



by Luke Weisman

Introduction

Pagoda is a two person turn based strategy game with an added element of luck. The goal is to be the first to build a chain of your pieces from the base of a mountain to the pagoda on top, and back down again. Your pieces are four of the steps in the cycle of life, namely worm, goat, human, and Buddha.

The Pieces

Each piece is a standard six sided die. The top of the die determines what piece it is: 1 is a worm, 2 or 3 is a goat, 4 or 5 is human, and 6 is a Buddha.

The Board

The board represents an aerial view of a mountain, with the central point (the pagoda) at the peak. The outermost ring is the base of the mountain, and the ring inside is half way up the mountain.

Pieces are placed on the little circles (or the pagoda) at the line intersections. They move along the lines connecting these spaces. The dotted lines are "rough paths" which only goats can use.

Setup

Place the board between the two players and give one player five white dice and the other the five black dice. Set the dice so each player has one worm, two goats, and two humans. These pieces are in the pool of resources the player can take and play on the board later on.

The Turn

During their turn players can either place a piece from their pool or move one of their played pieces, possibly killing or pushing another piece.

Placing

A piece can be placed on any empty space on the board, except for the pagoda. Buddhas may not be placed on the board.

Moving

Each type of piece moves differently.

Worms

Worms move one space within the ring (inner or outer) they were placed in. They do not go up or down. If they land on an occupied space they share that space with the other piece as worms are small and unnoticed. They count as being in the square for the determining a chain.

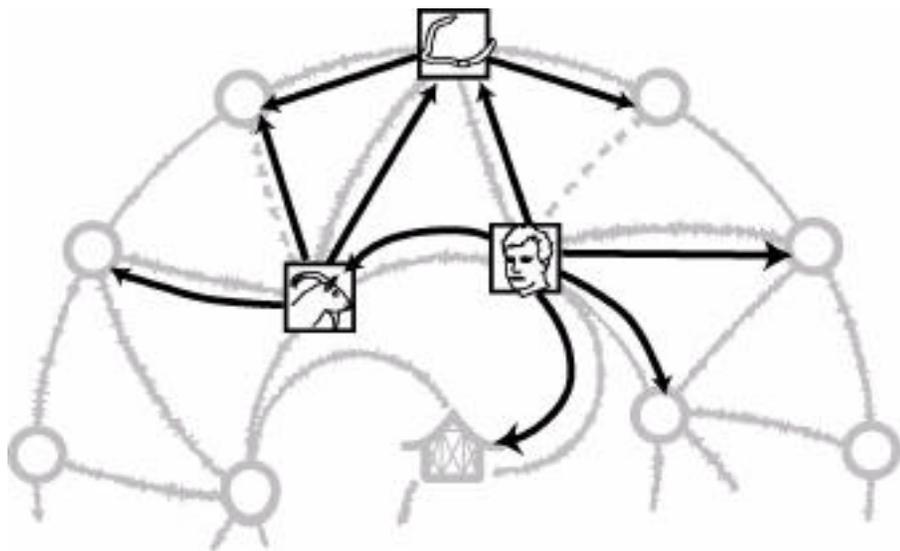
Goats

Goats move one space in any direction but must change elevation. This means that a goat can not move where a worm could move, and vice-versa. A goat pushes another piece (friendly or otherwise) by landing on that piece's space. At this point the goat can determine what adjacent space the pushed piece ends up in (excluding where the goat came from). If there is no available space, the pushed piece dies.

Humans

Humans can move in any direction except along the dotted lines (which represent rough paths). A human kills any piece it lands on. Humans can not kill friendly pieces.

Here is an illustration of the three pieces and their motions:



The Buddha

Buddhas always remain off the board. For each budda a player has she may trace a winning chain through one completely empty space.

Death

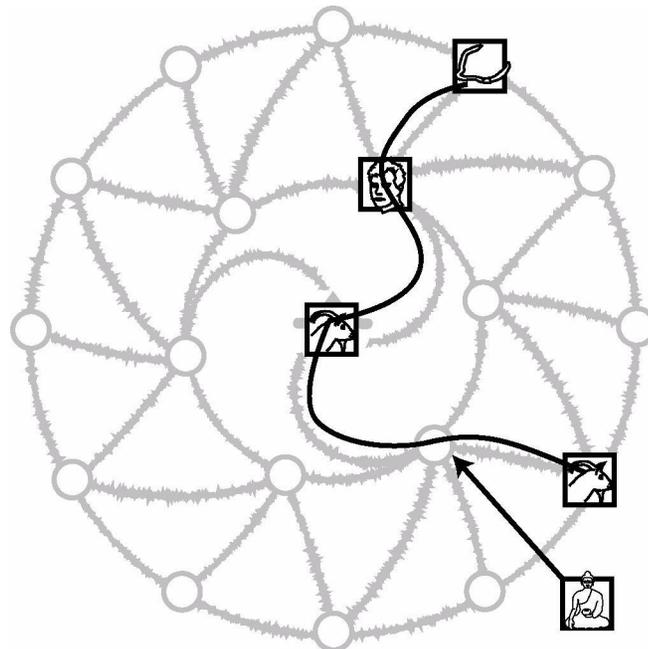
When a pieces dies, it is removed from the board and reincarnated. The killing player rolls the piece and returns the resulting piece to the opponent's pool. The opponent can later, as their turn, place the piece back on the board.

Winning

A player wins when he arranges his five pieces in a (possibly curvy) line from the base of the mountain, to the pagoda, and back down again. There should be a line (dotted or otherwise) connecting each piece to the next one in the chain. One gap in the chain can be filled per Buddha the player has. A worm still counts as part of a chain even if it is coexisting with an opponent's piece. Below is a picture of a finished chain of pieces, with one Buddha filling in a gap.

Some Last Notes

This game's chance comes from reincarnation. It may not be a good idea to take an opponent's pieces, for Buddhas are very powerful, and



pieces can come back better than they were. But sometimes the tides of chance go your way—good luck and good thinking!

Violent Worm Variant

An alternate rule I like just as well is that worms kill pieces they land on instead of coexisting with them. Try both!

Credits

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