

# Scientists develop better sports rankings

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Rochester Institute of Technology scientists Thursday announced the development of new mathematics models that provide more accurate sports rankings.

The RIT mathematicians noted there is endless debate every year concerning sports rankings, particularly when deciding the best teams in college football.

"Current sports rankings -- such as the Bowl Championship Series -- take into account many factors, but head to head competition is not emphasized enough," said Darren Narayan, assistant professor of mathematics and lead researcher of the project.

Narayan says when one team beats another, and the loser is ranked ahead of the winner, it weakens the credibility of the ranking in the eyes of the public. He said that becomes apparent when one team defeats another in the final game of the regular season, but is then ranked immediately below the team they just beat.

The model Narayan and colleagues are developing incorporates results of head-to-head competition, considering both the score and at what point of the season the game took place. He also is examining various ranking techniques involving an arbitrarily large number of teams.

Narayan hopes to present the study to various sports organizations when the research is completed.

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