

The NWFA league's board of directors might consider using a new approach for setting up their regular season schedule and postseason to drastically reduce travel expenses to the maximum possible. Below is a step by step process to make that possible:

- 1) Printout to paper a map of the United States.
- 2) Using a computer, open an Excel spreadsheet program and create two column headings – away and home. The spreadsheet will serve as the scratch sheet to create a league-wide regular season schedule.
- 3) With a magic marker put a small dot on the map for each team's location.
- 4) After all of the teams are plotted on the map, identify the most isolated team on the map and identify four most *nearest* teams to that isolated team. The four teams will form the eight game regular season for the most isolated team. Create eight rows of entries into the spreadsheet like in the below example. In the example, the most isolated team in the NWFA's 22 team membered league as of November 22<sup>nd</sup> was the JERSEY JUSTICE. The data in your spreadsheet should look as follows:

AWAY

JERSEY JUSTICE  
JERSEY JUSTICE  
JERSEY JUSTICE  
JERSEY JUSTICE  
WEST VIRGINIA BRUISERS  
WEST VIRGINIA WONDERS  
PITTSBURGH FORCE  
COLUMBUS COMETS

HOME

WEST VIRGINIA BRUISERS  
WEST VIRGINIA WONDERS  
PITTSBURGH FORCE  
COLUMBUS COMETS  
JERSEY JUSTICE  
JERSEY JUSTICE  
JERSEY JUSTICE  
JERSEY JUSTICE

5) Repeat step 4 for another team by choosing the next most isolated team until all 22 teams have eight opponents on their initial schedule. Sort the spreadsheet as needed (AWAY-HOME or HOME-AWAY) to help identify which teams need more or less AWAY or HOME games. In doing so, attempt to honor prioritized team requests to play certain opponents during the year. The end result should be a spreadsheet that looks as follows:

[NWFA-MATCHUPS-SORTED-BY-AWAY-THEN-HOME.pdf](#)

[NWFA-MATCHUPS-SORTED-BY-HOME-THEN-AWAY.pdf](#)

6) Assign the individual games randomly into each week of a ten week regular season schedule according to each team's stadium availability and the need to have two byes appropriately spaced out in the season for each team.

Notice the above example does *not* define conferences and divisions for scheduling purposes. Conferences and divisions do not exist under this plan. A more economical overall schedule can be created without conference and divisions being defined. At the end of the regular season the top eight teams advance to the playoffs based on a mathematical formula like the Jack Harbin or Zermelo process. On the other hand, it simply enough could be just each team's raw winning percentage being used with “points against” or some strength of schedule computation invoked as a tiebreaker to rank the teams from top to bottom for playoff selection. Rather than have traditional weekly standings data posted on a website, the league would have their chosen ranking procedure listing their teams from top to bottom each week.

To keep things economical in the postseason, the league's commissioner and/or board of governors committee could subjectively assign the match ups for each round of the playoffs based on the most economical travel scenario – the two most eastern teams out of the eight teams in the playoffs face each other. The next two eastern teams in the playoffs based on an atlas map are matched up against each other and so forth until all eight teams have an opponent.

To keep travel stress at its minimum, there will be a bye week between the last week of the regular season and the first round of the playoffs. In addition, there will be a bye week between each round of the playoffs to allow for flight deals and hotel accommodations as needed. To add even more fun to the situation the NWFA might consider having 2, 3 or 4 weeks between the semifinals and the league championship game rather than one week to gain even more time to calmly broker a flight/hotel deal for the teams involved and its fans. The league might even consider having the championship game played at the home field of one of the two teams actually in the championship. Award the game to the team that has the better facilities, rather than to the higher seed. This would mean only one team would have to travel if one of the teams end up hosting the game.

If each of the 22 teams in the league pays \$1,000 at the beginning of the year into a travel fund, that money would be forwarded to those teams that have travel needs in the playoffs each year.

The additional weeks off between the semifinals and league championship would create a college bowl like scenario and guarantee the stands will be filled with many fans since one of the teams in the game would host. That would look and sound good for an internet TV or radio deal. The extra time off would allow the local press to pump the game up.

If the NWFA wants to spice up their league while lowering travel costs they might consider implementing this plan.