



Free Game # 23 from Invisible City Productions, Inc.

A race game on an ever-changing field for 2 to 4 players by Jonathan A. Leistiko

The Story:

You've kept your beak to the grindstone with a hard week of catching fish and keeping eggs warm. Now it's time to gather your friends together, group at your nest, then head into town to party the night away.

Unfortunately there's only one dogsled available to go into town, so the first group that's ready to leave gets to ride in style, while everyone else has to walk. To complicate matters, local drilling is causing the ice to crack and shift unpredictably. The path that you take to get to your buddies may not be there on your way home. On top of that, the Polar Bear Gang has been making life tough, so you'll have to be super-sneaky if you need to go through their territory.

Even so, you're not going to let these obstacles stop you. You deserve a break, and you'll be darned if you're going to make the long, cold, 60-mile hike to town on flipper. Be the first one to gather your buddies up and get home again and you'll be ready for a...

Penguin's Night Out!

Object:

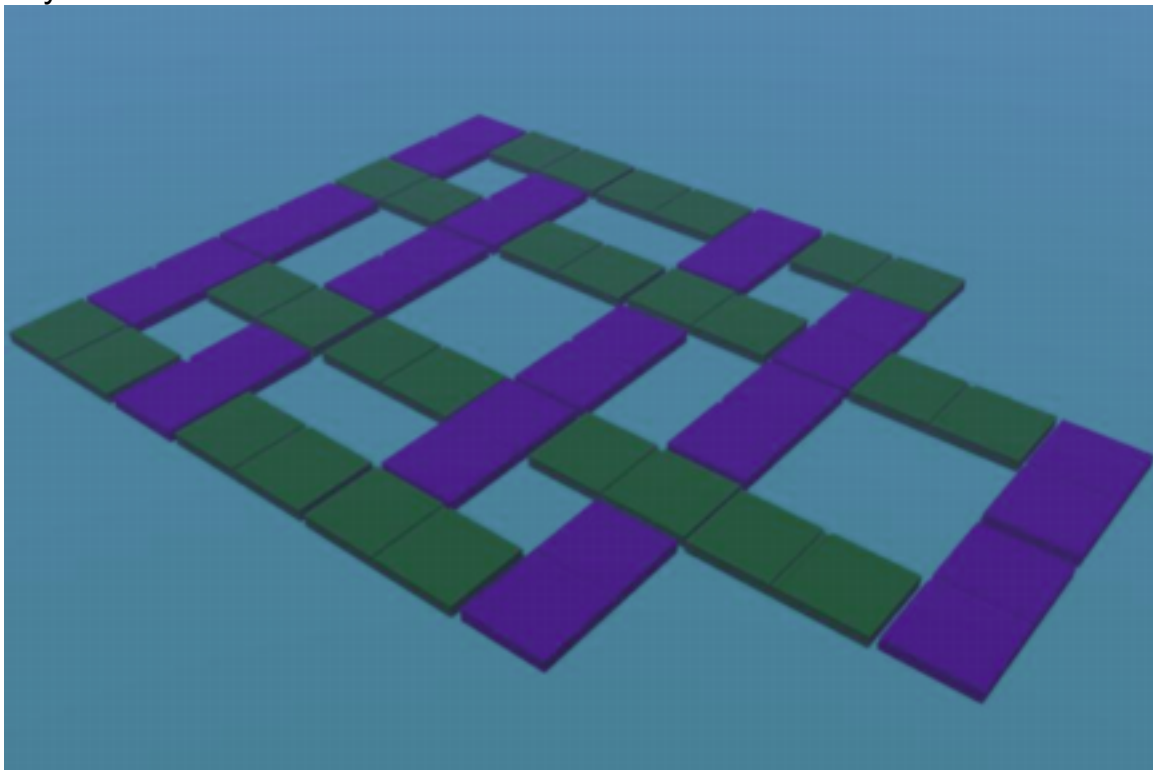
To be the first player to collect all of your buddies and return home on an ever-shifting playing field.

You Need:

- A set of double-six dominoes.
- A penguin pawn for each player. Assorted chess pieces work well.
- Two buddy tokens for each player. Pocket change is a good choice.
- Two six-sided dice.
- Paper and pencil.

