Infinitely Repeated Prisoner Dilemma Games:
Comparing Teams with Individuals

COOPER

We compare the behavior of individuals and two person teams playing infinitely repeated prisoners’ dilemma games. Teams are initially less cooperative than individuals, but this reverses with experience. Within supergames, play is “stickier” for teams than individuals; teams are more likely to mutually cooperate (defect) conditional on mutual cooperation (defection) in the prior stage game. We use teams’ discussions to gain insights about how and why strategies are chosen. Distrust plays a large role in early supergames, but this vanishes with experience. Rather than completely specify a contingent strategy, teams take an improvisational approach to strategy formation.