

Bladder™

– The Root of all Football –

Laid out here, to augment the rules on the box base, are the rules to a popular variation that was devised during a heavy **Bladder** weekend with Mark Maidens and the Deal Chess Brigade in Kent - Thanks Mark!

We call this variation **Two Tackling Bladder**. It is basically the same as the pure game described on the box base in all ways except that two pieces can tackle (without laming) and passing is limited to three squares. Also note the addition of an optional half-time rule (thank you Simon Gunning of West London). If having read the box base you are still in any doubt about any aspect of the game, a quick squint at this variation should clear up any vagueries (or you can email us at boys@pbgames.com).

You will find more variations being added to the website (such as the bonkers **Double Bladder Bladder**) all the time at www.bladdergames.com

Happy Bladdering and a word to those of you who are given to excessive spleen or players of an impressionable age, please restrict all football violence to the Bladder board!

SET UP:

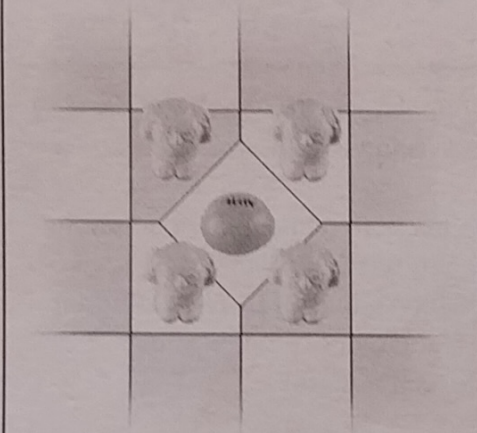
The **BLADDER** is placed on the centre diamond in the middle of the board. The two teams (Light and Dark) are set up in rows facing each other (see below)



TWO TACKLING BLADDER:

1) PLAY: Decide who moves first. Play then alternates, with one move per player, per go. Pieces may only be moved one square forward, one square diagonally forward, or one square sideways. At no stage of the game may a piece be moved backwards, or diagonally backwards. Pieces may not jump over other pieces, or occupy the same square as another piece. As soon as play commences, the unoccupied goal squares may be played (moved on) in the same way as all the other squares.

figure 2. Picking up the bladder:



Light (or Dark) may pick up the bladder by surrounding it on ANY THREE of the four squares indicated above.

2) PICKING UP THE BLADDER: To pick up the bladder from the centre diamond, it must be surrounded by placing three pieces on any of the four squares around the centre diamond (see fig. 2). The player who picks up the bladder, places it on the head of any of the three pieces used to surround it (player chooses).

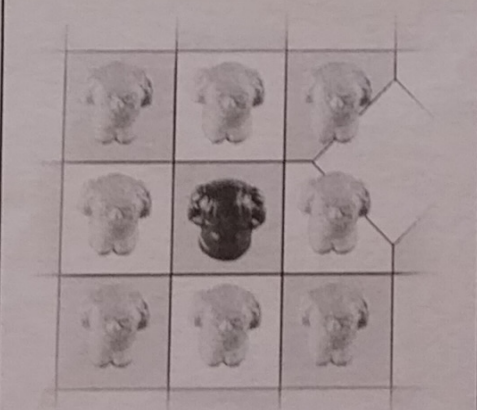
The point at which the bladder is picked up, is known as 'Half Time'. If Dark picks up the bladder from the centre diamond, Light then takes the next turn (as in normal play). However, if Light picks up the bladder from the centre diamond, Light is awarded an extra turn, to be taken immediately. As with the vast majority of games, someone has to make the first move. With **BLADDER**, Dark gains a slight advantage by starting the game, the purpose of 'Half Time' is to help level the playing field by allowing Light to 'kick off' the 'second half'.

As soon as the bladder has been picked up, the centre diamond plays no further part in the game, i.e. pieces may not be played (moved) on it.

Once picked up, the bladder may not be put down again during the game.

2a: If there are not enough vacant squares available to surround the bladder with three pieces, the players must attack and remove the pieces that are preventing the bladder from being picked up (see rule 3 - 'LAMING').

