

For more information:
Rosanne Desmone
703.302.1861 (direct)
703.946.3820 (mobile)
Rosanne@amstat.org

[*Note to editors:* ASA will be pleased to try to set up interviews with any of the presenters; contact rosanne@amstat.org. Press can register for the conference online at <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/index.cfm?fuseaction=pressregistration>]

Statistics and Sports: Making the Case for Statistical Analysis in Baseball, Football, and Sports in General

At the world's largest annual gathering of statisticians, the role that statistics plays in all aspects of sports – including player performance, game predictions, home field advantage – is a hot topic

ALEXANDRIA, VA (PRWEB) July 16, 2008 – Statisticians from across the United States will be discussing the role of statistics in sports, as a variety of sports topics are featured among the more than 2,500 presentations at the 168th annual Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM), the American Statistical Association said today. One of the conference's late-breaking sessions is devoted to the topic of steroid use in major league baseball, and several more sessions on sports topics are sprinkled throughout the 5-day program at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver August 3—7. JSM, the world's largest annual gathering of statisticians, is attended by more than 5,000 statistics experts from the government, industry and academic sectors.

Beginning with the late-breaking session, some of the sports sessions are listed below; each includes the title, presenter(s), a brief description and a link to the full abstract. Other sessions on tennis and volleyball, for example, can be located by searching on keyword at <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=main>.

What can statistical methods tell us about steroid use and its effects among major league baseball players? (Late-breaking Session -- Activity #333)

Presenters: James H. Albert, Bowling Green State University; Michael J. Schell, Moffitt Cancer Center; Andrew Dolphin, Raytheon Company; Phil Birnbaum, Society for American Baseball Research

This panel discussion reviews results on hitting performance and looks at how these results can be applied to evaluating pitching performance. Are there unusual patterns of hitting of the "steroid sluggers" such as Barry Bonds and Mark McGwire, and are there similar unusual patterns of pitching of pitchers such as Roger Clemens?

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=302726

Salary, Sponsorship, and Strategy: A Case for Statistics in Sports, Activity #281

Presenter: C. Shane Reese, Brigham Young University

Statistical analysis plays an important role in a variety of sports applications. Reese will discuss not only how statisticians can have an increasing role in player performance rating, but in salary negotiations, sponsorship, and strategy. A variety of sports applications will be considered, from baseball to basketball, NASCAR to volleyball.

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=302451

Assessing the Accuracy of Sports Predictions, Activity #230

Presenters: Paul Stephenson, Grand Valley State University; John Gabrosek, Grand Valley State University; Dan Frobish, Grand Valley State University

The success of ESPN, sports periodicals and local sports radio stations has dramatically

increased the number of "experts" that present their predictions for games, tournaments and seasons. But to what degree has the accuracy of these experts been evaluated and what metrics are appropriate to evaluate their accuracy?

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=302230

Baseball Topics

Coors Field: Why Is the Home Field Advantage so High and What Are Its Implications?

Activity #170

Presenters: Michael J. Schell, Moffitt Cancer Center; Dan Ayers, Vanderbilt University

Coors Field has the greatest home field advantage differentials of any baseball team in major league history. Home field differentials, however, need to be evaluated on the overall quality of the team. A key question is: does the team play particularly well at home, poorly on the road, or both? It is possible that the high altitude conditions at Coors disrupts the batting styles of hitters and leads to the team's poor road performance. These and other issues complicate the Rockies playoff chances, making last year's NL pennant win noteworthy.

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=300282

Visualizing Managerial Strategies in Baseball, Activity #230

Presenter: Steve C. Wang, Swarthmore College

Baseball fans intuitively know which individual players are similar or different. For example, Rickey Henderson and Tim Lincecum are similar to each other, whereas both differ from Mike Schmidt. But which managers are similar, and which are unusual, in terms of the strategies they employ?

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=302022

Contracts and Performance in Major League Baseball, Activity #453

Presenters: Elaine Allen, Babson College; Julia Seaman, Pomona College

A baseball player's day-to-day performance is largely unpredictable. For example, a player could have an excellent game one day and go hitless the next. However, by looking at statistics on an annual basis, trends can be identified and investigated.

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=300551

A Model of Playing Time for Pitchers in Major League Baseball, Activity #453

Presenter: Michael Greene, Deloitte Consulting, LLP

Injuries to baseball players heavily influence the statistical output of a baseball player over time. Missing time due to injuries complicates the prediction of a player's future performance. Collecting comprehensive data on injuries is difficult, thus no complete databases are available. We propose a model for expected playing time for pitchers based on performance and player characteristics.

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=302607

Football Topics

Is There Increased Parity in the NFL (Has Paul Tagliabue's Dream Come True)? Activity #230

Presenter: Joseph Koopmeiners, University of Washington

The St. Louis Rams and New England Patriots completed worst-to-first turnarounds to win Super Bowls XXXIV and XXXVI, respectively, leading football fans and sports writers to speculate that the NFL had entered a new era of parity. We investigate this hypothesis by modeling year-to-year autocorrelation using NFL regular season results from 1970 to 2006.

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=302026

Determination and Analysis of Factors Determining the Outcomes of National Football League Games, Activity #453

Presenters: Christopher Cohea, Oklahoma State University; Mark E. Payton, Oklahoma State University

The outcome of a National Football League game depends on numerous factors related to events that occur during the game. Over 40 variables were collected on a sample of 534 NFL games from the 2004 and 2005 seasons. Data from only one team (selected at random) will be utilized for each game.

http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=abstract_details&abstractid=301599

About JSM

JSM is held jointly with the American Statistical Association (ASA), the International Biometric Society (ENAR and WNAR), the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS), and the Statistical Society of Canada. The theme for this year's conference is *Communicating Statistics: Speaking Out and Reaching Out*. A brief history of the JSM can be found at

<http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/pdfs/ABriefHistoryoftheASAAnnualMeetings.doc>.

A complete list of JSM sessions, can be obtained from the online program at

<http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=main>, where you can search on the activity number, keywords, and presenter's name or affiliation.

About the American Statistical Association

The American Statistical Association (ASA), a scientific and educational society founded in Boston in 1839, is the second oldest continuously operating professional society in the United States. For more than 160 years, ASA has been providing its 18,000 members serving in academia, government, and industry and the public with up-to-date, useful information about statistics. The ASA has a proud tradition of service to statisticians, quantitative scientists, and users of statistics across a wealth of academic areas and applications. For additional information about the American Statistical Association, please visit the association's web site at <http://www.amstat.org> or call 703.684.1221.

#####