

## DABLOT PREJJESNE

by Damian Walker

15. Captures for warriors and farmers are compulsory, though for pieces of higher station they are still optional.

16. The game can be declared over when the king or landlord is taken, that piece's owner losing the game.

If rule 16 is not used, it is sometimes possible to beat a player whose most powerful piece remains when yours is lost. Since it is possible to win by immobilising the enemy, minor pieces may block major ones in even if they cannot capture them.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

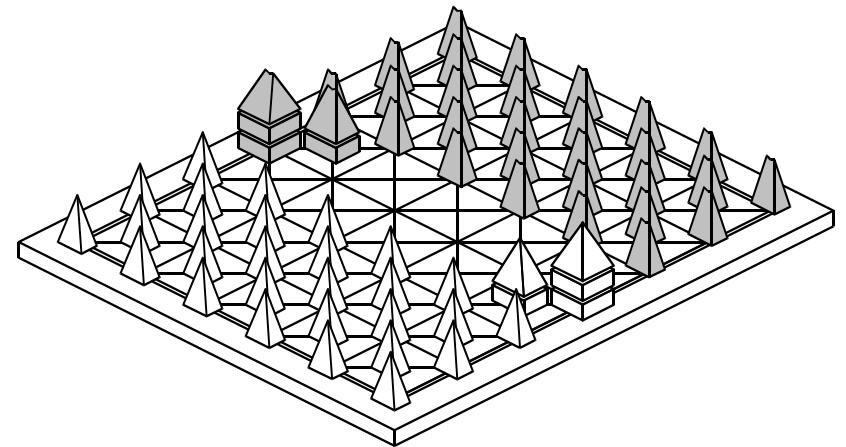
Information on dablot prejjesne can be obtained from the following books.

Bell, R. C. *The Boardgame Book*, pp. 152-153. London: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 1979.

Bell, R. C. *Discovering Old Board Games*, pp. 42-45. Aylesbury: Shire Publications, Ltd., 1980.

Parlett, D. *The Oxford History of Board Games*, pp. 247-248. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

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



## INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

The nomadic Sami people from Lapland have been quite innovative over the centuries when it comes to board games. An example of this is *dablot prejjesne*, which has some resemblances to other games, but in combining them becomes a pure Sami invention.

The game has been in existence since at least 1892, when it appears in a museum catalogue in Stockholm. However, it took until 1973 before it was introduced to English-speaking people by the game historian R. C. Bell.

Dablot prejjesne recalls historical struggles between nomadic Sami warriors and Finnish settlers farming the land. One side has a Sami king, prince and warriors, while the other side are known as the landlord, his son, and their tenant farmers. Despite the differences in names the sides are completely equal in number and power, making this an even-handed game of war.

A traditional board was made of pine, with the Sami side in yellow and the Finnish side in red.

## HOW TO PLAY

Dablot prejjesne is played by two people on a board of 72 points, arranged as two overlapping grids: one of six rows of five points, and one of five rows of four points, all connected by lines (see Illustration 1). One side consists of a *king*, a *prince* and twenty-eight *warriors*, while the other has a *landlord*, his son

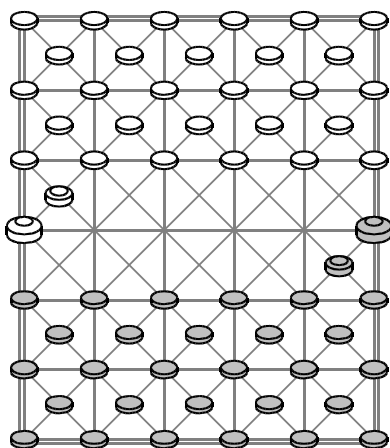


Illustration 1: the pieces in dablot prejjesne set out at the beginning of the game. The biggest pieces are the king and landlord out in front, with their sons behind them.

and twenty-eight *tenant farmers*.

### Beginning the Game

1. The Sami player's pieces are set out with the warriors on his back ranks, the prince in front to the right, and the king in front, as shown in Illustration 1.

2. The Finn's landlord, son and tenant farmers are

set up in the same way at the other end of the board.

3. Players decide at random who is to move first. After each player moves, play passes to his opponent.

### Moving the Pieces

4. A player in his turn may move one piece along a marked line in any direction, examples being shown in Illustration 2.

5. All pieces have the same power of move.

6. Only one piece at a time may occupy a point on the board.

### Capturing Enemies

7. Instead of moving, a piece may capture an enemy by jumping over it and landing on the empty space beyond (see Illustration 2).

8. Captures in this game are optional; players are never forced to capture.

9. No piece may capture above its station, specifically:

(i). the king and the landlord may capture any enemy;

(ii). the prince and the landlord's son may capture anything except the king or landlord;

(iii). warriors and farmers may only capture each other.

10. If the piece, having made a capture, is in a position to make further captures, it is free to do so in the same turn.

### Ending the Game

11. A player loses the game if he cannot move because:

(i). he has lost all his pieces, or  
(ii). he has pieces left but they are surrounded by the enemy and unable to move.

12. A player may resign if he feels his position is hopeless.

13. The game is a draw if only the king and the landlord remain on the board.

### Variation

Some players have introduced new rules to counter drawish play.

14. Warriors and farmers may only move forward, either directly or diagonally. They may, however, capture in any direction.

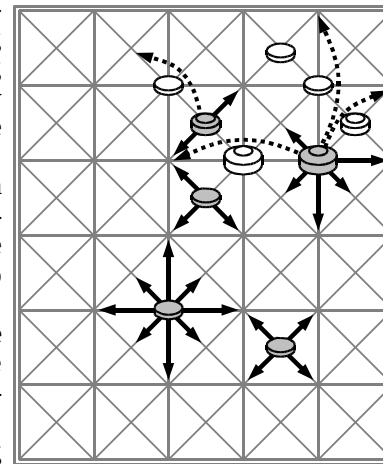


Illustration 2: moves and captures available to the dark pieces. For clarity only single jumps are shown. Note that weaker pieces may not capture stronger ones.