Setting Up:

1. Have each player choose his or her penguin and buddy tokens.
2. Turn the dominoes face-down and shuffle them.
3. Lay out the dominoes so it look like this:



4. Turn all dominoes face-up.
This creates the board. Each domino half counts as a square, so each domino has two squares on it. Pieces on the board can move from any square to any adjacent square on the board.

5. Choose a player to be first (We'll assume it's you.). Roll both dice and find the domino on the board that matches the number on the dice. Place your penguin on the middle of that domino and jot that domino's numbers down on a scrap of paper. This is your *nest*. Repeat with each player until all penguins have been placed. No penguin may have the same home domino as another penguin; reroll if this happens.
6. Pass your two buddy tokens out to the two players on your left. Each player does likewise. If only two of you are playing, then give both tokens to your opponent.
7. Starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise, place one of the buddy tokens you've been given on any vacant space on the board. Repeat until all buddy tokens have been placed.

Play:

Play begins with the first player and proceeds clockwise.

On your turn **roll to move**, then **alter the board**.

To move, roll one die. You may move your penguin from your current space into any adjacent space. While moving, you may not pass through a space occupied by another penguin who is carrying more buddy tokens than you are. You may stop moving at any time. You may continue moving to adjacent spaces until you:

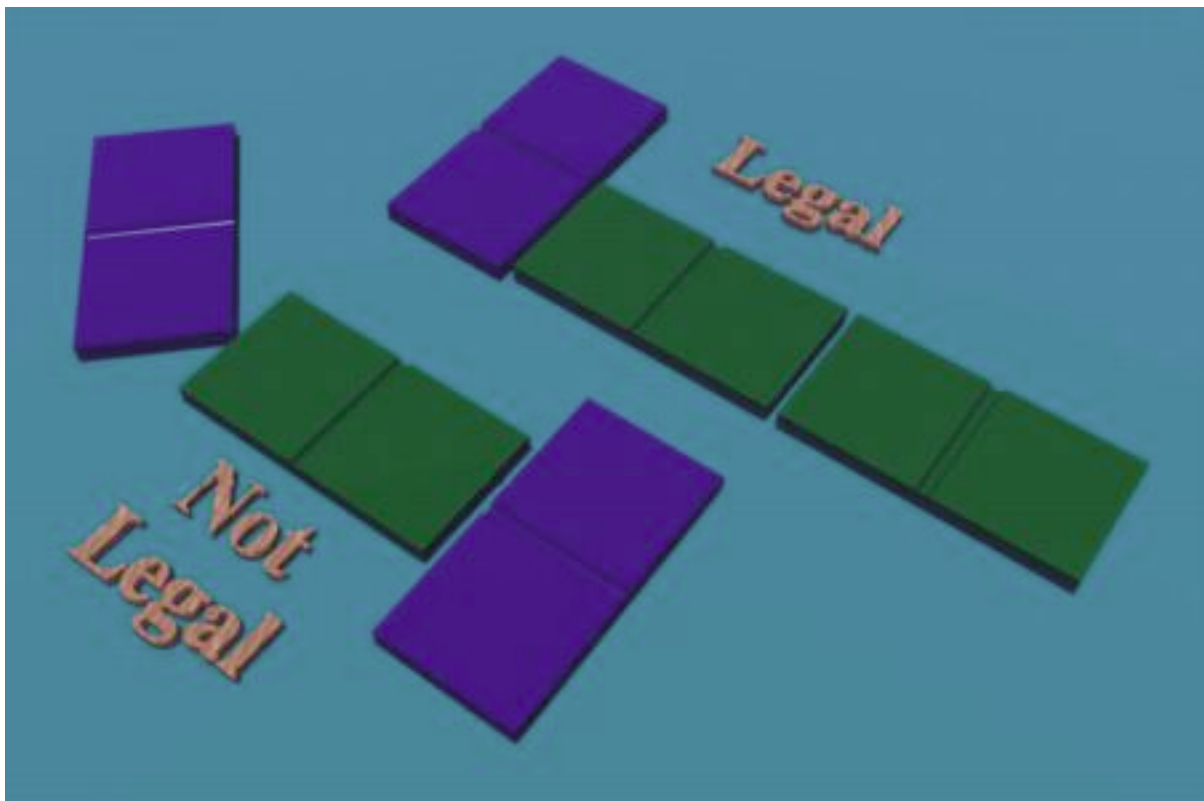
- Enter a space showing the same number you rolled. This ends your movement.
- Attempt to enter a square you occupied earlier this turn. This ends your movement.
- Enter a space containing one of your buddy tokens. This ends your movement, but you get to pick up your buddy. Place the buddy token under your penguin to indicate that you're carrying it.
- Enter a space with no pips on it (a blank). This is Polar Bear Gang territory. You must end your movement here, or you'll get eaten and removed from the game.
- Move a total of six spaces. This ends your movement.

