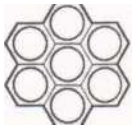
Note from the translator

The game Atlantis is designed by Martin Medema in 1986 and is protected by copyright. These rules are translated from a Dutch version of the rules, dated 02-22-1995. The translator has not yet been able to contact Martin Medema, and therefore this translation is an unauthorized version and is not meant to be published or made available on internet. It is for personal use only. The translator acknowledges all rights of Martin Medema and considers this translation as a tribute to his creativity. Above all, any errors in this translation are the responsibility of the translator. Please communicate any suggestions for improvement to: serge.bouwens@planet.nl.

Description

Abstract territory game for two to six players.

Game supplies



- 9 to 43 tiles consisting of 7 hexes, one in the middle and six around it:
- For each player a large quantity (~100; 20% of the number of hexes of the board should be enough) of pieces in his own color. These peaces must be easily stackable, since on many occassions they will be stacked up to six pieces high.
- A large quantity (~150) of black and white pieces. Checker pieces are perfect; Reversi (Othello) pieces are even better since they are white on one side and black on the other.

Victory conditions

Each hex on a tile is one position. The board area owned by a player consists of all the hexes that can be reached *only* by him. The player who owns the most hexes at the end of the game wins.

Game concept

To conquer area one must fight opponents, which cost pieces. So, during the game one is in constant need of more stones. These can be acquired by blowing up hexes.

When a hex is blown up, it becomes a "**source**", from which one piece springs of at the end of one's turns. However, after a (short) while a source is exhausted and will disappear forever, leaving behind a so called "**crater**". Tiles containing nothing but craters can be removed from the board and from the game; the black pieces can be reused elsewhere. Everything next to the board could be regarded as crater.

Since you have to spend pieces to acquire more area, and you have to spend area to acquire more pieces, economic play is essential. Blow up too many hexes and there is nothing left to conquer; blow up too little and there is not enough power to conquer.

Starting position

Depending on the number of players and the time you want to play, a board is assembled from the tiles. The board should be as symmetrical as possible. For four and five players no perfect symmetry can be obtained. The larger the board, the longer the game will take. Typical boards are diamond shaped (4x4 or 5x5 tiles) or hex-shaped (3 or 4 tiles per side (19 or 37 tiles)).

Each player occupies one tile by putting one piece on each of the seven hexes of the tile. These starting tiles should also be positioned as symmetrical as possible to each other.

Rules of play

Players determine randomly who begins and hence take turns clockwise.

A turn consists of three phases:

1. Movement: Moving pieces (voluntary)
2. Explosion: Blowing up hexes (mandatory!)
3. Reinforcement: Adding one piece to each source (mandatory!)

So, during your turn, first do *all* your movements before handling the explosions. Handle the explosions of all critical hexes and sources – as explained below, and only then finish your turn by adding pieces.

1 Movement

A Move consists of moving a (own) piece, a part of or a whole stack of pieces in a straight line in one of the six directions from one hex to another hex over a distance of exactly as many hexes as the number of moving pieces. Movement starts only from normal hexes – not from sources - and crossing a source or crater is not allowed.

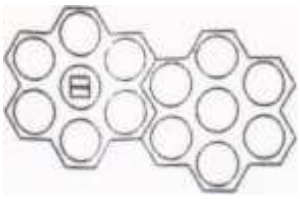
One is allowed to move over or to hexes that are already occupied by pieces of one self or of an opponent. However, each enemy piece that one tries to jump over or on, will be annihilated together with one of the moving pieces. So, when a stack of three pieces jumps over (one stack of) two enemy pieces, only one piece will reach the target hex three hexes away. It can happen that no pieces arrive on the target hex, e.g. when – in the example above – there are three or more enemy pieces in between.

As a result of this annihilation rule, no hex is ever occupied by pieces of more than one player.

