



Brandubh

(pronounced bran-DOO) is a Celtic board game played on a 7x7 board with 13 pieces. It is based on playing pieces and boards found in ruins in Ireland and Wales. It is a tactical game at least 10 centuries old.

One player has eight pieces called Barons. Their starting positions are the black circles on the board. The other player has four Princes and the King. The princes start on the white circles, the king starts on the spot marked with a "K". The barons make the first move. Each player may move one piece per turn. Pieces may move one space in any direction. Barons and Princes may move two spaces on a straight diagonal line if they are on light spaces and providing no other piece is in their path. You may not capture a piece with this move. A piece is captured by moving onto the space it is occupying and removing it from the board. The king may never be captured. He is immortal. The center square, where the king begins play, is called the TARA. No piece but the king may ever move onto or over the TARA. The four corners are also important. If a prince (but not a baron) remains on one of these four spaces for three consecutive turns, he is considered "lost in the woods" and is removed from the board.

The barons win when all the princes are removed from the board. The king/princes win when all of the barons have been removed from the board. The barons have the advantage of numbers and should try to press the princes, not giving them a chance to move their king. The barons can often afford to sacrifice a piece to take a piece. The princes should try to stay out of danger and let the king do the dirty work.

(Celtic artwork by aon-celtic.com)