ZMATH 2010b.00003

Gould, Ronald J.

Mathematics in games, sports, and gambling – the games people play.

Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press (ISBN 978-1-4398-0163-5/hbk). xix, 354 p. (2010).

The title of the book is rather misleading. Many scientists interested in problems of games and decision making will expect rather that the book will introduce them into mathematical tools used in the theory of games with some examples illustrating possible applications in variety of practical problems including games, sports and gambling. But the book introduces a reader into fundamentals of probability and statistics and their applications to games and gambling, puzzles and card tricks. Many parts of the book can be read separately and could be of interest for completely different potential readers. It may be an advantage but may be treated as a drawback of this book. To understand many examples of games it is sometimes enough to know an elementary statistics while for the others one should go carefully through some quite sophisticated considerations presented in chosen sections of the book. Probably the most consistent part of the book is chapter 8 which gives a short course of combinatorial games with a necessary graph theoretic background. All in one the book may be interesting for some readers without mathematical backgrounds but mathematicians or mathematically oriented scientists will be rather disappointed while comparing their expectations with the content of the book. *A. Świerniak (Gliwice)*

Classification: A20
Keywords: combinatorial games; gambling; discrete probability and statistics