

MOSCOW ICE !

A game for Icehouse pieces by Kendall Johns. (*1)

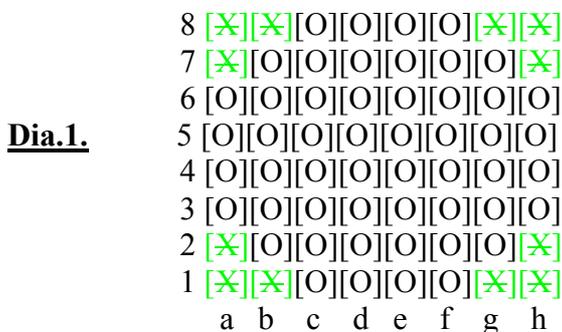
For 2 **OR** 4 Players – (not suitable for 3 in this format but see (*2)).

NEEDED: -

A different coloured Icehouse stash for each player. (*3)

A (modified) 8x8 Chessboard.

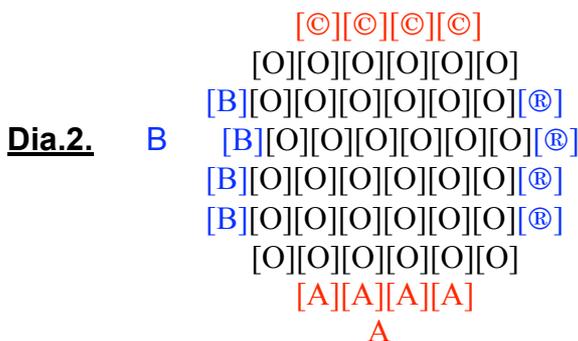
[The game is played on a central 6x6 grid with each side extended by a centrally placed single row of 4 – this is an 8x8 Chessboard minus three Squares in each corner – {a1, a2, b1}; {a7, a8, b8}; etc. etc.] **Dia.1.** (*4)



RULES FOR TWO PLAYERS

A. HOW TO START

- (1) Choose a player to start.
- (2) The first player (**A**) takes 4 Large, 4 Medium and 4 Small pieces of their colour, to form 4 ‘nested’ stacks, (i.e. Large, on top of Medium, on top of Small), which they place on the four square on one side of the board – their Start line. **Dia.2.**
- (3) The other player (**B**) does the same on an *adjacent*, (n.b. NOT opposite), side.
 e.g. If the first player is on □c1:d1:e1 and f1□
 Then the other player is on □a (*or h*) 3:4:5 and 6.□ . **Dia.2.**



B. THE OBJECT: -

Is to be the first player to re-stack their pieces on the four spaces on the opposite side of the board - their Finish line. [A]→[⊙] & [B]→[⊗]. **Dia.2.**

C. MOVEMENT

(1). Starting with the Start Player, then alternately, move one *piece*, (i.e. NOT a stack – c.f. {C(2)}), of your colour, until the victory conditions are met.

(2). Only the TOP piece of a stack may be moved. A *Stack* may consist of 2 or 3 ‘nested’ pieces of any colour/s - inc. Large on top of Small – c.f. {C(6)}.

(3). Movement is always in a forwards, (including diagonally), or sideways direction – never backwards.

(4). There are two types of movement – either: -

(i) A *simple* move to any adjacent empty space - c.f. {C(6)}, **OR**

(ii) A *jumping* move – over an adjacent piece/stack, (of any size or colour/s), to a vacant space - c.f. {C(6)}, immediately beyond, i.e. similar to the capturing move in Draughts/Checkers but orthogonally too. (n.b. The jumped pieces are NOT captured and jumping is optional as is the number of jumps you make - c.f. {C(5)}).

(5). Whilst you cannot combine both types of movement - *multiple jumps* are possible - but no jump of the series can be backwards {C(3)} even if the move would finish further ahead.

(6). In addition to a vacant space, a piece may also be moved onto a piece or stack, (of any colour/s), smaller than itself, i.e. a Medium Piece may land on top of a Small, and a Large on top of a Medium and/or Small. (If this is part of a series of *jumping* moves then the piece **may** continue **or** stop).

Because of the second rule of movement {C(2)}, the piece/s landed on are ‘frozen’ until the top piece leaves. – (But see the **‘STALEMATE MOVE RULE’**).

(7). Pieces **must** enter their Finish line in the correct order – a Medium piece may **only** enter by landing on top of a Small and a Large **only** on top of a Medium.

(8). Because of {C(3)} - once a piece has left its Start line it may not re-enter and once it has entered its Finish line it may not leave. However movement ALONG these lines is permitted – providing that the above rules are obeyed.

(9). Stopping in your opponent’s Start or Finish lines is not allowed but it is permissible to *jump* in, (also along), and out, providing that you finish outside.

THE STALEMATE MOVE RULE: -

If a player cannot move their remaining piece/s onto their Finish line, because a smaller piece/s is/are frozen by the other player {C(6&7)} - having no other move (*5) - the other player must release it, or one of, if more than one, on their **next** move.

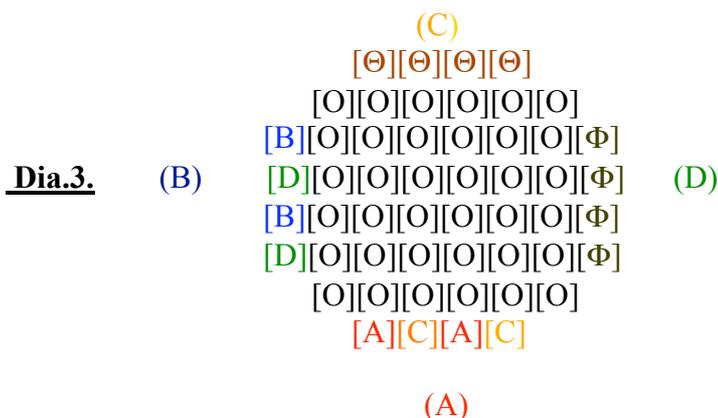
Also you may not ‘freeze’ a piece if it would cause this situation to occur.

