Historical Tabletop Games Played in the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA)

Printable game boards and instructions for:

⋄ Nine Men's Morris ⋄

⋄ Alquerque ⋄

⋄ Fox and Geese ⋄

⋄ Glückshaus ⋄
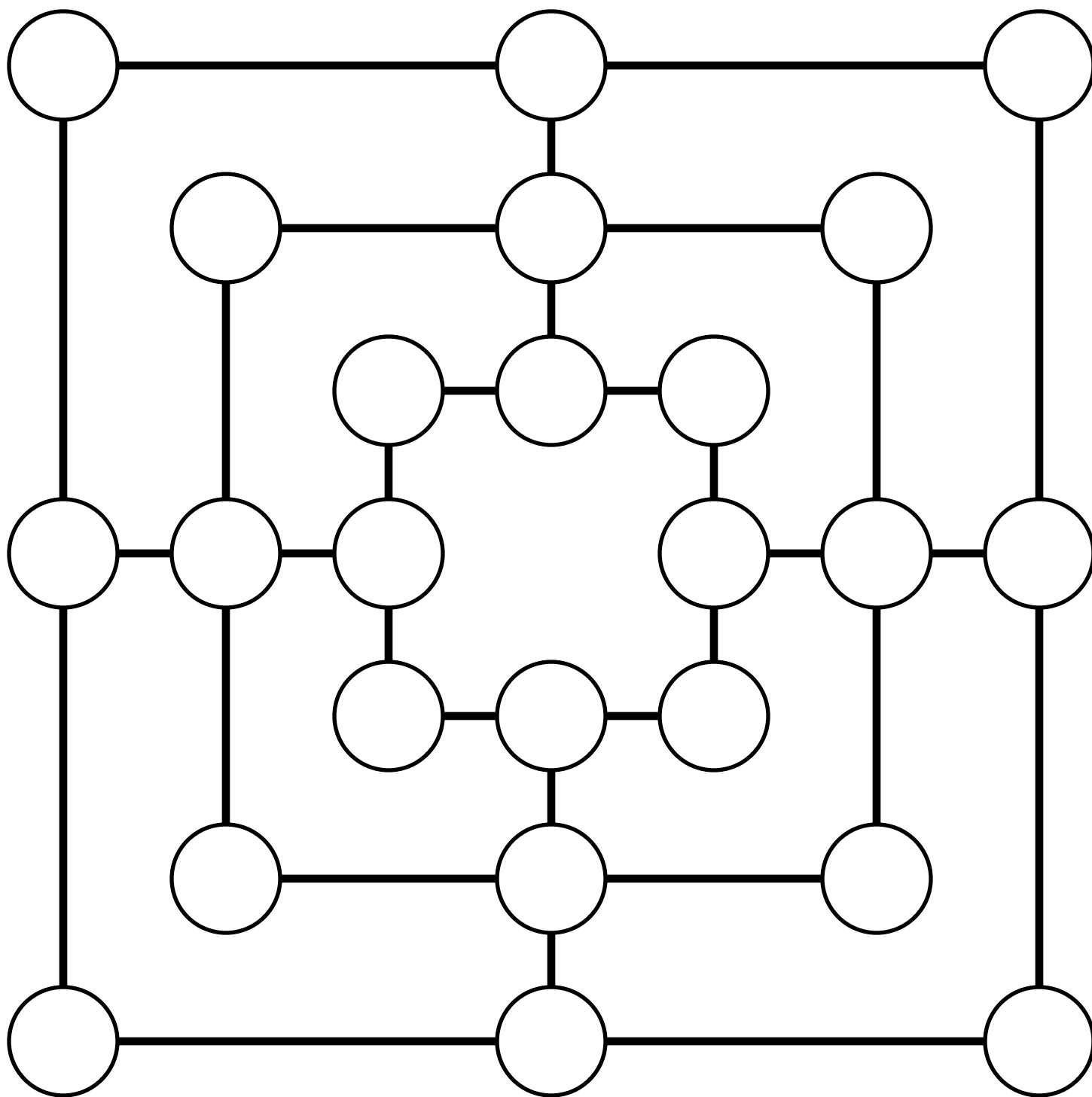
Nine Men's Morris

About Nine Men's Morris

History

Morris games are more than two thousand years old, and were popular in the Roman Empire and throughout the medieval era.

