



Time varying rankings models to determine the greatest sports players and teams of all time

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The main purpose of professional sport is to identify who is the best team or player at the moment of competition. A bigger question, and one often debated by sports fans, is "who is the best ever?". This talk will present work on a new methodology to estimate time-varying strengths of competitors. We choose the time-varying strengths to evolve deterministically rather than stochastically, a preference that we reason often has merit. The dynamic element of our model is facilitated by utilising barycentric rational interpolation (BRI). An incidental result of our work is to show that BRI often provides a better fit to data than the obvious alternative of spline interpolation. In the talk I will use the model to look at adding to the debate on identifying the greatest ever tennis player, golfer, and national football team.