DIPOLE

by Mark Steere

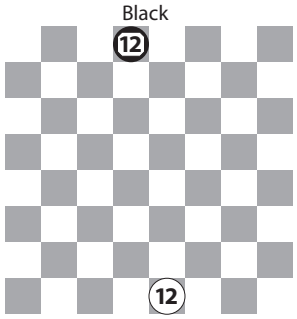

Fig. 1: Initial Setup

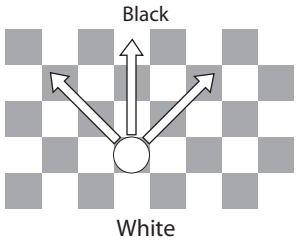

Fig. 2: Non-capture Directions

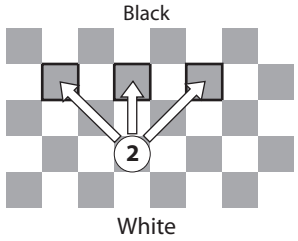

Fig. 3: Move 2-Stack Two Squares

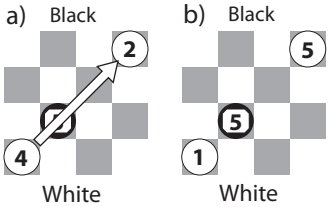

Fig. 4: Merging 3-Stack with 2-Stack

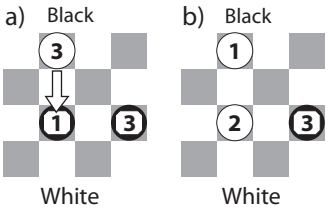

Fig. 5: 2-Stack Capturing 1-Stack

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INTRODUCTION Dipole is played with a Checkers set. Only the dark squares are used. There should be a dark square in your lower left corner.

The game starts with two stacks of 12 checkers, one white and one black, as shown in Figure 1. More advanced players may elect to play Dipole on a 10x10 board with two stacks of 20 checkers, one in each player's nearest row.

Use a coin (such as a nickel) to represent five checkers. So for example, a stack of two checkers with a coin on top would be equivalent to a stack of seven checkers.

Draws cannot occur in Dipole. Mark Steere invented Dipole in May 2007.

OBJECT OF THE GAME To win, all of your opponent's checkers must be removed from the board.

BASIC MOVES Players take turns moving stacks of their own checkers, one stack per turn. You can move an entire stack or just a portion of one (also called a stack here). This holds true for merging and capturing moves as well. See below. Basic moves can only be made in the forward or diagonally forward directions. Figure 2 shows the basic move directions available to the white stack.

The number of squares a stack is moved must equal the number of checkers in the moved stack. This holds true for merging and capturing moves as well. Even though only the dark squares are used, white squares must be included in the count. In Figure 3, White can move his two-stack to any of the squares indicated. Directly forward moves can only be made with even numbered stacks.

If you move a stack out of bounds, you must remove that stack from play. When moving a stack out of bounds pretend the board squares extend outward far beyond the boundaries, and make a basic move accordingly. Stacks can only be removed in the forward or diagonally forward directions. Players typically remove singletons from their far row because they have nowhere else to go.

If you have no moves available, you must sit the game out until you do have a move available. If you have any moves available, you must move. There will always be a move available to one player or the other.

MERGING MOVES Stacks can be moved onto other, like-colored stacks. In Figure 4, White takes three checkers from his four-stack and merges them onto his two-stack. Note that the white stack jumped over the black 5-stack. Stack movement is never obstructed by intervening stacks, regardless of size or color. This holds true for basic and capturing moves as well. Merging moves can only be made in the forward or diagonally forward directions.

CAPTURING MOVES Capturing moves can be made in any of eight directions. A stack can capture only an entire enemy stack, which must be of an equal or smaller size than the capturing stack. In Figure 5, White takes two checkers from his three-stack, and captures Black's one-stack. Basic, merging, and capturing moves must be made in a straight line.

AUTHOR'S NOTE Feel free to publish this rule sheet, and to program the game of Dipole for online or offline play. No licensing fee or royalties are expected. However please don't change the name or the rules, and please attribute the game to me, Mark Steere. My other games can be found at marksteeregames.com.