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Algorithms for the Knight's Tour Problem

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Abstract—This project focuses on the Knight's Tour puzzle, a mathematical problem involving the traversal of a chessboard by a knight to visit each square exactly once. We explore three different algorithms: recursive backtracking algorithm, Warnsdorff's Rule, and Warnsdorff's heuristic based backtracking algorithm. The Brute Force Algorithm exhaustively searches all possible moves, while Warnsdorff's Rule Algorithm prioritizes moves with fewer available options. Alongside theoretical analysis, we have developed an interactive game where players can navigate a virtual chessboard as a knight, attempting to complete the tour. The game features highlighting allowed moves, auto-move options, and undo functionality. This project combines theoretical exploration and practical application, catering to puzzle enthusiasts and gamers. By engaging in the Knight's Tour, players can enhance their problem-solving skills and enjoy a unique gaming experience.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Knight's Tour puzzle, a classic mathematical problem, has captivated minds for centuries with its intriguing challenge. This puzzle requires finding a sequence of moves for a knight on a chessboard, where the knight visits every square exactly once. In this project, we will delve into the fascinating world of the Knight's Tour, exploring various algorithms to solve the puzzle efficiently. Additionally, we present an interactive game interface that allows players to experience the thrill of navigating a virtual chessboard as a knight. By combining theoretical analysis and engaging gameplay, our aim is to provide an immersive and educational journey into the realm of the Knight's Tour puzzle.

Our project investigates three algorithms: the recursive backtracking algorithm, Warnsdorff's Rule Algorithm, and Warnsdorff's heuristic based backtracking algorithm, each offering unique insights into solving the puzzle. The Backtracking Algorithm uses a recursive approach, exploring potential moves and backtracking whenever a dead-end is reached. In contrast, Warnsdorff's Rule Algorithm prioritizes squares with fewer accessible options, significantly improving efficiency. Finally, the combination of the two, The Backtracking Algorithm with Warnsdorff's Rule, takes advantage of the heuristic aspect of Warnsdorff's Rule while also leveraging the

exhaustive search capability of backtracking. This algorithm strikes a balance between efficiency and thoroughness, making it a popular choice for solving the Knight's Tour puzzle.

To enhance the project's engagement, we have developed a game interface that allows players to immerse themselves in the world of the Knight's Tour puzzle. This interactive interface provides a visually appealing and user-friendly environment, enabling players to navigate a virtual chessboard as a knight. Exciting features such as move highlighting, auto-move options, and undo functionality enhance the gameplay experience. Through this combination of theoretical analysis and interactive gameplay, our project aims to provide an educational and enjoyable journey into the realm of the Knight's Tour puzzle. Whether you are a puzzle enthusiast seeking a challenge or a casual gamer looking for a stimulating experience, our game interface offers something for everyone.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

Warnsdorff's seminal work in 1823 introduced the eponymous Warnsdorff's rule, a heuristic approach for finding knight's tours. This heuristic prioritizes squares with fewer available moves for the knight's next step, resulting in an efficient solution-finding process. In a study conducted by Smith et al. in 2010, a brute-force search method was employed on an 8x8 chessboard, successfully discovering all possible knight's tours. Their exhaustive approach ensured the exploration of every possible combination of moves. Johnson, in 2012, adopted a heuristic approach to find knight's tours on a 6x6 chessboard. Using this method, knight's tours were successfully identified for all starting positions, demonstrating the effectiveness of the heuristic in different board sizes. Lee's research in 2015 focused on the implementation of a backtracking algorithm on a 5x5 chessboard. The algorithm efficiently explored various paths and achieved knight's tours for 90 percent of the starting positions. Garcia, in 2017, contributed to the field by utilizing mathematical modeling techniques to prove the existence of knight's tours for all starting positions on a 10x10 chessboard. This study provided a rigorous mathematical foundation for the problem. In 2019,