You may not end your turn in a space that is occupied by another player. If this will happen, then you must choose a different route or stop in an earlier square. You may end your turn in the same space as another player's buddy token, but you may not end your next turn in the same space as that buddy token.

If you end your turn on a "doubles domino" (a domino with the same number repeated twice), then you may move one of your buddy tokens one space. If that domino has the same number you rolled to move on it, then you get to move each of your buddy tokens one space; if you only have one buddy left, then it only gets to move one space.

To alter the board, roll two dice. Match the numbers on the dice with one of the dominoes in play. This is your selected domino.

- If the selected domino is vacant, then you may move it to any location on the board. The domino must be adjacent to at least one other domino. This may "widen" parts of the board. That's okay. You may not place a domino in such a way that it is not parallel or perpendicular to all other dominoes on the board. You may not place a domino in such a way that one of its squares is adjacent to more than one square of any other domino or dominoes; squares must line up with squares, not dividing lines.



- If the selected domino has an opposing player's penguin on it, then that penguin is stunned and must pass the next turn. If that penguin is already stunned, then this result has no effect.
- If the selected domino has a buddy token on it, then you may move that buddy token to any adjacent square. If this moves the buddy onto the penguin who is looking for it, then that player gets to pick up the buddy token as if he or she had moved onto it.
- If you occupy the selected domino, then you may move any vacant domino you choose to.

These effects are cumulative. If you roll the number of a domino that has two buddy tokens, another player's penguin, and your penguin on it, then you get to move both buddies one space, the other penguin is stunned, and you get to relocate a vacant domino of your choice.

Winning:

End your turn in your nest while carrying both of your buddy tokens to be the first group to reach the dogsled into town and win the game. Yippee!

Variants:

Elbow Room

This variant gives players a little more room to move around and a bigger board to play on. If playing with three or more players, use double-nine dominoes instead of double-six dominoes. Use the extra dominoes to build off of the basic layout as you see fit, but make an effort to keep it symmetrical. Use ten-sided dice instead of six-sided dice, re-rolling all dice that come up zero; do not count zeroes as blanks.

Origin and Credits:

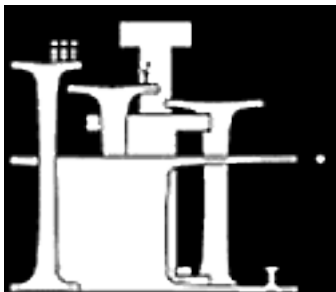
I can't remember if I was reading RPG.net or some other game-related website when I stumbled across the website of another person who's putting up games for free on the web. Although I didn't actually download any of his games ('cause I'm afraid of unconsciously plagiarizing), I noticed that one of his games uses dominoes as a racing game mechanic. I thought that this was incredibly clever. That created the seed idea for this game: Make a game that uses dominoes as an integral part of the board. This idea kind of fused with my favorite mechanic from Psycho Killer II: Dreamscape (not yet released) - the idea of an ever-changing board in discrete pieces.

So that happened on or about the beginning of this month. About three days ago (Today is the 9th of November.), I realized that we didn't have a game ready. I had a vague idea for this domino-based game, but I just couldn't get it to gel. That night, Sharon jokingly asked me if I'd thought of any games that day, and I told her about the failed dominoes game I'd abandoned. With a bundle of input from her—specifically the Candy Land-ish movement mechanic - the idea congealed and became this game.

Later in development, Ben helped me a lot with movement and developed the idea for rewarding players who stop on double-number dominoes. He also created the effect for the Polar Bear Gangs (although I'm responsible for the goofy name.).

Many thanks to Sharon for editing and to Ben, Natosha, and Sharon for playtesting.

By the way: If you're the guy who I'm very vaguely referring to in the first paragraph, please write to me and let me know who you are and where your site is so I can properly refer people to you.



Free games monthly from Invisible City Productions - <http://www.invisible-city.com/games/>