⚽ Socker ⚽

Copyright 2011, Phil Leduc

Socker is a two player abstract game that simulates a rough and tumble, soccer-like game where socking opposing pieces is a means to the end zone.

Socker is played on a 9x11 field. Each player has five man tokens, called sockers, and there is a ball token.

Set-up

To set up the game, place the ball token in the center space of the board. Players toss a coin to see who plays first. Starting with the toss winner, each player places all his or her sockers upright on any empty spaces that are in their half of the field, but not adjacent to the ball and not in the center row. For this game, adjacent means orthogonally or diagonally adjacent. See Figure 1 for a sample set up. Players continue alternating turns and do the following.

Figure 1. Set up

Game Play

On a turn, a player must perform one to three actions listed below using any of his or her upright (referred to as *active)* sockers.

- ⚽ **Move.** An active socker may be moved to any adjacent empty space. This includes the goal and out of bounds areas. However, at the end of a player's turn, no more that three of his or her sockers may be in the goal and out of bounds regions.
- ⚽ **Kick.** If an active socker is adjacent to the ball, the ball may be kicked directly away one space provided the destination space is empty.
- ⚽ **Sock.** If an active socker is adjacent to an opponent's socker, then the opponent's socker may be pushed directly away one space provided the destination space is empty. The pushed socker is then put on its side to indicate that it is *inactive* and will not be able to perform any actions for one turn. An opponent's inactive socker may be pushed multiple times but still remains inactive for only one turn.

Any action or active socker may be used multiple times. Player may use any combination of actions and active sockers, and in any order they like.

When a player completes his or her actions all that player's inactive sockers are put upright and become active again.

Out of Bounds: The first and last columns of the playing field, excluding the goal spaces (See the two vertical white lines in Figure 1.) are out of bounds. If the ball is pushed out of bounds, the ball is immediately moved to the center space of the same row. If the center space is occupied, the owner of the occupying socker can choose any empty space adjacent to the center space.

Repeat Positions: When a position is repeated, the player that plays next gets one extra action (total of four instead of three) to break the deadlock.

Objective

The goal of the game is to kick the ball over your goal line, as indicated by the colored horizontal lines in Figure 1. Players can choose either of the following winning conditions: first to score a set number of goals, or most goals after a set number of turns followed by sudden death if necessary. After a goal players should use the setup procedures above with the non-scoring player going first. For sudden death, use only *two* sockers each and use a coin to determine who plays first.