Wolfgang Haken Encyclopedia Article

Wolfgang Haken

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Contents

Wolfgang Haken Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Wolfgang Haken.....3

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German-American mathematician who in 1976 submitted the first mathematical proof that depended on computer assistance. This proof, that the four-color map conjecture was true, was a watershed event in mathematics, ushering in an era of proofs increasingly dependent on computers for their success. The four-color map conjecture, which had defied proof for over a century, stated that it was impossible to construct a map that needed more than four colors to make all adjacent regions a different color.