

Open goal

Fast footwork is required in this game for two players

It is no surprise that the world's most popular sport has provided the inspiration for scores of table games. Open Goal is one of the simplest. And, consequently, one of the best.

The layout consists of a grid of 16×18 squares, crossed with diagonals. At either end is a very open goal – 14 squares wide.

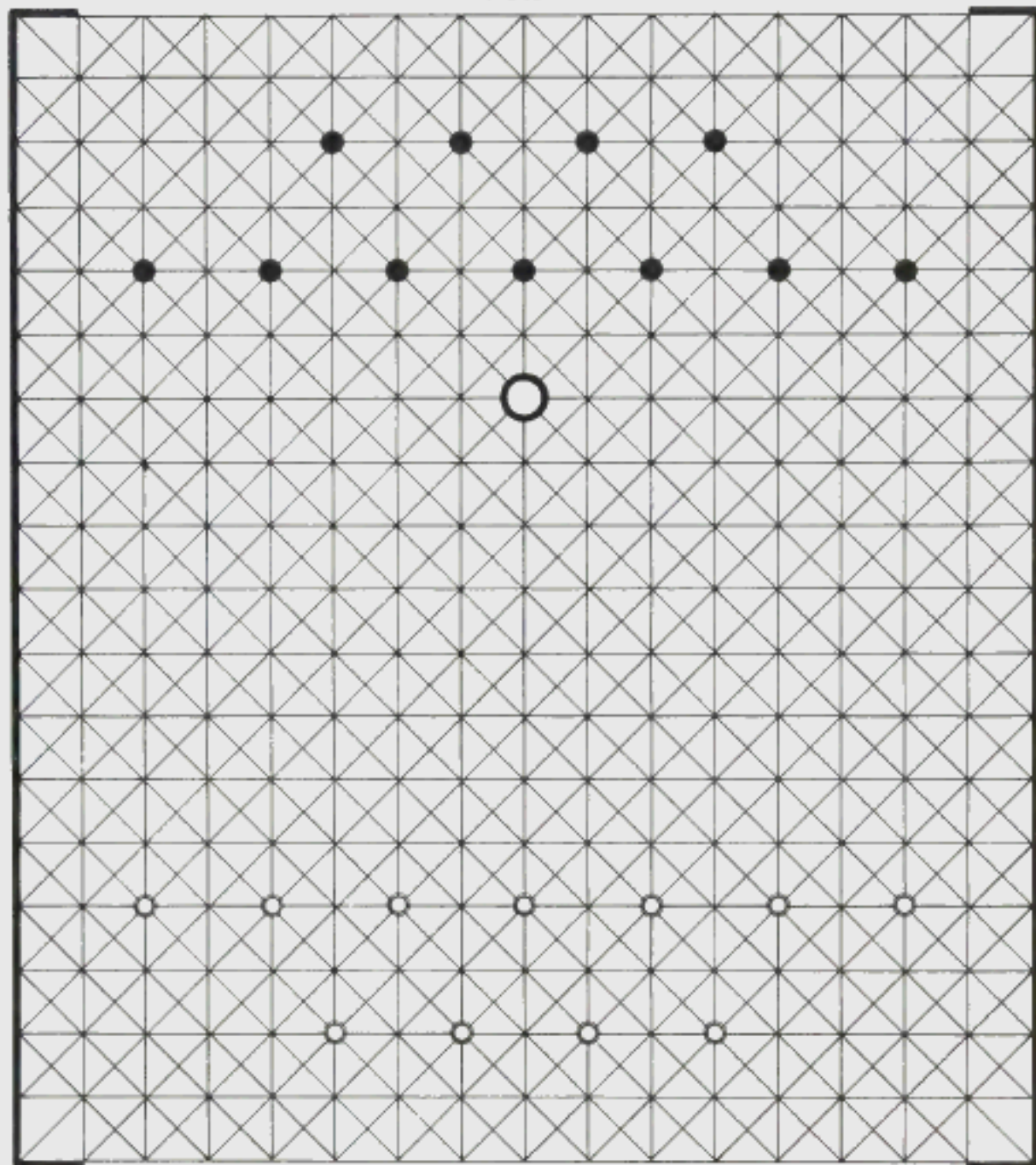
The two teams have eleven players, laid out at the start of the game as in the diagram. In this case, Black has won the toss so the ball is placed in Black's half ready for the kick-off. The rules are simple:

1. Men can move any distance in a straight line, forwards, backwards, sideways or along any diagonal. A player cannot pass over another man or over the ball.
2. To make a kick, a man travels along a straight line until he meets the ball. He then stays on that spot and the ball is kicked forward in the same direction, for any distance at the discretion of the player.
3. A player may drive the ball towards his own goal if he wishes. You are not obliged to kick the ball if you don't want to. So you can use your move simply to shift one of your men into a better position.
4. Normally, the ball may not pass over the heads of any of the players. However, if a man is starting his run from a point next to the ball, he can kick over the heads of his opponents. In this case, the ball can travel up to three points beyond the last man on the line of play.
5. Players can go on to the side boundaries, including the corners, but are not allowed to stand on the goal boundary.
6. The ball is not allowed to touch the side boundaries.
7. Neither the ball nor the men may play on the goalpost positions.

When a goal is scored, the loser has the next kick-off. The winner is obviously the player who achieves the highest score within an agreed time.

Speedy play is the essence of the game. After kicking the ball, you wait fifteen seconds and then count five slowly but firmly. If your opponent hasn't kicked the ball by the count of five, the penalty is to forfeit that kick. Advanced players may reduce the time limit to ten or five seconds.

GOAL



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