Ombagi (Reinhold Wittig, 1980)

Translated from the original German rules by Víctor M. González, April 8th , 2013.

Ombagi was once the favorite game of the Emperor of Ombagassa. A chronicler told a story about its origins: an Ombagassa's Emperor had two sons whom he loved equally. So he decided to divide his kingdom into two halves and to bequeath them to his sons (Time of the First Ombagassa's Division). The two brothers agreed and each one got the part, so the Emperor said, whose lands and people were most liked by each son.

When they had settled into their new countries, they found that the affairs of state in their small kingdoms were not as good as they had expected, and both secretly thought that the other had got the better part.

When they first met, they talked about it and agreed to exchange their empires. So began in Ombagassa a time of the 'hiking Emperor', and when this exchange was completed, being both kingdoms still worse off due to the change of government, the two emperors were sad when thinking about the kingdoms they had given up and decided to exchange them back again.

Since both imperial courts were almost always on travel and had no time to govern, the situation in both countries was getting worse.

Then, the court jester thought of a game, which he gave to both emperors when they met again at the old imperial city's parades.

They played it, and the more they played the more they liked it. They called for the jester and ask him the name of the game. When they heard it (Ombagi - i.e. Small Ombagassa), they understood the allusion and laughed at the idea of turning their permanent relocation into a game in which you also constantly want to swap sides.

They decided to govern jointly from the old imperial city and to move only symbolically playing the Ombagi game.

Ombagi, a three dimensional tactics game for 2 or 3 players.

Game components: board, rules, 36 pieces in three colors.

Game for two players:

Setting-Up: each player places his stones in their starting fields as shown in the picture, forming four stacks of three pieces each ('1' pieces below, '2' in the middle and '3' on top).
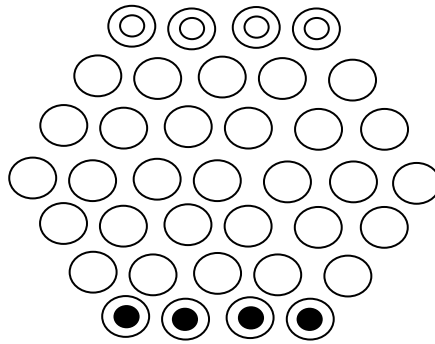
Game goal: The winner if the player who first rebuild his stacks ('1' below, '2' in the middle, '3' on top) on his opponent's starting fields.

Game play: Players alternate turns. The starting player is agreed upon.

'1' stones may only move one step onto an adjacent field, in any direction. Also, they can only occupy the lower level on any field.

The only exception: a 1-stone can jump over a three-stone stack (his or his opponent's stacks, or mixed ones) onto an adjacent empty field. Consecutive jumps are also allowed.

'2' stones move two steps per turn, up or down stacks (each level counts as one step) or onto adjacent fields [so, for example, a 2-stone on a two stone stack can move to an adjacent free field using two steps: one sideways and one down; or else, a 2-stone on level two can jump over an adjacent one-stone stack and be placed on level 2 of the next field, if a stone was already lying there]. '2' stones can only be found on low and middle levels.

'3' stones move three steps per turn. They can be found on level 3. '2' and '3' stones may change direction when moving, even ending their movement on their respective starting points.

Blocking: if a player jumps over an opponent's stone, this is considered blocked. The blockade must be abandoned if the opponent has no more free stones in the same row as the blocked piece, or behind it (seen from his goal fields).

A 1-stone is considered blocked if there are no more same-colored stones on the same row or behind it (also seen from his goal fields' perspective) and cannot move forward (even if it can move sideways). The opponent must free a field to allow this stone's movement (Obviously, this doesn't apply if one of the blocking stones is same color as the blocked one.

