



## Case Study: Caribou Cup Hockey Tournament

---

Hockey Tournaments can vary significantly in size and complexity. Some tournaments are basic 8-team bracket play, while others have multiple levels with pools and brackets. Regardless of size, the tournament schedule must account for several considerations, including pool configuration, time between games, game lengths, games allowed per day, etc. Even for the simplest of tournaments, mistakes in any of these considerations can quickly lead to participant complaints, schedule changes, and possibly even lost revenue.

The Caribou Cup Hockey Tournament is a major AAA tournament that is held in August each year. The tournament offers a competitive, end-of-season opportunity for teams from the US and Canada. In 2014, new owners took over responsibility for the tournament operations. That year, the tournament fielded 13 levels, over 140 teams, and skated at 8 facilities. The tournament was run over four days and had teams from Winnipeg, Toronto, Minneapolis, Wisconsin, and Chicago.

The new owners wanted a fully electronic solution to maximize communication to participants, but also to minimize manual efforts required to setup and execute the tournament. They were also very interested in considering specific demands from teams, particularly the out-of-town teams, to accommodate their arrival and departure times. Finally, they did not have experience with generating a tournament schedule, and the previous scheduler was unavailable. Without an automated solution, they realized that generating and managing the schedule would dominate their time preparing for the tournament, which was not ultimately in their best interests.

They selected Autolce to provide the process that would generate, audit, and publish the tournament schedule via their mobile platform. To start, the Autolce scheduler was used to generate the initial version of the game assignments. This included the pool play games for all levels, and the appropriate championship rounds. This initial schedule provided a balanced starting point for all future changes that were coming.

With the desire to consider team demands, several teams requested delayed start times. Some of the requests were received in advance of generating the initial schedule, so these adjustments were considered early. However, there were some teams that had changes requested after the schedule was generated. Autolce's Audit and Audit Correction's processes were used to modify the schedule and confirm that the schedule was still balanced and did not violate any settings. First, the adjustments were made to the team's availability. Second, the Audit was processed to identify the conflicts arising from the changes. Finally, the Audit Correction's process was used to recommend changes that would adjust the schedule without creating other issues.

The tournament experienced a larger adjustment later than expected. One of the associations that was sending multiple teams had an accident two days before the tournament was scheduled to start. The accident prevented any of their teams from coming. As a result, the pools had to be adjusted and all of the games needed to be changed. Autolce's Audit and Audit Correction process were again used, and the schedule adjustments were completed within an hour. The Audit was used after all corrections to ensure there were no issues and to provide a comfort level to the owners that the schedule was accurate.

With all of the changes, especially right before the tournament started, Autolce was used to generate the reports for the EMTs, Referees, and Scorekeepers. Autolce provided the initial details to these resources, but was then also able to provide details of the changes that allowed the resources to update only those games that changed.

The Caribou Cup Hockey Tournament continues to rely on the Autolce solution to generate and update its schedule to maximize ice usage, balance team demands, and reduce the manual efforts associated with managing the schedule.