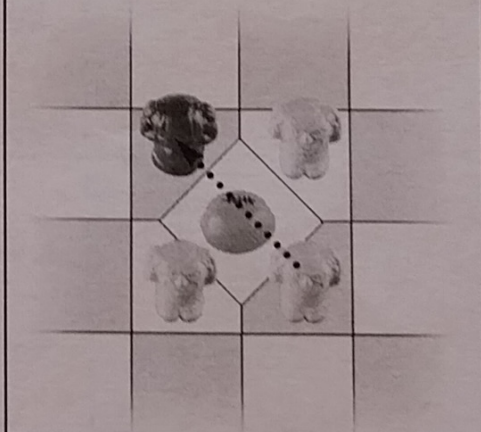
figure 3. Laming:



Light (or Dark) may remove their opponent's piece by surrounding it on ANY THREE of the eight squares adjacent to it. (see example above)

3) LAMING: To 'lame' a piece (to take - and permanently remove from play), it must be surrounded on any three of the eight squares adjacent to it (i.e. touching at the sides or corners - see fig. 3). Accordingly, the attacking player will have fewer positional options, if laming a piece which is in a corner, or next to the edge of the board. Pieces may not be lamed diagonally (across) the centre diamond, until the bladder has been picked up (see fig. 4).

figure 4. Laming across the bladder:

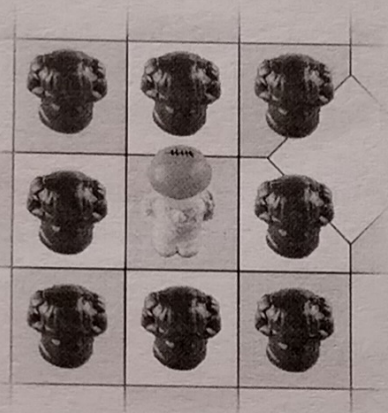


Players MAY NOT 'lame' their opponent DIAGONALLY across the centre diamond, before the bladder has been picked up. (see example above)

Only one piece may be lamed per move. Laming the bladder carrier, automatically transfers possession of the bladder to any of the three attacking pieces (player chooses). Once a piece has been surrounded by three attacking pieces, there is no defence - and their piece is permanently removed from the game.

3a: Players may move a piece into a position where it is surrounded by three of their opponent's pieces, without it automatically being lamed (i.e. passive laming is not allowed). To lame the piece, the opponent must move one of his three attackers (or another nearby piece) to create a new (or altered) three-on-one configuration (i.e. only aggressive laming is allowed).

figure 5. Tackling:



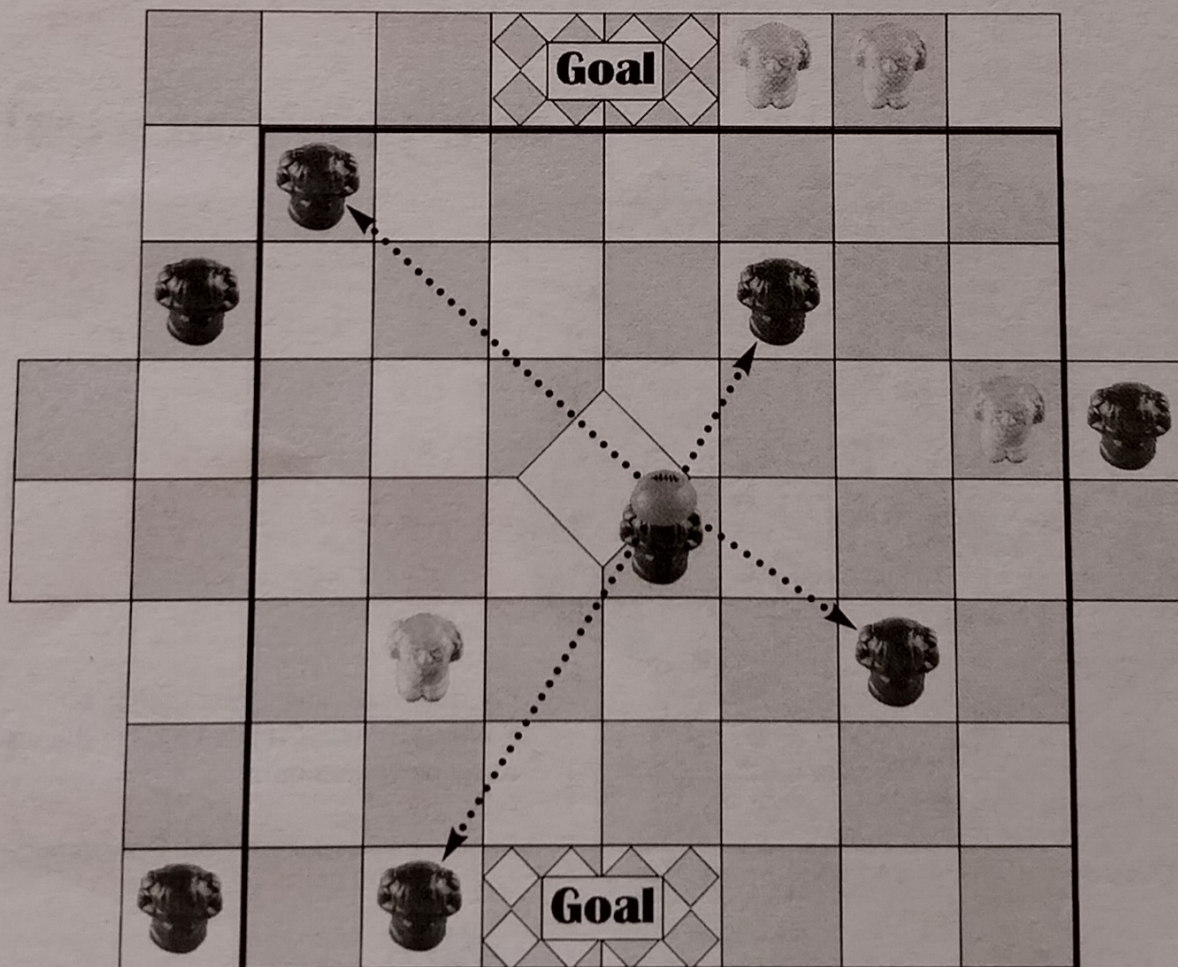
Dark (or Light) may tackle their opponent's piece to gain possession of the bladder by surrounding it on ANY TWO of the eight adjacent squares. (see example above)

