Archimedes

*A New Game
For Two*

BY PHILIP COHEN
AND SCOTT MARLEY

When Roman ships attacked Syracuse, the mathematician Archimedes showed the soldiers of Syracuse how to focus the sun's rays with their shields on the wooden ships, causing them to burst into flame.

The game Archimedes is inspired by this legend. Players destroy enemy ships by focusing imaginary rays on them, while trying to invade the enemy port. Destroyed ships, though, can be rebuilt later.

EQUIPMENT

Archimedes can be played with a standard checkers set. The board is an 8x8 grid, and each player has 12 "ships" represented by checkers of one color.

SETTING UP

Each player's home port is the near left corner square. Ships start around the ports as shown in the opening setup below. Players alternate. Each turn has two parts: moving, and (when possible) destroying ships.

MOVING

Each player moves one ship each turn. A ship moves any number of empty squares in a straight line, either vertically, horizontally, or diagonally (that is, like a chess queen). However, a ship may never end its turn in its home port.

DESTROYING SHIPS

Two opposing ships "attack" each other if they face each other along a straight line with no other ships between them (so that each could move to the other's square). A ship that is under attack from three or more enemy ships is "vulnerable." At the end of your move, you must destroy all vulnerable enemy ships by removing them from the board.

In the example below, the white ship on b3 is under attack from black ships on a2, b1, and d3, and can be destroyed.

You can only destroy enemy ships after your move. Sometimes, if an enemy ship is vulnerable at the beginning of your turn, your move in that turn will make it no longer vulnerable. When this happens, you cannot destroy the ship.

If the destruction of one ship makes another ship vulnerable that wasn't vulnerable before, both ships must be destroyed. In the example below, destroying the white ship on f8 makes the ship on g8 vulnerable. Both are destroyed.
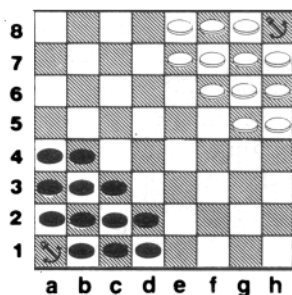
REBUILDING SHIPS

At the beginning of your turn, you may rebuild one of your destroyed ships. The ship is placed in your home port, and since ships may not end a turn in their own port, you must use your turn to move the ship out of port. Therefore, you cannot rebuild a ship until you have a vacant square to move the ship to.

WINNING

You win the game by moving one of your ships into the enemy port, provided that your opponent cannot destroy it on his or her next turn. (If your opponent can destroy it, the game continues.)

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Opening Setup

Examples of play (see text)