If a player has achieved the game goal, the loser can count how many moves are needed to build his four stacks on the goal fields.
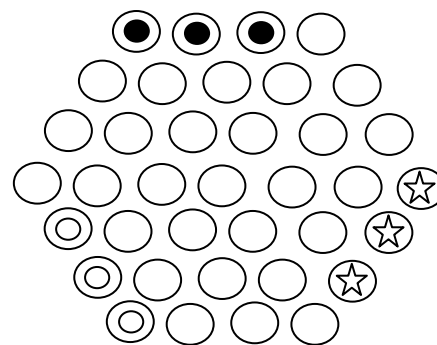
A difficult game variant: during the game, the blocked stones are placed so that the numbers on them cannot be seen.

Game for three players:

The game is played using the same rules, but each player uses only 9 stones (three 3-stone stacks).
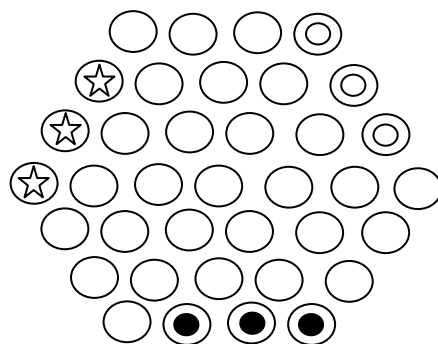
Setting-up   goal fields

For amusement, an ombagassian's rider with the national colors (red, green and gold) is here depicted [TN: a picture is shown nearby].

More Ombagassian games will appear in Edition Perlhuhn. The next one will be the game of the Dragon Prince Gillipilli.

Ombagi - A sample game

and also a suggestion to record good matches.

Notation:

The board fields are numbered from 11 to 47 (see figure). The stones are called H (= Light) 1, 2 and 3, and D (= Dark) 1, 2 and 3. The lower level is designated as A, the middle one B and the higher level C. The level is indicated only for the field to which the stone moves. In this sample game, an asterisk marks forced blockade movements.
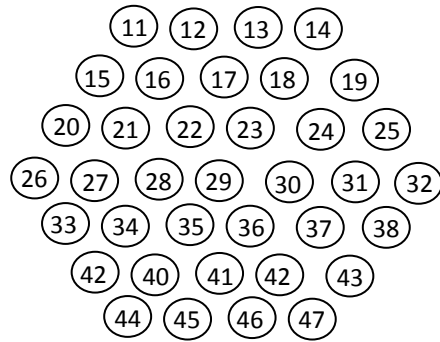
(D3) 12 - A17   (H3) 47 - A42   (D3) 14 - A18   (H3) 42 - A25