Many variations exist with different boards and varying numbers of pieces.

Equipment

• A game board with 25 open spaces connected by paths.

• Each player gets a differently-colored set of 9 playing pieces.

To Play

• The game begins with an empty board and each player holding their own pieces.

• The players determine who plays first and then take turns.

• At the start of the game, and while you still have new pieces to place on the board, a turn consists of placing one of your pieces on any open space.

• In the second phase, after all pieces have been placed, a turn consists of moving one of your pieces along a path to the next space (only one step, no jumps).

• During both phases, if you form a "mill" by placing or moving a piece so that three of your pieces form a straight line on adjacent spaces, vertically or horizontally, you can remove one of your oponent's pieces from the board.
  • You can choose which piece to remove, but you can only break up an oponent's mill if no other pieces are available.
  • You can move a piece to break an existing mill, then move it back on the next turn to reform the same mill, removing one of your opponent's pieces each time.

• When a player has only two pieces left, or all of their pieces are blocked in so they are unable to make a legal move, the game is over and their openent wins.

Alquerque
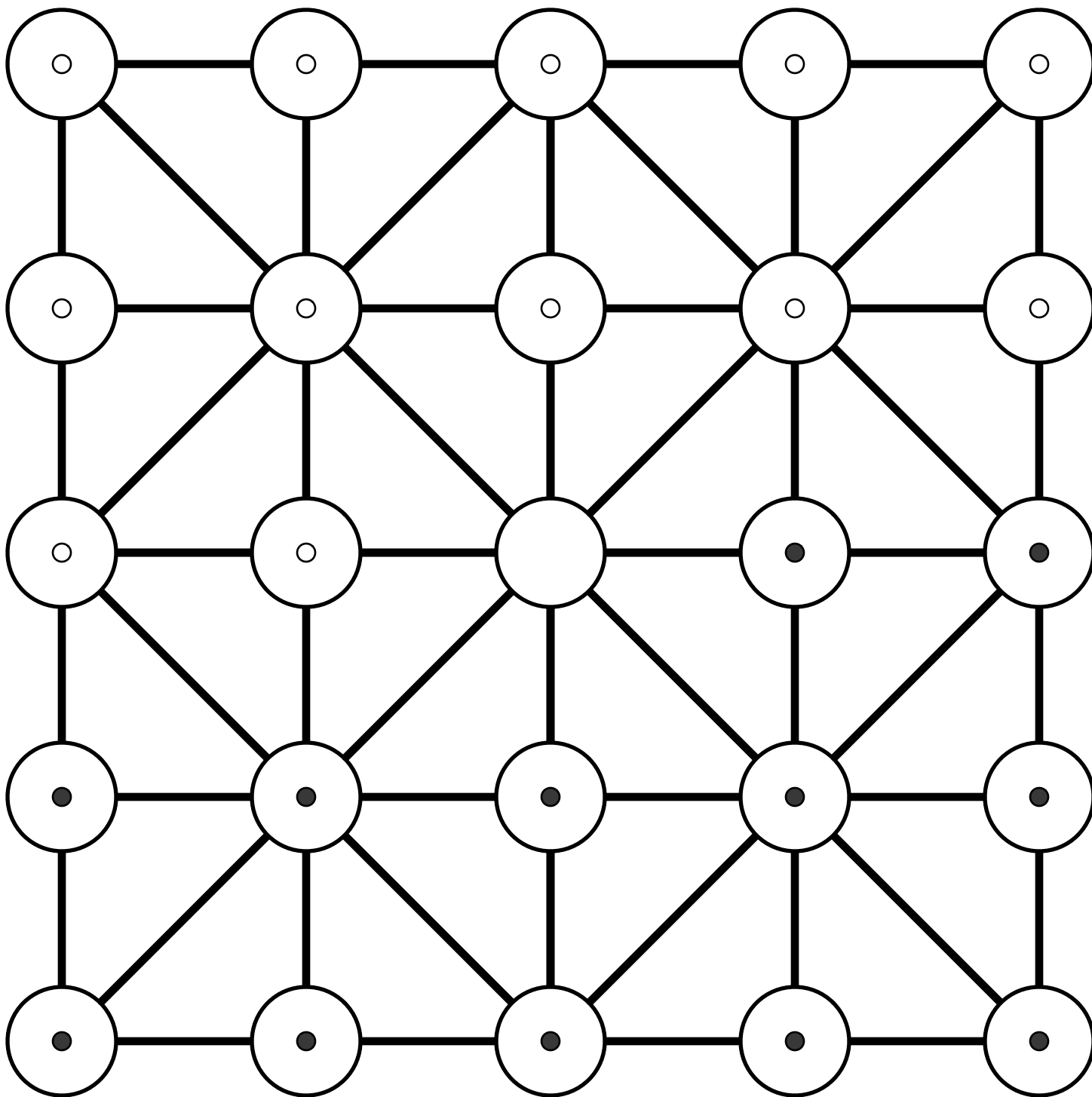
About Alquerque

History

The Arabic game "el qirkat" has been played for more than a thousand years, and was taught to Europeans who called it "alquerque."

The modern game of checkers is descended from this medieval predecessor.

Equipment

• A game board with 25 open spaces joined by paths.

• Each player gets a differently-colored set of 12 playing pieces.

To Play

• Set the board by placing each player's pieces along two rows on their side of the board, plus two spaces of the center row, with the very center spot left open.

• The two players take turns.

• On your turn, move one of your pieces one step along a path to an open space.

• Instead of a simple move, you can capture an openent's piece by jumping over it to an open space in a straight line along a path.
  • If you lands in a space from which you can make an additional capture, in any direction, you can do so immediately, multiple tiumes, as part of the same turn.
  • If your openent has an opportunity to capture a piece and doesn't take it, or they captured a piece but then stopped when they could have taken more, on your next turn you can point out the mistake and remove the piece that should have made the capture.

• When one player runs out of pieces, or is surrounded and can not make a legal move, the game is over and their openent wins.

