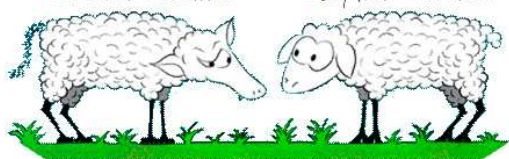# Mutton

Cameron Browne    Stephen Tavener

A game of deduction and farmyard intrigue for two players

## INTRODUCTION

All is not well in the farmyard. The cock crows, the farmer wakes and sees another sheep eaten in the night. Grabbing his trusty gun he takes careful aim... but at which blood-spattered suspect? Can he shoot the wolves in sheep's clothing before they eat all his sheep?

## COMPONENTS

- 1 hexagonal game board.
- 26 sheep, labelled 'A' to 'Z'.
- Sheep movement tracking sheets.

## GOAL

A match is played over two games. Each game has a Wolf player, who scores 1 point for each dead sheep, and a Farmer who tries to shoot the wolves hidden amongst the flock as quickly as possible, thus minimising the Wolf's score.

After both players have had a turn at being the Wolf, the player with the highest score wins.

## SETUP

The Farmer places 26 sheep labelled 'A' to 'Z' on the board.

The Wolf secretly chooses four of these to be wolves in sheep's clothing. The Wolf may find it convenient to choose four letters of a common word (e.g. "EASY") so that the hidden wolves are easily remembered..
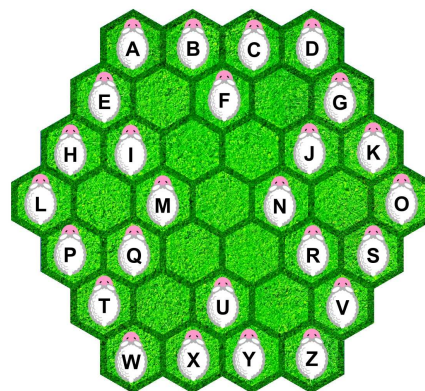


Figure 1: A popular starting layout.

## PLAY

Each round consists of a Wolf move followed by a Farmer move, as follows.

**Wolf Move**: The Wolf player must kill a sheep adjacent to one of the hidden wolves and indicate its death by turning the corpse upside down. Each immediate neighbour of the corpse (including the killer) then runs away to an empty cell that is adjacent to at least one other animal but not the corpse.
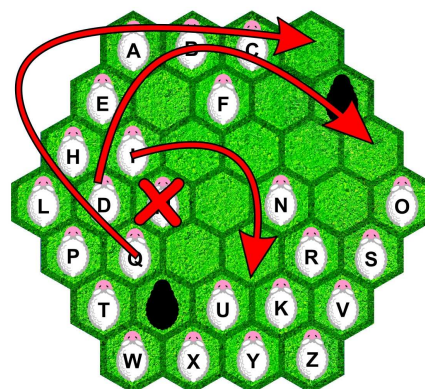


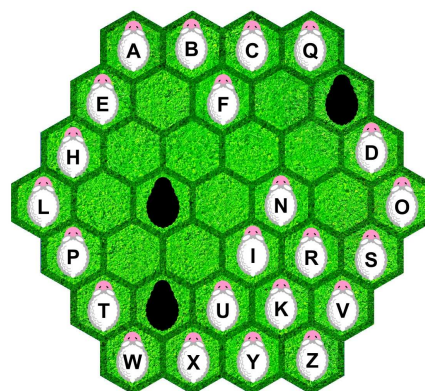Figure 2:  Wolf D eats M, then all adjacent animals (including D) move away from the corpse...



Figura 3: ...leaving the position shown. D is ready to kill again.

**Farmer Move:** The Farmer may perform one of the following actions:

- Pass (unless the Wolf was forced to pass).
- Shoot a suspect, in which case the corpse is turned upside down (neighbouring sheep do not run away).
- Go berserk and shoot multiple suspects.

If the Farmer shoots a wolf, the Wolf player confirms the kill immediately, in the time-honoured fashion: "Aroooo!". If the Farmer shoots a sheep, the Wolf player should say "Baaa!" as pathetically as possible.

If the Farmer goes berserk and shoots multiple suspects then the game ends, and any surviving wolf eats the remaining sheep as the Farmer reloads. Multiple shots should be used as a last resort only!

## NOTATION

The Farmer will find it useful to track sheep movements resulting from wolf kills on the sheets provided. We suggest that the Farmer tracks the animals incriminated in each Wolf kill on a separate row, since this information can be re-visited later in the game when more suspects are eliminated; animals killed by the farmer can just be marked off across the top of the sheet, since there is no other information to be gained.



Fig 4: Example of scoresheet.

In the chart above, the top row shows the sheep letter; dead sheep are crossed out; dead wolves are ringed. In the row marked 1 we see that in the first turn, the Wolf player ate V, and S and T ran away. In row 2, U was killed, and A, E, H, Q, R and S ran away.

You can download additional scoresheets in .pdf format here: http://www.cameronius.com/games/mutton/scoresheet.pdf.

## END OF GAME:

Each game ends when the farmer succeeds in killing all the remaining wolves. The Wolf scores 1 pt for each sheep killed (eaten or shot) over the course of the game. The Wolf's score is noted and the second game started with the Wolf and Farmer roles reversed.

The player with the highest score over both games wins the overall contest.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**How many times can I go berserk?** Once. After that, you have either caught all the wolves, or the wolves eat all the remaining sheep while you reload.

**Where can sheep run to?** To any empty cell that is not adjacent to the sheep just killed. Sheep may jump over obstacles.

**Can a wolf eat another wolf?** Yes. The disguises are very good indeed.

**What happens if the Wolf player can't eat anything?** The Wolf player must pass. After the Wolf player passes, the farmer *must* shoot something, and in fact will have to continue to do so until he finds all the wolves..

## VARIANTS

**Shotgun:** Instead of a rifle, the Farmer has a shotgun. When he shoots, all neighbouring sheep run away, in just the same manner as the Wolf move. At the end of both the Wolf move and the Farmer move, any dead sheep are removed from the board. The shotgun is single-barrel and cannot be shot multiple times per turn.

**Dictionary:** All Wolf words must be legal Scrabble words.

**More/Fewer Wolves:** Although we recommend four wolves, try playing with three or five wolves for a bit of variety.

**Quick Play:** Play only one game; the Wolf player wins by scoring 11 or more points, otherwise the Farmer wins. Alternatively, players may bid to be the Wolf with the highest bidder having to score that many points to win.