

FURTHER INFORMATION

Readers interested in finding out more about salta can do so by consulting the following books.

Bell, R. C. *Board and Table Games from Many Civilizations*, vol. 2, pp. 58-59. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979.

Botermans, J. et al. *The World of Games*, p. 109. New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1989.

Murray, H. J. R. *A History of Board-games Other Than Chess*, p.52. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952.

Parlett, D. *The Oxford History of Board Games*, p. 135. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Copyright © Damian Walker 2011 - <http://boardgames.cynningstan.org.uk/>

SALTA

by Damian Walker

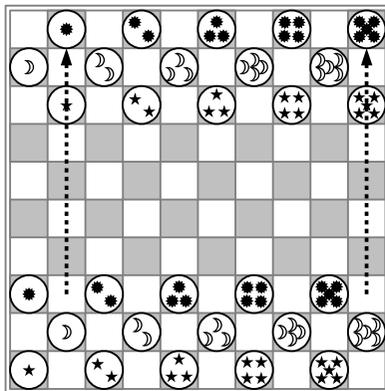
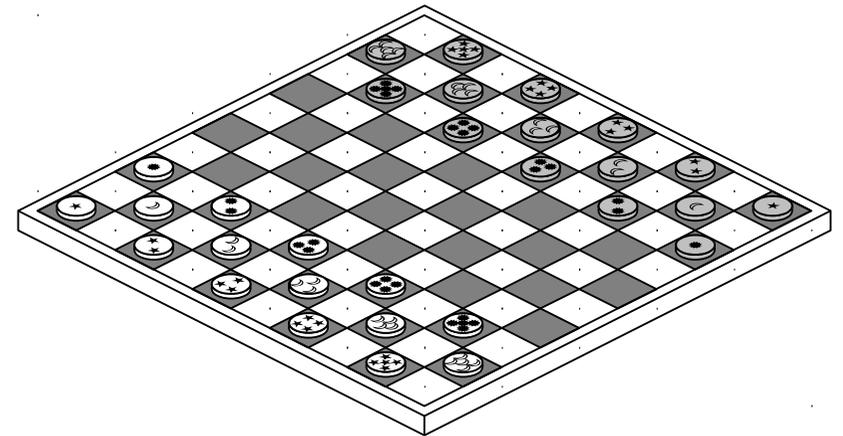


Illustration 3: the aim of victory as described in rule 9, using the white pieces for example. Pieces have advanced to their equivalent ranks and files at the far end of the board.

INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

Salta is a game of position invented in 1899 by the Düsseldorf-born musician Konrad Büttgenbach. It seems to be based on the popular game *halma*, another offshoot of which is *Chinese checkers*, but the rules are slightly more complex. Its affinity with *halma* is made more apparent by the fact that both words mean "leap".

The game was exhibited at the

Monte Carlo Chess Tourney in 1901, which gained it some popularity. It was also energetically promoted for a while, its marketing including a published picture of actress Sarah Bernhardt playing the game with its inventor. For a brief time *salta* became quite fashionable, but by the time of the Great War it had returned to comparative obscurity.

HOW TO PLAY

Salta is played on an enlarged chequerboard of 10 squares by 10, as is used for draughts in some European countries. The pieces are 15 counters, specially marked with a rank (1 to 5) and a suit (stars, moons and suns).

Beginning the Game

1. The game is set up with each player's pieces occupying the black squares of the three rows of the board closest to him.

2. On the back row, the pieces of the star suit are placed, in ascending order

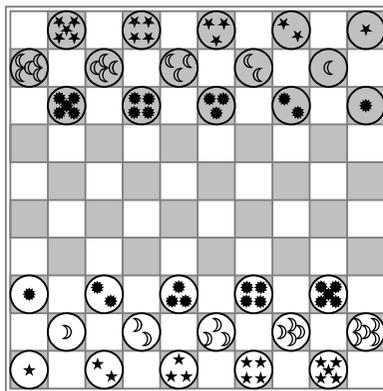


Illustration 1: *salta* pieces set out for play.

from 1 at the left to 5 at the right.

3. On the second row are the moons, similarly numbered, and the third row contains the suns arranged in the same way. The whole arrangement is shown in Illustration 1.

4. The black player takes the first turn, play then alternating between white and black.

Moving the pieces

5. A player may in his turn move a single piece one square diagonally forwards or backwards to a

vacant square. The markings on the pieces are not relevant to their powers of movement.

6. Alternatively, a player may leap diagonally forwards or backwards over another piece of either colour, landing on the empty space beyond.

7. After leaping once, a piece may leap again if further leaps are possible. Such a sequence of leaps may consist of as many or as few as the player pleases. Examples of moves and jumps are shown in Illustration 2

8. Pieces are not captured in *salta*, so a piece jumped over is left in play.

Winning the Game

9. A player wins the game by moving all his pieces forward to the opposite end of the board. The pieces must be retain their order, as shown in

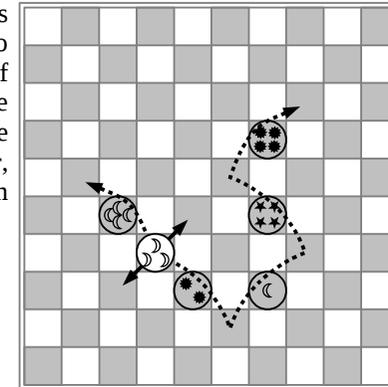


Illustration 2: movement of the pieces, as described in rules 5 to 7. The white piece may move along any one of the four paths. It may also stop at any point on the longer series of jumps.

Illustration 3.

10. Optionally, a score may be calculated: the losing player continues to move until the pieces are all at their goal; the number of moves he makes are his opponent's winning score.

Variation

Early in the game's history, a variation on the method of winning was proposed. This has been adopted in many rules, sometimes being passed off as the original rule in English-language versions (including all of the references below).

9(i). A player wins the game by moving all his pieces across the board, so that they occupy the opponent's home rows. The pieces must be arranged in the same order of suit and rank as the opponent's pieces were when they started the game.