Dear NYT design group,

I am writing to you regard the interactive graphic design on 2010 World Cup Rankings ([http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/sports/soccer/2010-world-cup-team-rankings.html](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/sports/soccer/2010-world-cup-team-rankings.html)). It is a fantastic visualization of the team rank and some statistics analysis of 2010 World Cup with a visually pleasing and easy-to-learn user interface. It is a great interactive tool for soccer fans and those who are interested in 2010 World Cup. The users can easily learn how to interact via the tool to learn how the team they care about performed regarding both the overall ranking and the detail statistics data.

The most standout feature of this visual design is the learnability of the interface. Users can easily grab the whole concept of this visualization in a couple of seconds. Because the ordering of teams are ranked from the highest to the lowest of each column, which is consistent with human cognitive of listing or ranking, one can easily understand the performance of a team by the location of the team on the list without any mistake or confusion.

Also, another strong feature is when user hover over a team or click on a team, the team name will be highlighted in every column, which is very easy for a user to keep track the same team in every aspect. In the conventional list, one has to manually look up the team name. In an un-alphabetic ordered list like this, it could be really difficult and time consuming.

In addition, the visualization enables people to compare two teams. One can choose one team by click on the team name, which will be shown as blue background, and by hovering over another team, all of the appearance of the team will be shown in gray background, users can easily see which team is better at what aspect.

But I do have several suggestions for this design. The first thing come to my mind is the amount of scrolling needed for users if he/she would like to see a team’s rank in every aspect. My screen can only display about one third of the entire ranking list. To view all the ranking of one team, I have to scroll up and down many times and it could be very frustrated.

In regarding to the users’ “memory load”, the visualization is not quite satisfying. As I mentioned, the list is really long and the screen will only display part of the list, users have to remember the content of every column to avoid scroll back to the top of the list to see the title of that column. There are 10 different columns, so it is really hard for a user to remember all the column titles.

Another minor issue of this design is the color scheme. The un-eliminated team is shown in light blue background, which is very similar to the gray-color-background, which will be shown if users hover over one team.
Hopefully these comments will be useful and thank you for all the time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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