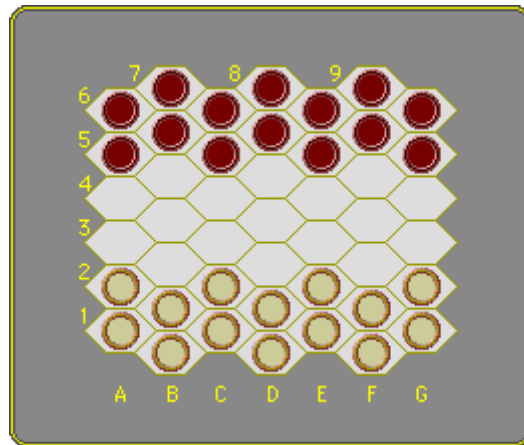


Pommel

2010, Michael Howe,

<https://mindsports.nl/index.php/the-pit/628-pommel-sp-1219752432>

Pommel is a hexagonal checkers variant invented by Michael Howe of Connecticut, USA in 2010. It has an interesting feature found in no other checkers variant, namely linear capture by leaping.



initial setup

There are two players, black and white. White begins. Players move, and must move, in turn.

The rules mention soldiers and captains. A captain is a promoted soldier. If the difference doesn't matter, they may also mention pieces, for instance 'the number of pieces on the board'.

Capture precedes over a non-capturing move. If the player to move has no capture available, he has two options: (i) Moving a soldier,)ii) Moving a captain

A soldier moves straight or oblique forwards over any number of like colored pieces (including zero) to the first vacant cell it encounters. If it reaches one of the seven cells of the back rank, it is crowned to captain and this marks the end of the move.

A captain moves any number of vacant cells in any of the six main directions but must always stop on a cell that is in an unblocked line from an opposing piece.

Capture. Capture precedes over a non-capturing move. If the player to move can make a capture, he must do so. Capturing may be done in all six directions. A player faced with multiple ways to capture can freely choose which one to execute: there is no requirement to capture the maximum number of pieces. During all captures, pieces are removed immediately as they are jumped and the same cell may be visited more than once.

There are two distinct ways to capture, by jumping and by leaping.

- Jump capture is like the familiar checkers capture: the soldier jumps over and thereby captures an adjacent opposing piece and lands on an empty cell immediately beyond. Jumping captures may be multiple and a piece that can continue to jump must do so.
- To leap, a soldier starts adjacent to a line of two or more enemy pieces, leaps over them, and lands on the empty hexagon immediately beyond, capturing the enemy pieces. Leaping capture is not multiple and a single capturing move ends the player's turn.
- A soldier becomes a captain when it ends its move on the last hexagon of a column. A soldier that visits the promotion zone during a jumping sequence but does not end its turn there, does not promote.
- A captain may traverse any number of empty cells before jumping or leaping. In the latter case it must land on the cell immediately beyond the captured pieces. When jumping it must also land on the cell immediately beyond a captured piece, and from there on it must proceed capturing if it can.
- When not capturing, a captain may traverse any number of empty cells but must stop on a cell that is in an unblocked line from an opposing piece.

A player wins by eliminating all opposing pieces. Draws are rare in Pommel.