Fox and Geese
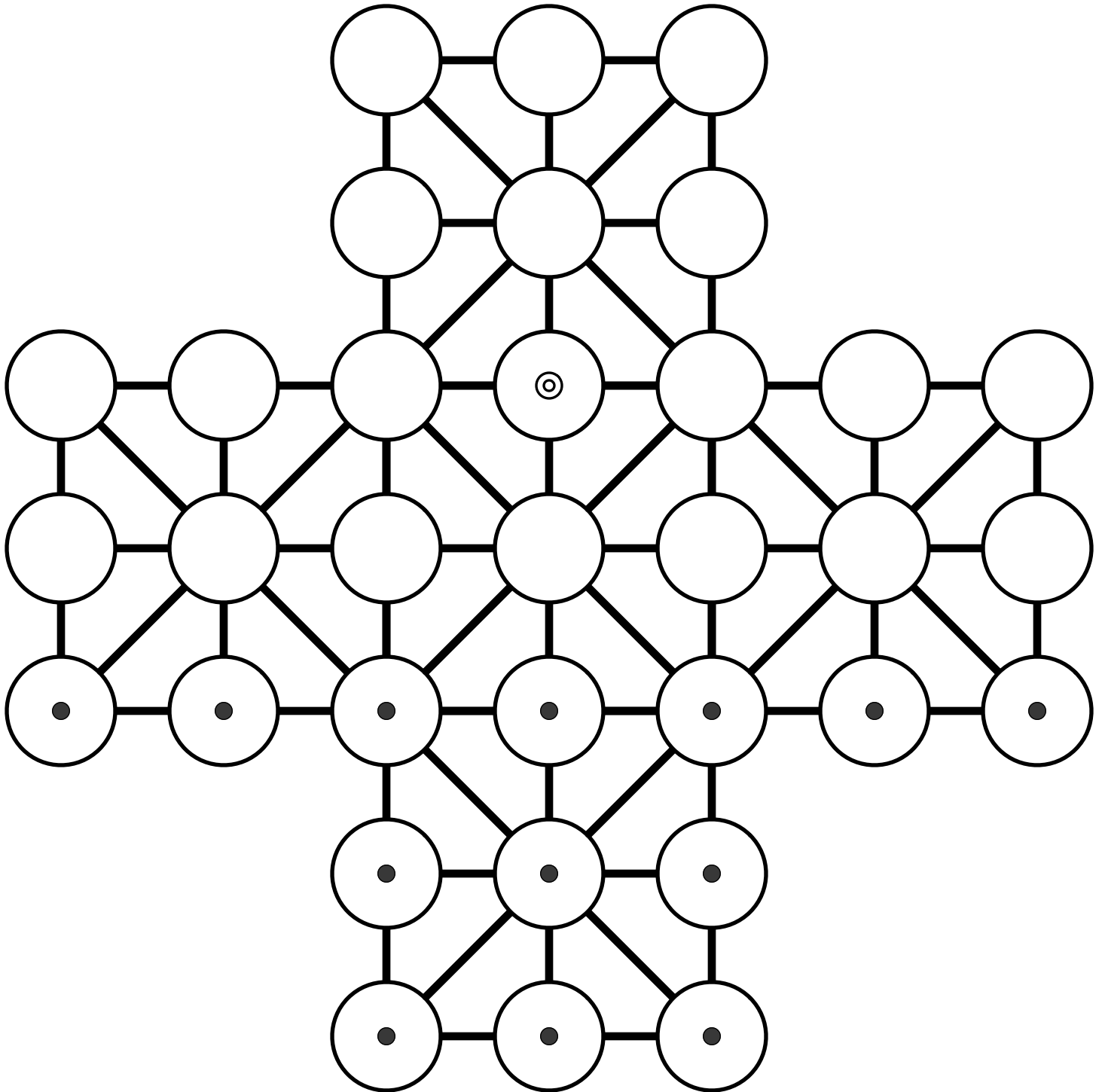
About Fox and Geese

History

The medieval "fox games" are asymetric, with one player outnumbered but more powerful, facing a player with many weaker game pieces.

Many regions had local variations, like "fox and hounds," each of which had its own set of rules; for example in Sweden it was played with two wolves and 20 sheep.
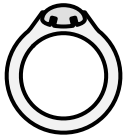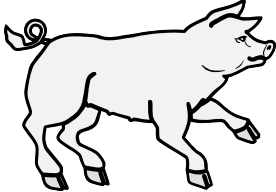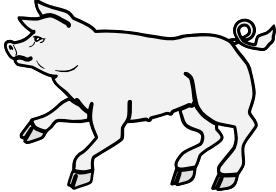
Equipment

• A game board with 33 open spaces joined by paths.

• Two differently-colored sets of game pieces — one fox, and 13 geese.

To Play

• Set the board by placing the 13 geese pieces on the bottom rows of the board; the fox can start in the middle or choose any space their player likes.

• The two players take turns, with the geese having the first move.

• On your turn, move one of your pieces one step along a path to an open space.

• Instead of moving, the fox can capture a goose by jumping over it to an open space in a straight line along a path; the goose is removed from the board.
  • If the fox lands in a space from which they make an additional capture, in any direction, they can do so immediately, multiple tiumes, as part of the same turn.

• If the geese surround the fox so that it can not move or capture, the geese win.

• If only four geese are left, the fox wins.

Glückshaus

12 King of the Board

11

7 Wedding Dowry

3

10

6

9

5

8

2 Lucky Pig

About Glückshaus

History

In the medieval period there were a wide range of gambling games played with dice and a "stake board," a board divided into areas in which coins were placed and then collected.The rules differed slighltly from one region to the next and across the centuries, as people kept playing what they often called "the Game of Seven" and adapting it to their local cultures.

The version presented here is a twentieth-century reconstruction that combines elements from several different variations that were popular long ago.

Equipment

• A game board with spaces numbered 2 through 12.

• Two six-sided dice.

• A supply of identical coins, chips, or other tokens.

To Play

• Start with an empty board and divide the coins evenly between the players.

• Take turns rolling the dice to visit numbered rooms in the "House of Fortune."

• On a 2, you're the "lucky pig" and collect all coins on the board except in space 7.

• On a 4, nothing happens,

• On a 7, you're a wedding guest and must put down a coin for the bride's dowry.

• On a 12, you become the king and can collect all of the coins on the board.

• On any other number, take the coin in that room, or if it's empty put one down.

• When one player runs out of coins, the game is over and their openent wins.