4) TACKLING: To tackle for possession of the bladder, the piece carrying the bladder may be challenged by placing two pieces on any of the eight squares adjacent to it (see fig. 5). The bladder is then placed on the head of either (player chooses) of the two pieces used to tackle. Successfully tackling for possession of the bladder concludes the players' turn, the game now continues as before. Remember, 'laming' the bladder carrier (as described in Rule 3) automatically transfers possession of the bladder as well.

5) THE BLADDER CARRIER: Once in possession of the bladder, the player has the option either to move a piece (including the piece carrying the bladder) or pass the bladder to another piece.

5a: The bladder may be passed a maximum of three adjacent squares, in any direction. The three squares may be counted in any way (straight, diagonally, 'L' shaped, etc.) provided all three squares touch at either the side or corner (see fig. six).

figure 6. Passing:



Dark may pass the bladder to any other dark piece up to a maximum distance of ANY THREE ADJACENT SQUARES. The highlighted box in the above example shows the maximum passing range of the bladder carrier.

6) WINNING (SCORING A GOAL): The bladder may not be kicked into an open goal. It may either be carried into the goal by the bladder carrier, or passed to another piece which has been successfully manoeuvred into the goal. The first person to score wins the game. N.B. Own goals count, i.e. if a player moves or passes the bladder into their own goal, they have lost the game!

7) ADDITIONAL: As soon as a piece has reached the far end of the board, it may be turned about face (literally) - and moved back towards its own end of the board. This new direction is counted as forward - and again, these pieces can move in any direction except backwards (i.e. against the way they are facing). If a piece subsequently returns all the way to its' own (original) back line, it may be turned about face yet again - and move forward in the usual way. This turn-around tactic may be employed indefinitely.

The squares which protrude at the sides of the board (two on each side) have the same practical use and value as all the other squares. These squares serve to 'open up' the mid-field playing area, allowing more freedom of movement than a traditional chequerboard configuration.

THESE ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT RULES TO REMEMBER DURING PLAY:

Rule 2) THREE PIECES ARE NEEDED TO PICK UP THE BLADDER.

Rule 3) THREE PIECES ARE NEEDED TO 'LAME' (TAKE & REMOVE) YOUR OPPONENT'S PIECE.

Rule 4) TWO PIECES ARE NEEDED TO TACKLE (TAKE THE BLADDER FROM YOUR OPPONENT).



use yer 'ead son!

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