On a players turn he is allowed one Move per tile. This is measured against the starting position. No piece can engage is more than one Move per turn! Movement is voluntary: passing on one or more tiles is allowed.

NB: As you can see from the example below, the order in which stacks are moved is of consequence:

Starting position


First A, then B


First B, then A

2 Explosion

Whenever a hex or source is occupied by at least as many pieces as it has neighbourhexes, it becomes critical and 'explodes'. **Craters and sources do not count as neighbourhexes**, nor is everything next to the current board. In the figure on the right in each hex the number of neighbours is given. The black hexes are craters, sources or outside the board.

Note that for a hex or source to become critical it is not relevant whether the neighbourhexes have pieces on them or not.

When a Explosion occurs, each neighbourhex gets exactly one piece of the exploding hex or source. Overcapacity is removed from the board (and can be regarded as wasted).

When a normal hex explodes, it becomes a 'source'. This is indicated by the placement of a white piece on the hex. An exploding source becomes a 'crater'. The white piece(s) are replaced by one black piece.

So a source explodes after at most six turns, since it gets one stone in each turn's reinforcement phase. No stack can ever be higher than six, although theoretically during the explosion phase a stack of six could acquire six more in case of a chain reaction exploding every surrounding hex, but overcapacity is removed anyway.

When a hex or source explodes, neighbourhexes get more pieces and fewer neighbours. Because of this, chain reactions can – and will – occur. Be aware of this, being unable to stop a chain reaction ('machine'), can be destructive, but more often selfdestructive! A chainreaction results in a net increase of craters as well as pieces. The pieces tend to annihilate opponent's pieces, which may slow down the chain reaction. But again they may not. The best defense against such a machine is a wall of craters, or a better machine. Think of these as putting out a fire by burning the ground yourself or by blowing out a fire with an explosion. Very dangerous stuff.

Note that when new explosions cause a source to become neighbourless, it cannot bring new pieces into play, and will turn into a crater *immediately*. When you forget, it is no big deal, since it is of no consequence. When a source explodes it will only add pieces to neighbouring hexes **and not neighbouring sources** (sources are not considered neighbourhexes as is stated above)

During the Explosion phase, all explosions *must* be carried out. Surprisingly, the order in which these explosions occur is of no consequence for the resulting position on the board on the end of the phase. The Explosion phase is in fact an mechanical phase in which no relevant choices are made. As a matter of fact, the same is true for the Reinforcements phase.

3 Reinforcements

After all explosions has taken place, all sources of the acting player gets one extra piece. This is mandatory. This can cause sources to become 'critical' (ready to explode), but the exploding will only take place in the Explosion phase of the player's next turn: Reinforcement is the last phase of the turn.

Game end

The game ends when all sources are gone and all players have passed in a row. Remember that even in a pass-turn, the explosion and reinforcement phase are mandatory.

Every player counts the hexes only he can reach: this is regarded as his area. These areas are always disconnected from other player's areas (like in the game Go). The player with the most hexes is winner.

A player's area can contain more than one unconnected separate areas.

It is also possible that neutral areas exists, that either no player can reach anymore, or that can be reached by more than one player.

Variations

Starting with stacks instead of with a filled tile

This can be a preferred way of starting in a game with 4 or 5 players, where a symmetric board is impossible. Every player places a stack of six pieces on a hex of his choice. Players can change until everybody agrees on the starting position. In every players first turn the stack explodes.

Playing with simple 'machines'

The most simple machine can only be used in a obtuse or sharp corner. Place stacks of three pieces in corner hexes on the edge of the board. These will explode on the first turns. The machines do not move but they are reinforced (mandatory) and will expand faster and faster. Unless they are stopped by the players they will consume the whole board.

This alternative is usefull to add a virtual fifth or sixth player for reasons of symmetry. Also, one can play solo on a triangular board against two machines. Machines of one color will go faster than machines of different color. Two players van play against each other and two machines on a diamond shaped board. Three players can play on a triangular board, occupying the middle tiles of a seven-tiles sided board, with the machines in the corners.

