

A Review of the 1995 Major League Original and Revised Schedules

By
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The *original* schedule for both leagues was released in early 1995 when 162 games were arranged. However, the *revised* schedule, obtained from the Baseball Hall of Fame Library in Cooperstown, was released by the league offices in early April and consisted of 144 contests for each team, 72 at home and 72 on the road. Generally, the formula for 14 teams in a 162-game season was six games versus 10 clubs and seven against the remaining three clubs for a total of 81 home and 81 road contests. Thus, eighteen fewer games were set for each club, nine at home and nine on the road. All total, 252 fewer games or 126 per league, were on tap to be played. This updated program of 144 was a radical departure from the rules of the longer 162-game schedule that would involve various adjustments to compensate for the shorter season.

One such adjustment would affect one important date involving a certain playing streak. The American League press release, dated April 7, 1995, presented a note regarding Cal Ripken. It stated:

“Cal Ripken, with these revisions, is scheduled to tie and break Lou Gehrig’s consecutive game playing streak on September 5 and 6, respectively, at Oriole Park at Camden Yards. Further revisions to the 1995 schedule would be considered should postponements or other considerations make a necessary review.”

Looking at the original 162-game program, Cal Ripken was on track to break Lou Gehrig’s consecutive playing streak on August 18 *at Oakland*, the Orioles 122nd contest. With the implementation of the revised schedule, Ripken would have to wait until September 6, again Baltimore’s 122nd game, to break Lou’s record. Cal did, in fact, break this historic record versus California, his home crowd looking on, September 6 at Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore. Thus, the revised game schedule *allowed Ripken to break Gehrig’s record at home rather than on the road*, which was set in the original program released in early 1995.

Comparing the two 1995 schedules, the most common changes by far involved *additions* to the revised program and *deletions//cancellations* of games from the original schedule. Less common adjustments related to game sites (for example, the contests at Saint Louis set for July 3,4 and 5 were moved to San Diego) and game times (that is, shifts from day to night and night to day). On both the original and revised schedules, only one doubleheader was to take place in the majors with St. Louis visiting San Diego on August 11. The revised version had two additional twinbills, both of which were single contests on the original docket. Both would take place on July 8, San Diego visiting Houston and Toronto playing at Oakland. The only club in either league not requiring changes of any kind was the Minnesota Twins.

To my knowledge, no major league schedule was as *unbalanced* as the revised one. As a result, some oddities became evident. For example, there was *no scheduled game* set for Florida at San Diego for the *entire season*, the only such occurrence in the either league. In the American League, there were eight occurrences of only two championship games being planned versus an opponent at home for the entire season. The eight were: Seattle had but two contests @ Milwaukee, then California @ Cleveland, Kansas City @ Boston, Chicago White Sox @ New York Yankees, Detroit @ Oakland, Toronto @ Minnesota, Baltimore @ Texas and Boston @ Chicago. The National League had four instances where only two championship games were planned versus an opponent at home for the entire campaign. The four were: Colorado @ Philadelphia, San Francisco @ Florida, Los Angeles @ Houston and Cincinnati @ San Francisco.

The revised schedule provided numerous instances of a team playing a *one-game series* versus an opponent on a homestand. Examples of such an oddity were four such series, all at Montreal: against Florida with but one game on May 22, versus St. Louis on June 1 and July 27 and then Chicago on July 12. Ten total clubs participated in such a series, leaving four teams without one: Cincinnati, Colorado, Houston and San Francisco. I don't know of any other league schedule in major league history which consisted of so many series of but one game versus one opponent. The American League had seven such series, five occurring on April 26, their *opening day* of the season: Minnesota @ Boston for only one game, then Baltimore @ Kansas City, Detroit @ California, Chicago @ Milwaukee and Texas @ New York. The two remaining contests not in April were Seattle @ Detroit on May 22 and Kansas City @ Baltimore on August 17.

The National League revised schedule released by their league office had a *discrepancy* shown for the Los Angeles @ New York Mets series of July 18, 19 and 20. The month for this series should have been for the *same dates* in August, not July. Research shows that this oversight involved obviously *conflicting dates* that were previously noted--the Mets were also set to play @ Chicago on July 18 and the Dodgers were to host the Astros on July 18 and 19.

I must truly commend those involved in creating the revised schedule, an effort worthy of much praise! I must also thank my sweet wife, Kathy, in a big way for assistance with data entry and proofing! Someone else helped to complete my research, but wishes to remain anonymous.