ABSTRACT: Sports competitions are studied using a mathematical model in which there is a fixed probability that a weak team upsets a strong team. Theoretical analysis shows that this random process captures many empirical features of real sports competitions in league, tournament, and championship formats. This theory helps us better understand how randomness plays a key role in determining the outcome of sports competitions. The approach incorporates quantitative measures for parity of a sports league and predictability of individual games, and also suggests efficient algorithms for scheduling games.

Wednesday, October 10, 2012

4:15 pm – Room S-122, Sackler Sciences Center