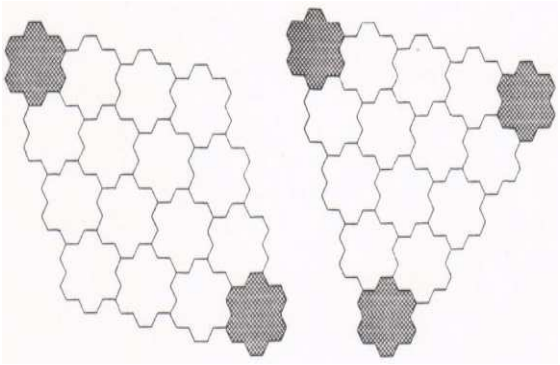
Extreme machines

The machines, conceived by Mare Waterman, do moves on their own, trying to explode and expand as fast as possible. The determine this, some experience in Atlantis is required. The machines follow the following rules:

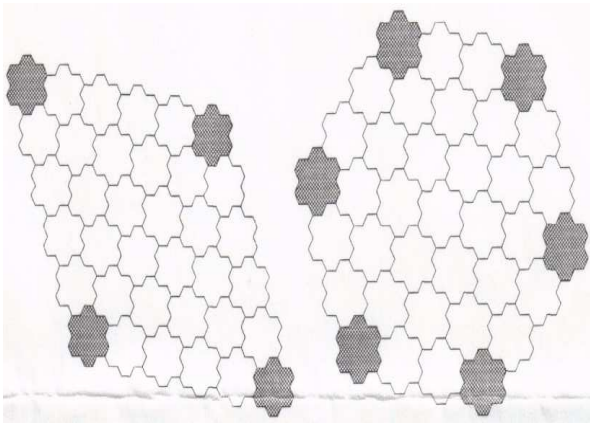
- The machines strive to explode as many hexes as possible;
- In case of equal choices, pick one at random;
- If a machine cannot explode in the current turn, advance in a way that it can explode maximal on the next turn. Disregard possible movements of other players.
- The machines start with one fully occupied tile.

Board shapes

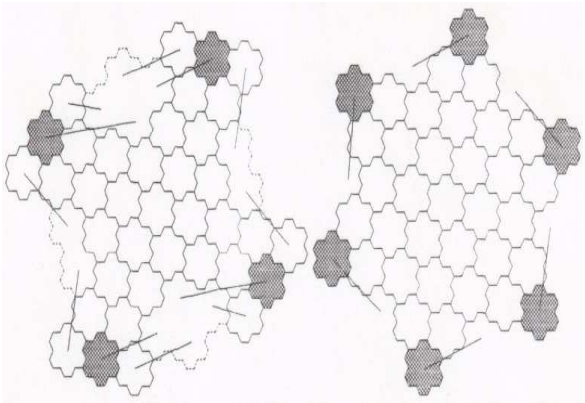
Boards with starting positions for two (diamond) and three (trinagulum) player games. The dark tiles are the recommended starting tiles.



Starting positions for four (diamond) and six (hexagon) player games.



Alternative starting positions for four (butterfly) and six (star) player games. The lines show how to move tiles from the hexagon above to get the alternative shapes.

