

## **Why does everyone love EZ Sport Scheduler?**

To answer this question, it helps to start with an understanding of the basic problem. Most of the people running youth sporting leagues, directing tournaments, coaching teams, managing teams (or team mom), and web site builders are volunteer staff. They are doing these extra duties in their spare time, which they are acutely short of. They are providing their service to busy working parents who need information to plan their lives around their youth athletes' schedules.

Technology can be very helpful, but it takes specialized experience and a lot of work to make it really work for you. Without someone volunteering with this experience, and the time to do the work which can be very time consuming, it takes a lot of money to hire someone to make it work.

There you have it in a nutshell: It is a communication problem that technology can help solve, but there is not enough time and money to make it happen.

## **The Typical Scenario**

### ***Tournament Director / League Commissioner View***

The player's parent's expectations have gone up in recent years. Most of them are Internet aware and know what technology can do. They bank online and conduct a whole variety of business online from the comfort of their homes at all times of the night. When they need information, they expect to get it easily and quickly, online.

As an organizational leader, you want to be as professional and up to date as possible to meet these expectations. The more accessible and professional your services are, the more participants will be drawn to your organization and / or event. The greater the number of participants, the higher the quality of athletic competition, and the more success you have in your mission.

So, you just received the hundredth email or phone call demanding to know what the schedule is for the event that starts day after tomorrow. Little do they know that you had to extend the registration deadline by two weeks, trying to get that last team to make. You're still waiting on the scheduler to finish their work. Then you're going to have to make a thousand copies to distribute because the web master won't have time to load an electronic schedule before then.

### ***League / Tournament Scheduler View***

That was the 10<sup>th</sup> phone call from the director this week. You told them not to wait until the last minute like they did last year. Surprise, they kept the registration period open for two weeks longer, AGAIN. Now, here you are with 12 division, 150 teams, and 15 fields that you have to try and organize schedules around. No room for error, because if it gets out the door with a flaw, then everyone is confused with the wrong version for the rest of the season. Not enough time for error checking. If you're lucky, you have a PC based scheduling tool that can help. Most likely, you're doing it with that wonderful technology called Excell. You only have Thursday nights free, and they didn't get all the information to you until Friday. You can't get any help because it is difficult to share the work when only one of you has the wonderful scheduling tool. Even if two or more of you have copies,

it is difficult to share the work because you have to export it, email it as an attachment, detach the attachment, and import it. Who has time to train the smuck on the other end of the line? Then, as soon as you squeak by and get the schedules out, the web master will be whining at you about how hard they are to work with.

With your luck, it'll rain the first week out of the gate and you'll have to reschedule everthing all over again.

### ***Web Master View***

Geez! There is only one scheduler and one sport (at a time at least), but here comes the schedules for 12 divisions that you are supposed to "upload" to the web site. The organization wants to have scores updated as games occur because parents really like that, and it makes your organization look more professional. Twelve divisions, twelve spreadsheets, and are any of them formatted the same? No. You have to write 12 different programs, or massage 12 different spreadsheets, into a format that you can then upload into some system that you will have to write that will keep scores. Does the scheduler care? No way. Not until it rains and you both have to go through the process all over again.

Then they want you to recalculate standings with each score update. Then there is the finishing tournament with advancements on each score. Its just not possible.

### ***Parent's View***

Why can't this organization get its act together? It's the 21<sup>st</sup> Century already. Wait until the last minute to get a schedule. Not everyone can afford Excel you know. Static hard copies that are out of date the minute you print them. What about scores and standings? I'd like to plan my vacation, but I don't know when the finishing tournament is. They act like my kids are involved in only one thing, their thing. I've got to balance the family schedule. They act like they are the only choice in town. They need to get their act together.

# **The Typical Scenario with EZ Sport Scheduler**

## ***Prior To Registration Opening***

### **Scheduler View**

Its two months before the registration deadline. You just spent about 10 minutes setting up the divisions in your league / tournament. Called the web master to have him check it out and talk him into adding the Apply Now feature to the web site.

Although you have two months to do it, you're so enthusiastic, you went ahead and spent another 5 minutes and all the fields are defined. Another 5 to 10 minutes, and you've outlined the time slots. You're ready for scheduling as soon as the registration deadline passes.

### **Web Master View**

Got a call from the scheduler who found this new scheduling software called EZ Sport Scheduler. Amazing! In 10 minutes, you had a link posted that integrated the online team registration into the web site. Best part is that it blends in with your look and feel with little effort. This is not an advertising driven model where they don't give you any control. As easy as pasting a traditional hyperlink inside a frame, it blended into your web page. That was about 2 minutes. The other 8 were spent playing around with Cascading Style Sheets to apply your sites color and style themes to the EZ Sport Scheduler page. Now, coaches can register their team, including their contact information online.

You're so enthusiastic, you spent another 10 minutes integrating the Schedules, Scores, and Standings page into the web site so it will be ready when the time comes.

## ***Registration Deadline***

### **Scheduler View**

Wow! Even though the Tournament Director extended the registration deadline by two weeks, scheduling was a snap. First of all, you didn't have to enter the Team Name into the database. The coaches did that when they applied online. The fact that they entered their contact information is a bonus to the organization.

