Rocky Mountain INFORMS: March 8, 2022

The Rocky Mountain INFORMS Chapter is pleased to host Professor Eli Olinick from the Department of Operations Research and Engineering Management at Southern Methodist University. He completed his B.S. in Applied Mathematics at Brown University and earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering and Operations Research at the University of California at Berkeley. A former president of the INFORMS Technical Section on Telecommunications and Network Analytics, and of the Dallas/Fort Worth INFORMS Chapter, his primary research interest is optimization in the context of network design for telecommunications.

Title Rıoт Sports: Improving and Demystifying the Crystal Ball in Professional Sports

Abstract So-called magic numbers capture the attention of fans across a variety of professional sports, and provide information regarding when a team has clinched or been eliminated from a playoff spot, and, additionally, when a team has captured or lost the opportunity for a first-place final standing prior to post-season play. Mixed integer programming (MIP) models for determining magic numbers for a variety of professional sports have been proposed in the literature and implemented in practice. Often, the proof that a magic number is correct relies on showing that a MIP model is infeasible. So, although fans enjoy tracking these numbers, most must take them on faith. We discuss strategies for and challenges of automating the process of justifying magic numbers to sports fans in plain English.