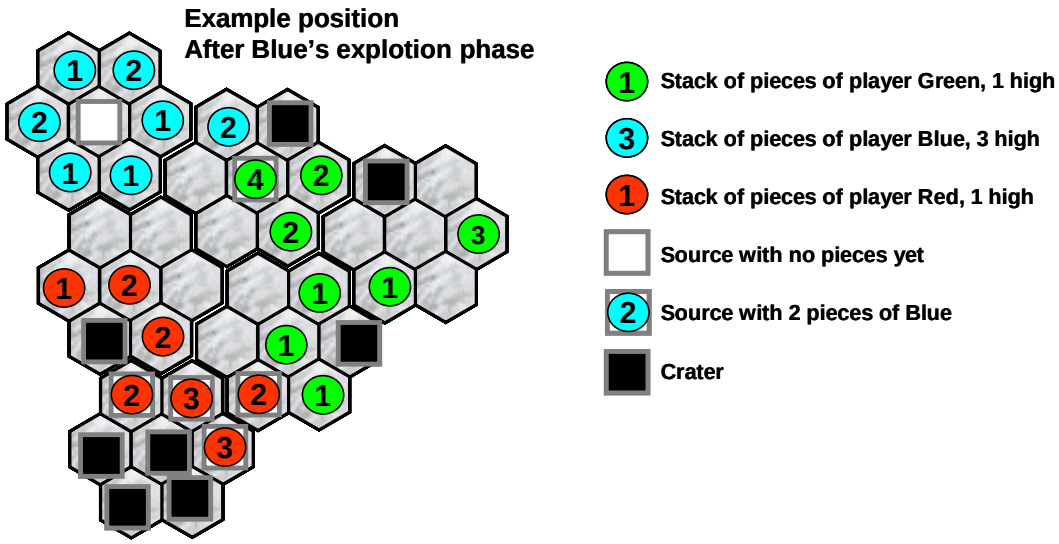


For a more challenging and longer game these shapes can be enlarged, by adding tiles in a symmetrical fashion.

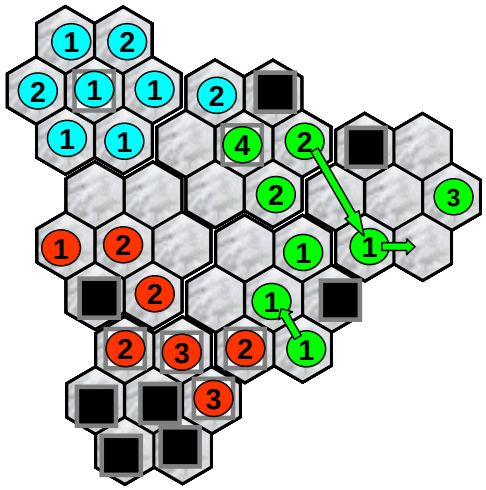
Boards are rotation- and point symmetrical, but not mirror-symmetrical! Therefore the boards have a natural direction of rotation which makes it easier to attack either your left or right neighbour. The diamonds and triangulum above rotate clockwise; the rest rotate counterclockwise.

Game Example

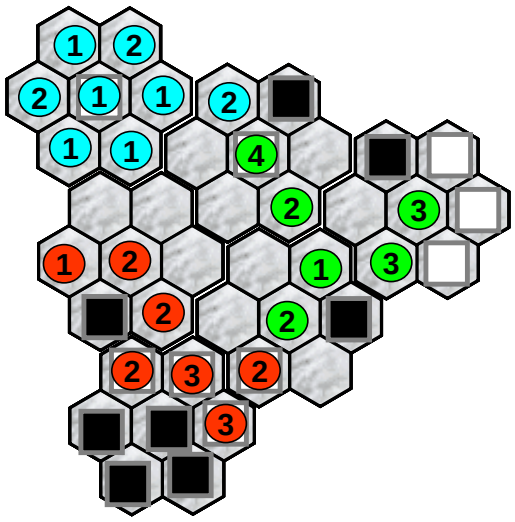
In this example game we play on a (too) small board and start half way. The moves players take are not necessarily good moves, but are merely chosen for the purpose of explaining the game mechanic.



