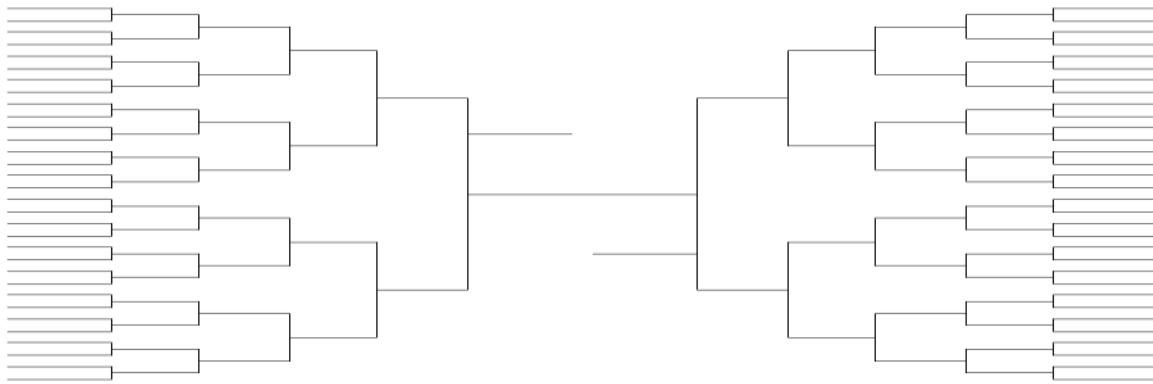


Math Challenge Problem

for late March, 2014

Math Madness



It has been widely reported that the odds of correctly filling out a *March Madness* bracket (that is, correctly picking the winner of all 63 games) are 1 in 9.2 quintillion. Not surprisingly, nobody has accomplished this feat. In fact, you will often read that “no one has even come close,” whatever that means.

How can you decide whether you have done a good job or a bad job of picking a bracket? To answer this, it would be nice to know what the expected number of successful picks would be. To simplify matters, let's assume that each team has an equal chance of winning each game they play in. Your job is to fill out the bracket, selecting the winner of each of the 63 games played in the tournament. A pick will be correct if the *team* you pick to *win* does so, no matter who they beat. For example, if you pick Duke and Tennessee to each win their first round games, but Mercer beats Duke, then when Mercer plays Tennessee you would get credit if you pick Tennessee to win (and they do) but no credit if you say Tennessee would lose the game (even if Mercer wins) because you thought Duke would win their second game.

The Challenge: On average, how many winners do you expect to pick correctly?

Submit solutions to Ross 2239G or to oscar.levin@unco.edu by **Friday, April 4.**

WIN PRIZES!

A winner will be randomly selected from all correct answers received for each challenge problem to receive a fun math prize of his or her choice.

Prizes include funky Rubik's style cubes, math puzzle books, math games, even a math coloring book. So submit your answer TODAY!