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Tournaments with and without Private Information: A Nonparametric Approach

14 January 2026 (Wednesday)
10:00 – 11:30

WYL314, 3/F, Dorothy Y. L. Wong
Building, Lingnan University



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BIOGRAPHY

Jun Zhang is an Associate Professor at University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and Australian Research Council Research Fellow (DECRA). He received his PhD in Economics from Queen's University, Canada. His research spans Industrial Organization, Economic Theory, Experimental Economics, and Operations Management, unified by the central theme of employing mechanism design to address complex economic issues and rigorously testing these theoretical models in controlled laboratory settings, ensuring their robustness before applying them to real-world societal challenges. Currently, his primary research interest lies in developing economic models and econometric methods for structural estimation using real-world data. His publications appear in *Journal of Economic Theory*, *Economic Journal*, *Management Science*, *Games and Economic Behavior*, *European Journal of Operational Research*, *International Journal of Production Economics*, etc.

ABSTRACT

We establish nonparametric identification and estimation of the distribution of random shocks for two tournament models with and without private information. We then apply the proposed estimation procedure to analyze a broiler production tournament data set. Our estimation results show that the model without private information fits the data much better than the one with. Our counterfactual results show that switching from the observed prize structure to an optimal one would lead to a large gain in the principal's profit but only a modest gain in social welfare, while that based on the poorly fit model predicts a misleading result.