

Recreation Youth Director's Report

August 2020

The RIAS Spring 2020 season was cancelled after the first weekend of games. I hope that we can do better with the Fall 2020 season.

We are continuing to improve the in-house-developed, automated scheduling system for RIAS. These programs perform an *optimal* assignment of games for declared teams in each age group and division. For our purposes, *optimal* is defined as those games pairings that minimize the overall drive time for all teams in the division.

For this last season, because the geographic spread of the teams was greater than usual, we exercised an option within the program to give most divisions a *home-and-home* schedule (ten games, five different opponents). This was done to reduce the average drive time. Unfortunately, this seemed to be an unpopular choice. Therefore, for the next season, unless the divisions are small (i.e., less than 15 teams) and spread-out, we will go back to the standard ten games against ten different opponents schedule, unless a team is a geographic outlier, like Columbus.

In addition to optimizing the game pairings, the software balances the home-and-away drives such that a team's total season drive time is nearly equal to the drive time of all of its visiting opponents. Of course, each team will still have five home and five away games.

Please make sure to encourage all teams to consider their blackout needs at declaration time, including home-only or away-only blackouts. The assignment program will automatically work around blackouts and still provide a nice compact schedule. It is the late changes to the schedule that force many back-to-back Saturday and Sunday games and open weekends.

Andrew Henshaw
Recreation Youth Director