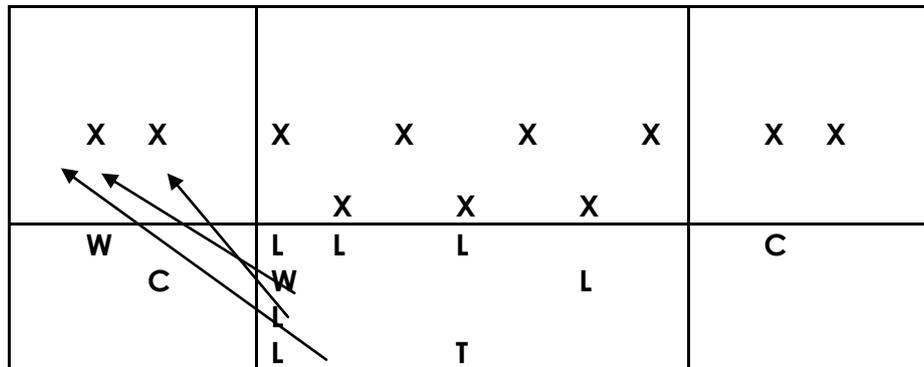
MA: Catchers and **Throwers**, the ability to out run and out position is a huge advantage.

AV: Line Elves and **Wardancers**; these need the durability.

AG: Everyone except Line, but no more than **AG5**, it allows you to drift through most tackle zones

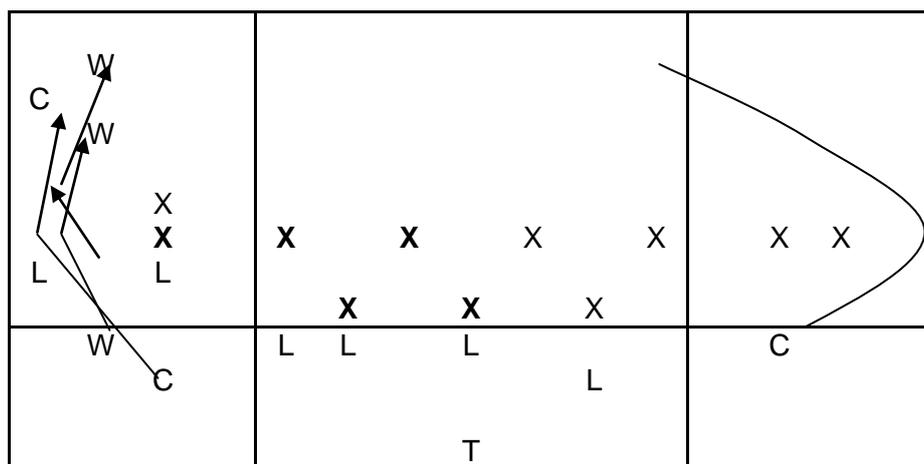
ST: I'm going to go really against the grain here and say take the double, remember the Parkour style; you can benefit the team with **Guard** rather than a single player with a ST increase. Plus it keeps your Team Value down.

Flank Offence aka the 'L' Drive:



L drive blitz

Both Line elves take up their positions to negate and to add an assist. The Wardancer Blitzes the player in front and pushing him to 1 side.



Wardancers take up their positions. Note the Thrower is set well back (about 6 squares from the back and in the middle) to get the ball and throw it to the Catcher. The Line elf with the assist can make a block. Move the Assist up to the forward **X** and move the free Line elf around to stop the last player **X** noted in bold. Try and get your free Catcher around the other flank. This allows for a hold off pass.

Note there are many other defences but get used to using the flanks and having a Plan B. Using the Flanks denies the opponent a lot of his team's abilities due to movement. As long as you can get many players within the MA distance of the Touch Down you can keep a good 2 Turn Touch Down drive discipline. Furthermore this can be done with Line elves too.

L	W	L	C	C	T	W	L
		L	L	L			

Simple defence: Depending on your wings and as the Line get better skills the wings will get tougher. The Wardancers are where they are to prevent attacks against the Catchers. Note the Thrower is within the zone as he is supposed to be the Kicker. Blitzes are good because all the best positions can pour through.

