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This refreshingly authoritative look at recreational mathematics illustrates winning strategies that use the methods of algebra, geometry, number theory, combinatorics, and graph theory. Its lucid analyses of the rules and theories of mathematical games include skill-enhancing exercises, in addition to detailed references, appendixes, and question-and-answer expositions that explain the basic theories.

Serious but not heavy-handed, this treatment covers games for one and two players, a theory of games, and rankings. Games in which chance plays a part, such as card games, are not considered. The accessible and appealing approach does not require an extensive background in mathematics. A source of stimulation for students, this volume will also interest practicing and aspiring mathematicians and offer inspiration and encouragement for the invention of new games.

Steven Vajda was born in Budapest in 1901 and died in England in 1995. For the last twenty-two years of his life, he was Visiting Professor of Mathematics at Sussex University. As a prominent teacher, lecturer, and author, he played a vital role in the development of mathematical programming and operations research and wrote more than a dozen books and many research papers on these and other topics including game theory.