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Comments on Playing the Dots and Boxes Game

The Dots and Boxes game is long known and analyzed in detail by Elwyn Berlecamp and others in "Winning Ways, vol 2" and in "The Dots-and-Boxes Game: Sophisticated Child's Play". A number of computer programs exist. For not too large board sizes, computer programs of David Wilson allow optimal play and the determination of the game value for each move.

In the talk rules for determining the order of so called 'loony' moves are presented, as well as rules for deciding when to take control. No restrictions on loops are imposed.

A new derivation of the Long Chain Rule is valid in the presence of loops. It allows a more correct interpretation of its statement.

The overall decision tree for selecting the next move is formulated in a non-technical language accessible to school students.