(D2) 14 - A19   (H2) 47 - A43   (D3) 18 - B25   (H1) 47 - A42

(D1) 14 - A18   (H2) 43 - A30   (D3) 17 - B30   (H1) 42 - A36

(D1) 18 - A24   (H3) 46 - A42   (D2) 12 - A17   (H1) 36 - A29

(D1) 12 - A16   (H3) 42 - B29   (D3) 13 - A18   (H2) 46 - A42

(D1) 16 - A22   (H2) 42 - A31   (D2) 13 - B24   (H1) 46 - A41

(D1) 22 - A28   (H1) 41 - A35   (D3) 11 - A16   (H3) 45 - A40

(D2) 17 - A22   (H3) 44 - B35   (D1) 13 - A17   (H3) 35 - A21

(D2) 11 - B21   (H2) 44 - B35   (D1) 11 - A15   (H3) 40 - A20

(D1) 28 - A34   (H1) 44 - A39   (D1) 34 - A40   (H1) 39 -A34

(D1) 40 - A44   (H2) 45 - A41   (D1) 17 - A23   (H3) 29 - A17

(D2) 24 - B29   (H1) 45 - A40   (D3) 25 - C30   (H2) 31 - B24

(D1) 23 - A37   (H1) 34 - A28   (D2) 22 - B28   (H1) 40 - A34

(D2) 21 - A27   (H2) 35 - B27   (D1) 37 - A43   (H3) 21 - C28

(D1) 15 - A21   (H1) 34 - A22   (D1) 43 - A47   (H3) 28 - B17

(D2) 19 - B25   (H3) 20 - B16   (D3) 18 - B22   *(H3) 16 - C29

(D3) 16 - C22   (H1) 35 - A23   (D2) 25 - A32   (H3) 25 - A13

(D2) 32 - A43   (H2) 41 - A37   (D3) 22 - C28   (H2) 37 - A35

(D2) 43 - B47   (H3) 13 - C17   (D3) 28 - C22   (H3) 29 - B21

(D2) 28 - A34   (H1) 23 - A12   (D2) 34 - A39   (H2) 35 - A33

(D3) 22 - B28	(H2) 33 - A20	(D3) 22 - C28	*(H3) 21 - A16
(D1) 21 - A35	*(H2) 24 - A19	(D1) 24 - A36	(H2) 27 - A21
*(D2) 29 - B35	(H1) 29 - A23	*(D3) 28 - A34	(H1) 22 - A13
*(D3) 28 - A22	(H2) 21 - B16	(D1) 36 - A42	(H1) 28 - A21
*(D3) 30 - A36	(H1) 23 - A18	*(D3) 30 - A43	(H1) 18 - A14
(D1) 42 - A46	(H2) 30 - A18	(D3) 36 - A41	(H2) 19 - B14
(D2) 35 - B46	(H2) 18 - B13	(D2) 39 - B44	(H1) 21 - A15
(D1) 35 - A40	(H1) 15 - A11	(D1) 40 - A45	(H2) 20 - A15
(D3) 34 - A39	(H2) 16 - B12	(D2) 27 - A40	(H2) 15 - B11
(D3) 39 - C44	(H3) 16 - C11	(D2) 40 - B45	(H3) 17 - C14
(D3) 41 - C45	(H3) 17 - C12	(D3) 43 - C47	(H3) 17 - C13
(D3) 22 - A42	(D3) 42 - C46	H wins in 2 turns	

Complement to the Ombagi rules: if a player completes the movement of three towers to their goal fields, he is not allowed to keep one of his opponent's goal fields occupied/blocked with his other stones.

Ombagassa games, only in Edition Perlhuhn!

The newest game (November 1981) is 'Wunderwatschler", a Dirk Hanneforth's brisk dice game for 3-5 players.

In March 1982 will appear the best game so far: 'Der Ombagassische Seiltrick' (original edition with lianas), a Reinhold wittig's solitaire game.

This is a small sample of 'Der Ombagassische Seiltrick'. Curious? [TN: This sentence refers to a nearby picture of a chameleon on a tree branch].

Brought back from the last trip to Ombagassa:

Gassen-Ombagi

A game for young Ombagassians.

Both players place their stones according to the image below (numbers upwards, any distribution).

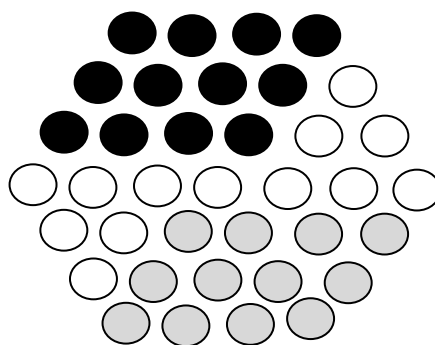The first player is agreed upon.

Players alternate turns.

The active player moves a stone to an adjacent field or else jumps in a straight line over an opponents' piece, which is then removed. Only one piece can be removed per turn. Capture is compulsory but the player is free to chose which piece to remove in case more than one possibility exists. The following rules must be observed:

- a '3' piece can capture a '3' or '2' piece.

- a '2' piece can capture a '2' or '1' piece.

- a '1' piece can capture a '1' or '3' piece.

If a stone in a corner field if surrounded by enemy pieces such that it cannot longer move, it's considered captured and removed from the board.

The game ends in a draw if just two equal numbered pieces, one of each player, remain in play.

If a player has no more pieces in play, the opponent is the winner. Also, if one player's remaining pieces are no longer a threat to his opponent, the latter wins the game (e.g. one player has one '3' piece, the opponent has two '2' pieces: the former is the winner).

Setting-up