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MLB Umpires Have A Turkish Secret Weapon

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A boy who grew up loving soccer in Turkey, not a fan of the American pastime, is helping Major League Baseball umpires [complete](#) the [daily](#) grind.

Hakan Yildiz, an assistant business professor at Michigan State University, is a key part of a research team that created a method Major League Baseball uses to [schedule umpires](#).

Science [Daily](#) reports the method, developed by Yildiz, Michael Trick from Carnegie Mellon University and Tallys Yunes from the University of Miami, will be featured in an upcoming [special](#) issue of the research journal Interfaces.

Major League Baseball used to have a former umpire build the schedule on an Excel spreadsheet. Yildiz started the research in the mid-2000s while working on his doctoral degree at Carnegie Mellon.

The Yildiz umpire system is so favorable, it's been used in five of the past six seasons.

How hard is it to devise a workable system?

Nearly 2,500 Major League Baseball games are played during the six-month season, with each game worked by a four-person crew. The schedule must include union-mandated vacations and league rules that regulate coast-to-coast travel, among other things. Each umpire crew needs to travel to all 30 ballparks at least once during a season.

Researchers implemented the "18-day rule," which states no crew should umpire the same team's series of games more than once every 18 days.

Tuldiz, who grew up in [Duzce, a small town in northern Turkey](#), says he still doesn't like baseball, but has become a fan of the NFL and NHL.

"For me, I like the fast-moving games," Yildiz tells ScienceDaily. "Baseball is a slow-moving game; it takes too long."

No matter. The late, great Leslie Nielsen would still be proud.



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The Dish.

“Where It's Always Showtime”

Written by **Ben Maller**



Ben Maller is known as the 'Drudge of [Sports](#)' -- an original [Sports](#) blogger and the No. 1 sports/entertainment resource on the web. You can [listen](#) to Big Ben on his

popular weekend radio show broadcast [nationally](#) on Fox Sports Radio. Follow him on Twitter [@BenMaller](#).

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