Reversi/Othello

by Tim Hartnell; Graham Charlton

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Contributor	Mark Meiss
Language	English

REVERSI/OTHELLO

The final program in the board-games section of this book is REVERSI, which is often called OTHELLO.* Invented in the late eighteen hundreds, it is played on an ordinary eight by eight board. When it is played on a board, you use pieces which have different colors on each side. The game begins with four pieces placed on the center squares.

From this point on, you move by placing one of your pieces next to a computer piece or pieces, with another of your pieces further on. When that happens, all the computer pieces "reverse" to become your pieces.

Here's how it works. Suppose a line of pieces looked like this:

    OXXXX

and you decided to put your piece (the O) at the end of the line like this:

    OXXXXO

The computer pieces would reverse, so the line looked like this after your move:

    OOOOOO

The game continues until every square on the board is filled, or neither player can move. As you can see, fortunes can change swiftly in this game, as rows branching off your position (such as on the diagonals) can be changed with a single move.

If you cannot move at any time, you signal this to the computer by entering a zero.

REVERSI is a very enjoyable game to play. Writing in Creative Computing magazine (June 1981, p. 188), David Levy tenders the opinion that it is "one of the best games ever invented, simply because the rules can be learned in no more than a minute, yet the game can take years to master." He goes on to observe that although the game is much simpler than chess, it is more complex than checkers.

Although the modern game is called Othello, and was "invented" by Goro Hasegawa in Tokyo in 1971, the only difference between it and Reversi is the fact that the first four positions must be as in the sample game you'll see following this description.

Back in the 1880s, when the game was first invented in London, two gentlemen -- Lewis Waterman and John W. Mollett -- both claimed to be the originators of the game. Stephen Kimmel (writing in Creative Computing magazine, July 1981, p. 94) says he believes Waterman has the strongest case for being the inventor of Reversi, because he had the details published first in a series of articles in the magazine, "The Queen" (which concentrated on "affairs of interest to ladies").

Regardless of who should get the credit, Hasegawa, Waterman, or Mollett, it is a great game, and this program (based on one written by Graham Charlton) puts up a spirited defense.

* Othello is a registered trademark of Gabriel Industries, Inc., USA
  and Mine of Information, UK.

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Emulator_start	menu.exe
Identifier	reversi.qb64
Identifier-ark	ark:/13960/t9n392z8v
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Source	Tim Hartnell's Giant Book of Computer Games
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