

RETROGRADE

v20060506

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PREMISE

The last remaining members of two warring species of dragons fight for the survival of their race on the precipice of a black hole.

OVERVIEW

Players take turns moving their pieces around the board in attempt to capture the other players "spore." Whomever catches their opponent's spore first, wins the game.

COMPONENTS

Game board - The board is made up of eight concentric circles (orbits). Each circle (except for the outermost circle) is divided up into a number of spaces that is twice what the more inner circle has. For example, the first circle is 1; the second, 2; the third, 4; the fourth, 8; etc.

Pieces - Each player has eight pieces:

 **SPORE (1)**

 **HATCHLING (3)**

 **DRAKE (1)**

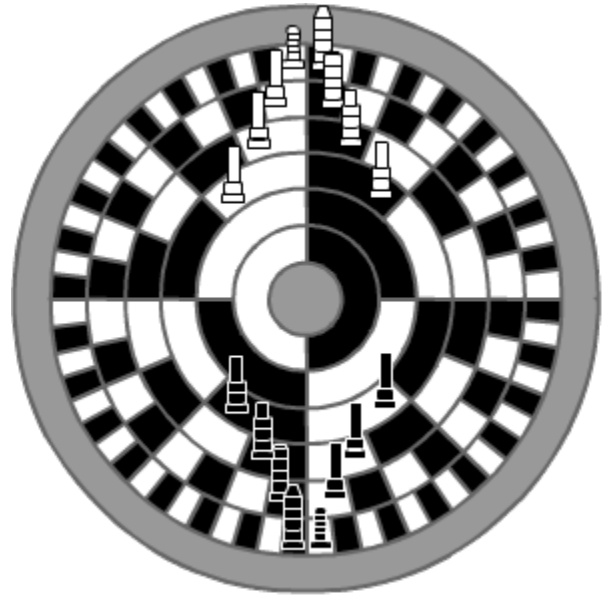
 **WYRM (1)**

 **LEVIATHAN (1)**

 **ELDER (1)**

INITIAL SETUP

Each player lines their pieces up in two rows along the major axis so that the spore rests to the player's right of the line on the 7th circle. The hatchlings are lined up on the right side on the 6th, 5th, and 4th circle. The elder is placed on the 7th circle on the player's left hand side of the line. The leviathan is placed on the 6th circle on the left, the wurm on the 5th and the drake on the 4th.



GAME PLAY

Piece movement

On a player's turn, they move a single piece. All pieces, except the spore, move in the same fashion, only the distance they can travel differs.

There are two different systems of available piece movement: All Out and Gentleman's Game.

ALL OUT

In this system, all pieces (except the spore) have a choice to move in one of the following six movements (where N = that piece's strength, colors reference lines in diagram below, the piece demonstrating is a drake with a power of 2):

1. N orbits out, 1 around (red)
2. 1 orbit out, N around (blue)
3. N around (green)
4. N around, 1 orbit in OR out (purple)
5. 1 orbit in, N around (orange)
6. N orbits in, 1 around (yellow)



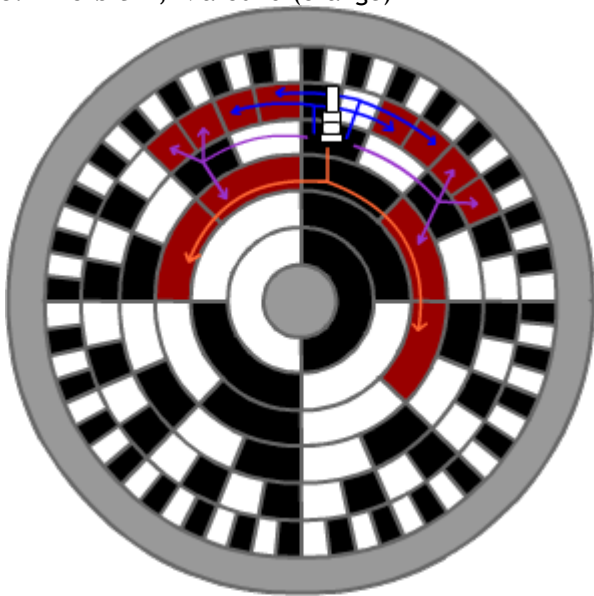
In the All Out system pieces have a greater number of move choices (as compared to the Gentleman's Game) but pieces are unable to move through other pieces (friend or foe). This means a piece's advance can be blocked.