	L	W	C	T	L	C	W	L
			L	L	L			

Attrition defence: Best used against slower teams, especially ones that cannot exploit the wings. As you team dwindles by attrition you will want to protect those important players. Do not give up hope Wood Elves can manage on 5 at a scrape.

C	T			L	C
L	W			W	L
		L	L	L	



Column defence: Good against fast teams. This is designed to through up as many tackle zones as possible. Note this is the only time to put the Line of Scrimmage together.

The Line of Scrimmage debate: Spacing the players out absorbs more of the opposition. When you have all 3 together the opponent can 'domino' them as each blocker provides the assist for the next blocker. Spacing them out means that the first assist needs to move to assist another and also add in an additional assist for the last player. Depending on your opponent's line up this can use between 3 to 5 of their players. However in the Column defence you are trying to block access to the centre of the Line of Scrimmage, there may only be one way through but as the team develops this can plug up that hole. When the line gets Sidestep they can plug the holes.

Tips: On a Blitz and especially if you cannot get to the ball carrier target the opponent's Throwers. Removing key positions from your opposition will disadvantage them, especially with players with a lot of ball handling skills. However if you do this remember to defend your own.

On defence move a player into the 'Keep One Deep' position; that is a player with an MA within the Touch Down Zone. So if the ball goes loose, it can be scooped up, passed and scored all in 1 turn.

The Cage Leaper: traditionally a Wardancer but if you can get a 1 die block on the ball carrier in a cage do it. If it is with the 'Leap' skill then hope you have a reroll (given to you by circumstance) to smack the ball carrier. If you are playing for desperate measures, go for it, you may pull it off more than failing.

Do not Foul... it is not in the spirit of Tao Parkour style; moreover you need all your players and cannot risk a sending off. If you have the ref from a kick off result – go on drive a collective boot in.

Use different players to get their skills up. This adds an element of fluidity to the game and it keeps your opponents guessing to which player to look out for.

Always go for the ball when you can. A 4+ roll is better than letting the opponent get a 2 or 3+ roll.

Inducements

I'm going to have to say extra apothecaries. It's your insurance; the team can function well against most teams but attrition. Then go for a single Bloodweiser Babe. Weigh up your opponent and decide to choose cards but if there is a big difference Max out on those apothecaries. Try to have some durability.

Conclusion

It has been noted that this style of play is somewhat 'balls to the wall' or non newbie friendly. But what it tries to overcome is the apparent weakness of the Wood Elf team, their low armour and high cost. To do this you have to maximise their strength which is superb ball control and the more you can control, not just your own ball movement, but, the movement of your opponent's ball handling skills then the more you can frustrate and tie them up. Sure the Grind Machine is going to be tough, ignore it, try and speed it up or try and slow it down, whatever it is, you must dictate the pace of the game.

I am writing this after 23 Wood Elf games and I have lost 5 to a High Elf team, Pro Elf teams (both with Safe Throw), a highly aggressive Orc team and drew 1 with a Nurgle Team (I would hasten to add I could have won but forgot to move my Keep One Deep and this meant the Thrower had a Long Bomb on a 5+ rather than a 2+, funny thing is the Nurgle team could have won in overtime but failed to do so.) What my opponent's fear is the lightening speed of my game, they are very concerned about dropping the ball, which will result, in a high chance, of me scoring quickly. At 23 games in and still no reroll, although depending on Team Values I am prepared to get one but at present all ok, my money is now saving for a slap down of 3 rerolls, so I'll need to save.

Remember always take the first turn where possible; score as quickly as possible because this gives you more time to steal possession. The slower you are the more the blocking game applies to knocking lumps out of the team. If you cannot get an advantage from rolling a die then don't do it (especially if there is no reroll). Target members of opposing team and you'll see their games falter as they have to rely on their rerolls because of poor ball handling (other Elves cannot keep pace if you play fast). The only teams to fear are: Dwarves, Chaos Dwarves, Nurgle and High Elves. The first 2 for their 'Tacklers' the 3rd for 'Disturbing Presence' and the High Elves for being your best match with more armour, strength and 'Safe Throw'. Know your opponent and try to exploit his weaknesses.

Finally, if you are losing with high scores you are still doing well. One more thing to end on is that if your TV is heading towards 1700 start getting the rerolls. Especially from game 16 onwards... it can get difficult from then on in (max out at 3 to begin with).