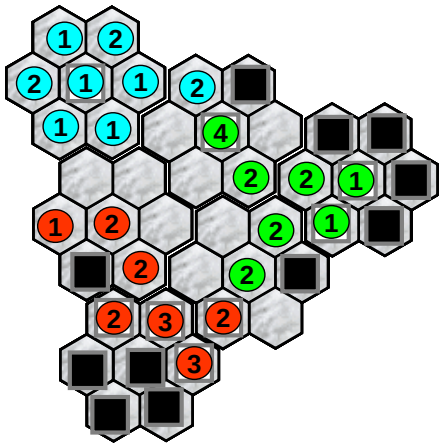
1. Blue adds one piece to it's source. You can see that it will take ages before this tower explodes. Unless something happens.
2. Green moves three pieces, one per tile:



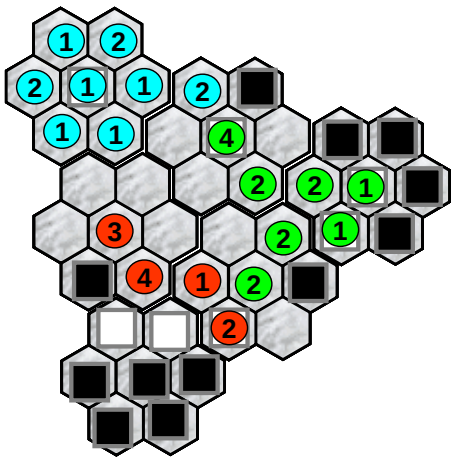
3. Green explodes. The stack of 3 explodes. Then 2 of its three neighbours explode. Oops, that goes fast.



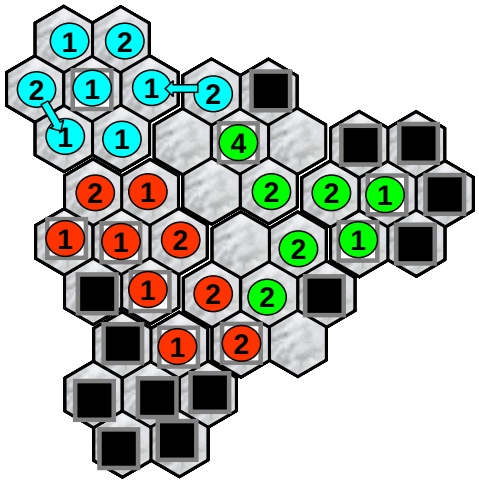
4. More explosions takes place. The stacks of three explodes also, and some overcapacity is wasted. Then the Reinforcement phase takes place, and the latter two sources get an extra piece. Note that the former three sources have no free neighbours and turn into craters at once. Green's turn ends like this:



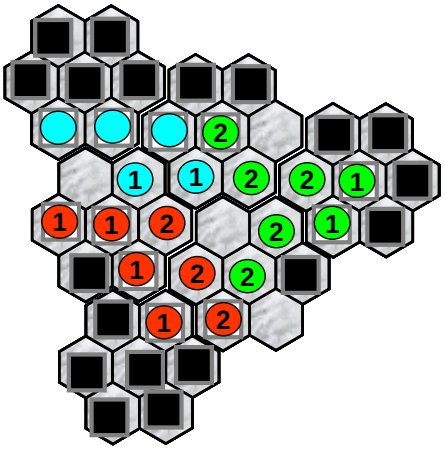
5. Red has made himself a machine. Let's see how this works out. First Red can only one stack since they are all on the same tile. He moves the 1-stack onto the 2-stack. The the Explosion phase begins. The lowest source has no neighbours, so Red doesn't bother anymore. He turns it into a crater. Then two other sources explode, the third is not critical then:



6. After that, more explosions take place. Then Red reinforces, and blue moves:



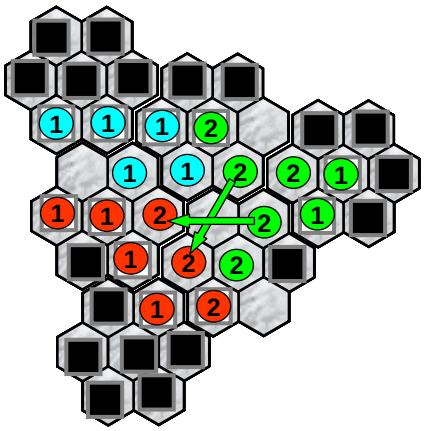
7. After resolution of the explosions and Reinforcements the board looks like this:



Try if you can reproduce the same result. If you can do it in your head, you are ready to play!