A piece must move its full number of spaces. If something prevents it from moving its full number of spaces in one direction than that piece may not move in that direction.

GENTLEMAN'S GAME

In this system, all pieces (except the spore) have a choice to move in one of the following four movements (where N = that piece's strength, colors reference lines in diagram below, the piece demonstrating is a drake with a power of 2):

1. 1 orbit out, N around (blue)
2. N around, 1 orbit in OR out (purple)
3. 1 orbit in, N around (orange)

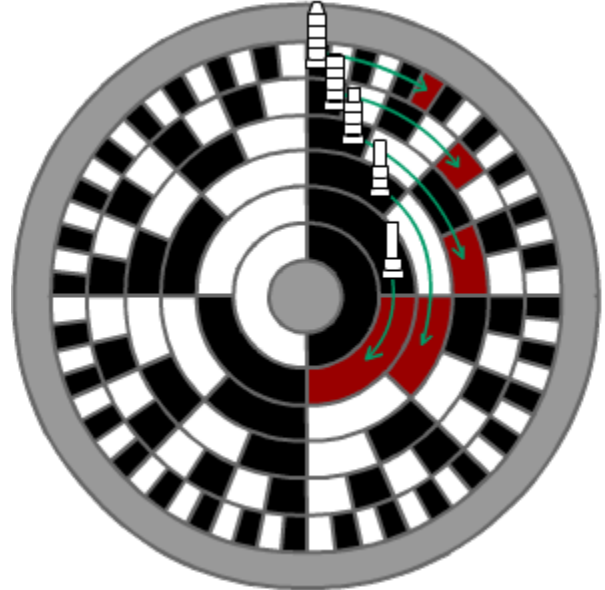


In the Gentleman's Game, pieces have fewer choices for movement, but unlike the All Out system, pieces CAN move through other pieces (friend or foe), which means piece advancement cannot be blocked.

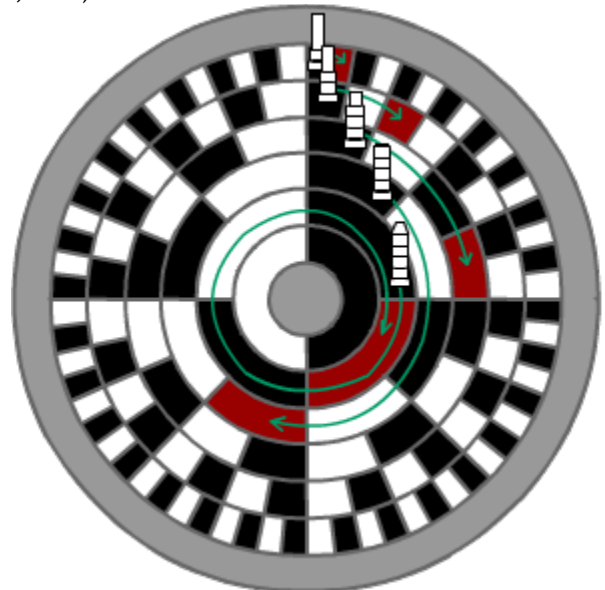
A piece must move its full number of spaces. If something prevents it from moving its full number of spaces in one direction than that piece may not move in that direction.

Piece Power

A piece's power simply represents the number of spaces it moves around an orbit or number of orbit changes it can make (depending on movement choice, power represented by N). Below is a diagram that demonstrates each piece's power making a simple move around an orbit (the elder is on the 6th outermost orbit (power 5), the leviathan is on the 5th orbit (power 4), the wyrm is on the 4th orbit (power 3), the drake is on the 3rd orbit (power 2) and the hatchling is on the 2nd orbit (power 1):