RULES FOR FOUR PLAYERS

For “opponent” read “opponents” and for “other player” read “other players”, otherwise all the rules for Two Players apply - unless amended below.

A. HOW TO START

- (2) Each player starts with TWO stacks of their colour.
 Opposite players (i.e. A-C & B-D) set up their pieces on alternate spaces on the same side. – ‘[A][C][A][C]’ & ‘[B][D][B][D]’ – (note that the alternative ‘[C][A][C][A]’ and/or ‘[D][B][D][B]’ is also acceptable.) **Dia.3.**
- (3) In any case the Start lines are adjacent. **Dia.3.**



B. THE OBJECT: -

Is to be the first player to re-stack their *pieces* on any TWO of the four spaces on the opposite side of the board. - [A]&[C]→[Θ] and [B]&[D]→[Φ]. **Dia.3.** (Note that this does not have to be the same as the starting positions.)

C. MOVEMENT

(1) Starting with the Start Players, then in clockwise order, move one *piece* (i.e. NOT a stack), of your own colour, until the victory conditions are met.

(8) As for Two Players *plus* - you cannot ‘freeze’ your *opposite* player within your joint Start or Finish lines.

THE STALEMATE MOVE RULE: -

As for Two Players *plus* - if the pieces are frozen by more than one player then it is the **next to play** who must release one on their next turn.

RULES FOR FOUR PLAYERS (PARTNERS).

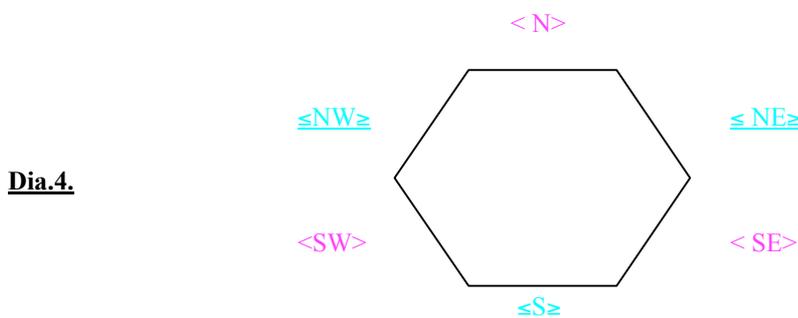
Players (A) & (C) play against (B) & (D).
 Both players have to finish to win otherwise all the rules for four apply.

NOTES (*)

(*1) This game's roots obviously lie in HALMA/CHINESE CHECKERS, with a nod to THE TOWER OF HANOI. Also to an early Ravensburger game, I have heard about, but never seen or played, which used stacking Russian Dolls. After that the blame is mine.

(*2) If you download SIX segments of Eeyore's **3 Player [Martian Chess Board](#)** – (and set them out as shown for six players) – then **Three or even Six** players becomes possible.

- (i) You will need to blank off the three squares in each of the (six) corners.
- (ii) The Board design means there are some interesting jumps, especially through the centre, but this is no problem if you remember {C(3)}.
- (iii) Start lines are on alternate sides. (i.e. if the sides are aligned N; NE; SE; S; SW; & NW: then the Start lines could be either $\leq S; NW; \& NE \geq$ or $\langle N; SE; \& SW \rangle$. In each case the opposite sides are the Finish lines – $S \leftrightarrow N$; $NW \leftrightarrow SE$; and $NE \leftrightarrow SW$). **Dia.4.**



- (iv) Play Three Players as for Two - each player has 4 stacks and
- (v) Play Six Players as for Four - each player has 2 stacks & opposite players set up alternately on the same side. In a Partnership game they are also partners i.e. Three teams. e.g. [N][S][N][S] on $\langle N \rangle$; [SW][NE][SW][NE] on $\langle SW \rangle$ & [NW][SE][NW][SE] on $\langle SE \rangle$.

(*3) Any colours may be used but the translucent ones are preferable to the opaque so that any frozen pieces can be seen. Considering the title perhaps the colours for Two Player's should be RED and CYAN.

(*4) Unless you have a spare Chess Board that you wish to use solely for this game there is, of course, no need to physically remove the corner squares! The easiest way is to block them off with Counters, Poker Chips, Coins etc. Or you can shape some card pieces to mask. What I have done is to cut 4 envelopes to form pockets, which slip over each corner. One side of each is shaped to mask and they are held in place by a small piece of Coloured Tack.

(*5) The **STALEMATE MOVE RULE** *only* comes into force if players' sole remaining unfrozen piece(s) are on their 7th. Rank and they have no other move but a sideways one. If another piece is *temporarily blocked*, (i.e. NOT frozen), elsewhere on the board then it does not apply, - they must make a sideways move or miss a turn until the blockage is resolved.

(*6) **VARIANTS** - here are some of the alternative rules we tried during testing. You might like to experiment with some of them for yourselves

- (i) You are **NOT** allowed to enter you opponent's Start/Finish lines.
- (ii) If you land on an opponent's piece during a jumping move - then end your turn.
- (iii) Allow backward jumps if the piece finishes the move further forwards.

Have fun – feedback welcomed. Please write johnske at btinternet.com.

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