You had spent a little bit of time two months ago setting up your fields and dates. Today, you had to spend 10 minutes dividing a couple of divisions into sub-divisions (e.g. pools, flights, conferences) then went to the Plan Schedules dashboard and clicked on the Turn On Auto Schedule button. Viola! There is the complete season all scheduled out. Clicked on Publish Schedules, then went to the organization web site, and sure enough, there are all the divisions and team schedules already available online.

You spent another 5 minutes setting up a Tournament Bracket division, and two teams (a bracket winner and a bracket loser). If you had read through all the online documentation, you could have done this work two months ago too. You selected a couple of choices on the drop down boxes, including the check box for double elimination tournaments, and clicked Auto Schedule Playoff Brackets.

There you are, 15 minutes after the close of the registration period, and the schedules are available online including the divisional playoff schedules. Instead of hours on end trying to manually create the schedules and error check them yourself, you can go straight to reviewing the published schedules. More importantly, you can now easily get everyone in the organization involved in checking for errors. No need to all get together, just teleconference while reviewing from home. No data exports. No data imports. No emails. If a change is needed, it is made and immediately visible to everyone for review. But there won't be any errors to fix because EZ Sport Scheduler made certain that each team in the pool plays each of the other teams, made certain that teams play on the days they are supposed to play, and even on the specific fields or specific times that they are supposed to play if you need to restrict it. No overlaps. There are even reports to help identify and adjust Coaching Conflicts (i.e. double booking).

## **Web Master View**

That was easy. Having integrated the schedules, scores, and standings link into the web site two months ago, you didn't have to do a thing to publish the schedules. No data exports. No data conversion programs, or worse, manual data manipulation. No data imports. Plus, they all have the look and feel of your web site.

## **League Commissioner / Tournament Director**

Can you hear the silence? 15 Minutes after the registration deadline and all the coaches and parents have access to schedules online. All you had to do was logon and click the PayPal button to pay for enabling online access to the general public. Three minutes, tops. You get all schedules for all divisions, for all teams, for the entire season, including playoffs, for chump change. You can get a sponsor to pay ten times that amount at the drop of a hat. The schedule was online a couple of minutes later. No photocopies. No corrections. No outdated hard copies. The best part is no phone calls. So this is what quiet sounds like.

## **Coach and Parent View**

Schedules available online the day after registration closes. What a relief. Now you can go about planning the rest of your life.

## ***Throughout The Season / Tournament***

### **Scorekeeper View**

The ability to manage score updates, organized by day, anytime day or night is quite a convenience. The best part is the standings which are calculated automatically as soon as the score is entered.

### **Coaches View**

Projected finishing tournament seed rankings calculated and used to sort teams in the pool is nice. The ability to research upcoming opponents Win / Loss record, and strength based on Gives and Takes which is graphically presented is fantastic. The excitement builds the closer to the finishing tournament it gets. Seed projections help forecast who you are likely to meet, and need to game plan for.

### **Scheduler View**

It rained yesterday, and half the games were cancelled. No problem. Took about 10 minutes to go in and reschedule all unreported (i.e. scores not entered) games to the same time, same field, on a free day the next week. One update and done. If needed, you could have moved the games backwards or forwards in time by a few hours. Or, you could have moved games from one field to another. The best part is that now the schedule is automatically flagged to indicate that a change to the original schedule has been made.

### **Parent View**

It is really helpful to have convenient online access to the schedule. Scores are a bonus, and its fun to check out the other teams scores and schedule.

### **Advertising Sponsors View**

33,000 hits a month. Cheapest advertising buy, EVER!

## ***Post Season / Pool Elimination Tournament***

### **Scheduler View**

Seeding the tournament is almost a formality. Everyone has access to the schedules and seed rankings, so they can project who they are going to play. That stopped a lot of anxious phone calls. But the tournament brackets do look better with actual team names in them. So, one click of the SEED button, and were done. The only thing we might have to do is a manual tie-breaker procedure and related manual schedule update. Even that can often be eliminated with the Electronic Coin Toss in many cases.

### **Score Keeper View**

As each score is entered, winners advance automatically through the winners brackets. If it is a double elimination tournament, the losers advance to the losers brackets until their second loss.

### ***Next Year Prior To Registration***

### **Organization, League, Tournament Director View**

The next generation of coaches and players are coming online. There are new coaches and new players coming of age each year that are trying to decide which league to go with. There are former coaches and former players thinking about whether to switch leagues, or stay with yours. Coaches are considering what tournaments to enter this year.

Which one looks more professional and is likely to make your life easier. One with hard copy application forms, and Excel schedules, with no scores posted. Or, one with a rich online history of schedules, scores, standings, and completed tournament brackets where they can get a head start on researching their opponents?

## **Scheduler View**

All right! Head start. We can copy last years schedule information over to this year's new schedule. As little work as it was last year, it is even less now.

## **Why Does Everyone Love EZ Sports Scheduler?**

Because it is full of time saving features, easy to use, and highly affordable.