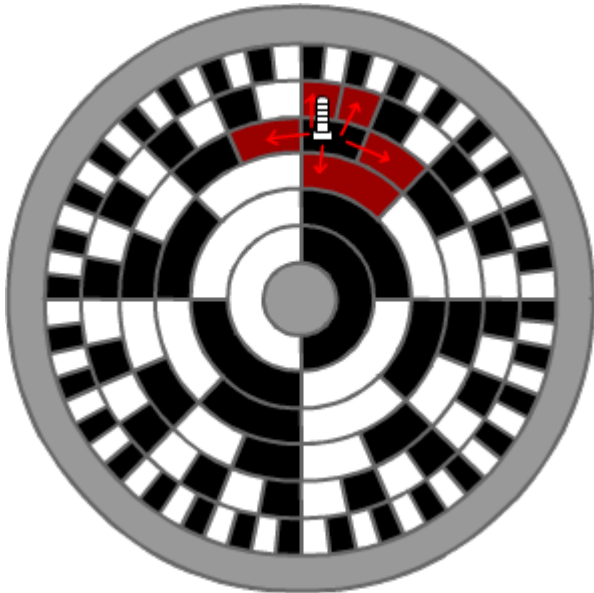


Below is the same diagram but with the pieces in the inverted position (elder on 2nd orbit, leviathan on 3rd orbit, etc.)



Spore Movement

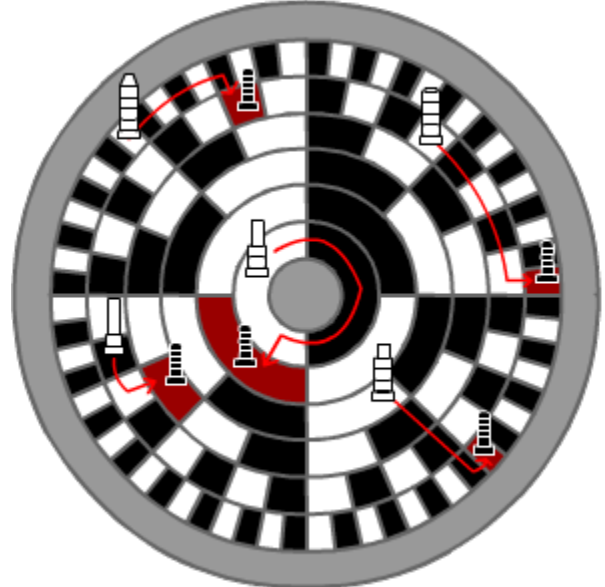
The spore is drifting aimlessly in the gravitational field of the black hole, as a result, its movements is more restricted than the other pieces. A spore can only move a single space either around the orbit it is in, or move in or out a single orbit.



Capturing

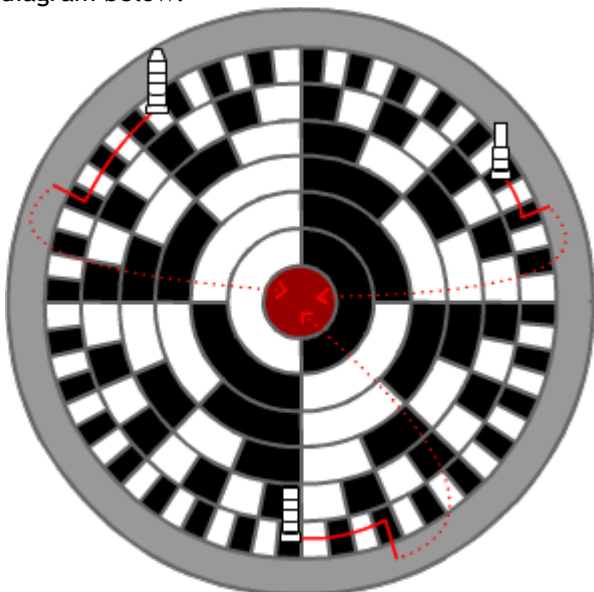
A piece captures another piece when the end of its movement places it on the same square as an enemy piece. The attacking piece must be able to move its full number of spaces - it cannot capture mid-movement. At this point, the enemy piece is removed from play.

Below is a diagram of several different pieces capturing an opponent's spore:



Outer/Center circle

Any piece whose final move places it in the outermost circle is automatically transported to the very center circle. This is demonstrated with a few different pieces in the diagram below:



Winning

The player who captures their opponent's spore wins the game.

Stalemate

Occasionally players can enter an end game where a lack of pieces can create an endless succession of moves. If this occurs, the players can agree on declaring the game a stalemate - the game is a draw. This can be avoided by playing a timed game.

Timed Game

Players can play timed games. Each player starts with a total amount of time (the exact amount is based on the player's skill level). Whomever runs out of time first, or whose spore is captured first, loses the game.

A time game helps prevent an endless end game, as well as prevents excessive move contemplation - making for a more frantic game.