

Kyle

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WeightWatchers' Contributor

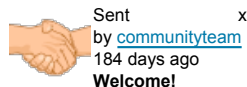
Sports Stack

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kylestack
Planning for tomorrow
12/15/2010 12:55 AM

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[devjfl1](#) Exhaustion has won. Off to bed for me
1/13/2011 11:15:39 PM

[pedrog263](#) is terribly sick from a stomavh bug! God willing, will recover ASAP.
1/13/2011 8:41:50 PM

[devjfl1](#) first Podcast is coming together.
1/13/2011 6:42:23 PM

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What my Friends are up to

[blondekel13](#) wrote on [blondekel13's blog](#).

[blondekel13](#) wrote on [blondekel13's blog](#).

[devjfl1](#) wrote on [devjfl1's blog](#).

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ATP Tour Chooses Quality Over Quantity

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Written by [kylestack](#) on 12/30/2010 4:20 PM

A professional sports organization has finally chosen to shorten its season in order to improve its quality. The Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP), the governing body of the men's professional tennis circuits, obliged player's complaints of a season which ran too long by announcing November 21st that it would lengthen its off-season by two weeks, starting in 2012. This gives its players a seven-week off-season during December and January. I find it comforting that at least one pro sport sees the value in a shortened season.

The grind of the 2011 ATP schedule reflects what players have griped about for years. It calls for at least one sponsored tournament in every week but seven from January 2nd through November 28th. And those seven weeks are scattered, with the calendar never going more than one week without at least one tourney. The only major in-season relief comes in March, when two U.S.-based tourneys are scheduled -- one March 10th and the other March 23rd. Did I mention the schedule requires travel worldwide?

The men play an exhausting string of tournaments; top U.S. player Andy Roddick admitted as much in a recent [USA Today](#) story. "You can't play 11 months straight 10 years in a row," Roddick told [USA Today](#). "At a certain point, something gives, and unfortunately a lot of times it's the human body." He should know, having just overcome a six-month battle with mononucleosis that was exacerbated by his schedule's grind.

This news falls concurrent with the NFL's desire to extend its regular season by two weeks, to 18. For years, critics have chastised MLB (162 games) and the NBA (82 games) for their lengthy campaigns. Even the PGA Tour has at least one tournament scheduled in 2011 for every week from Jan. 6th through Aug. 18th. It's not required for a player to compete in every tourney, as in tennis, but many of them stay busy to raise their rankings and increase their income.

I applaud the ATP for listening to its players and understanding the big picture: It's better for one's sport to have its players compete in fewer events, so that they're at full strength for the ones that matter. Athletes can train all they want; every one of them experiences wear-and-tear. Hopefully, we'll see even better quality from the excellent players on the ATP now that they'll have more recovery time in the off-season.

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