In this game none of the players has so far succeeded in creating an area of their own. The endgame may very wel result in two players annihilated, or even three!

8. Green prevents too much explosions for Red by moving from two different tiles:



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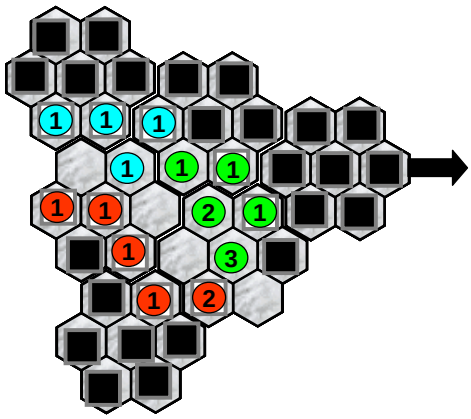
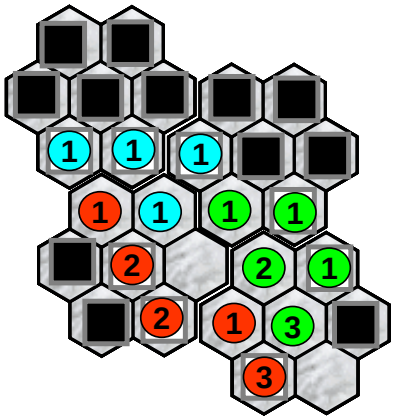
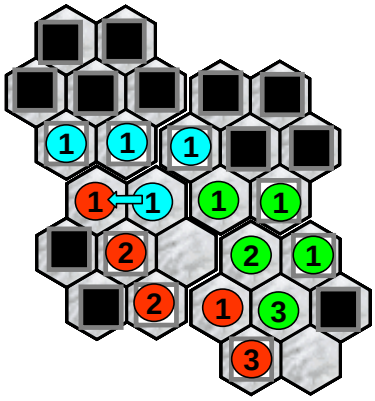
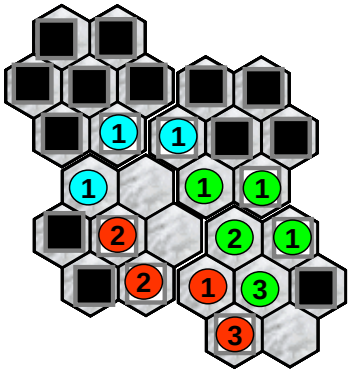


9. The rightmost tile can be removed from the game. Atlantis starts to sink into oblivion…
10. Red can't move, so he turns to explode. After his turn the board looks like this:



11. Blue removes a red piece:





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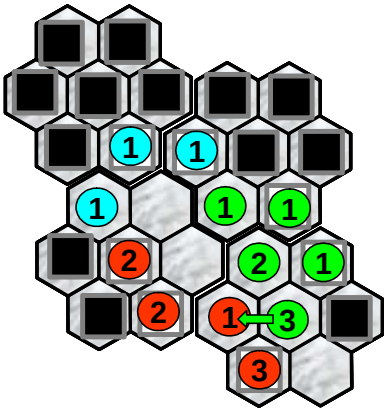
12. Green:



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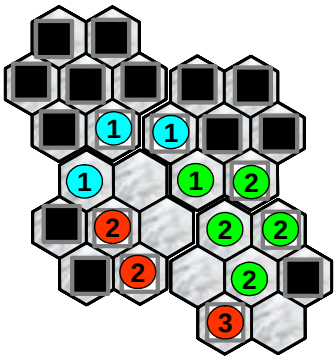
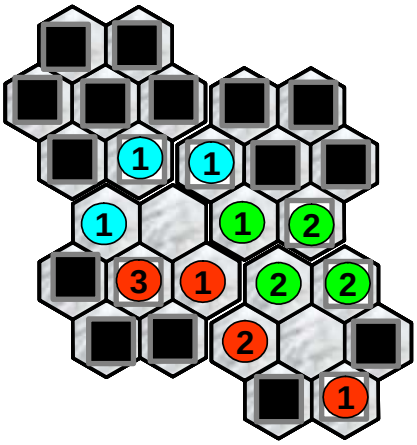
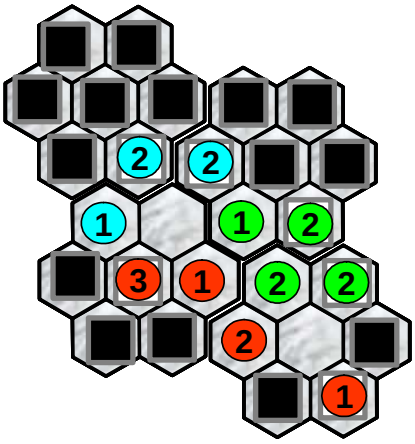


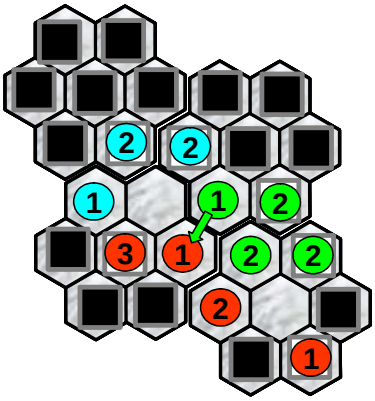
13. Red: No moves.



14. Blue does not move, nor explodes: just reinforces.



15. Green neutralizes a red piece and explodes 4 times, making the lower red source redundant and eleiminating all red pieces.



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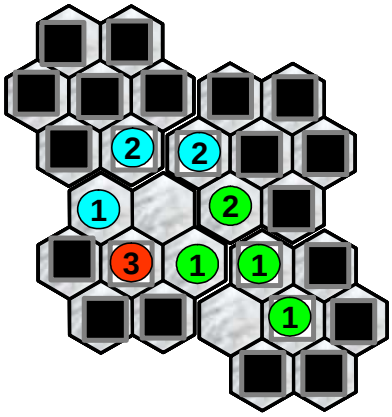
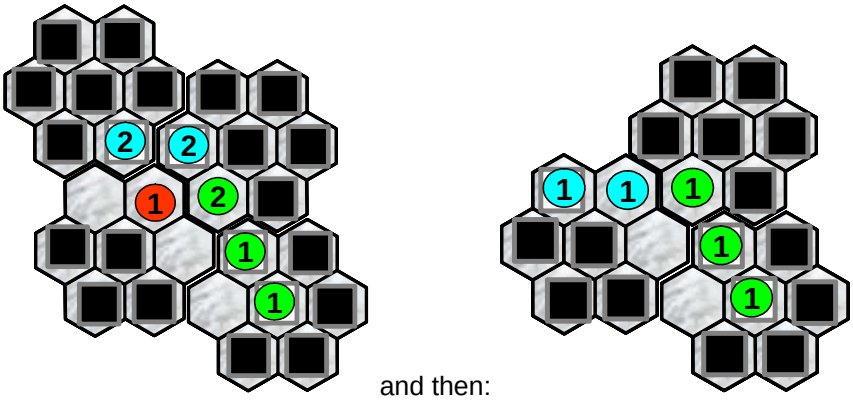


16. Red explodes, and then blue. Blue eliminates red completely, and another tiles goes under water:



and then:

The game goes to a close, and the fact that green did not manage to make an enclave costs him dearly: The whole island collapses: