

CS #2: AI AT THE TENNIS TOURNAMENT (Discussion Preparation)

Libo Zhang (lz200)

Question 1 – What were the potential consequences of keeping the current highlight-selecting system?

Answer 1 – If keeping the current system, firstly, the fans have already been unhappy with the problem and have been making complaints, so such biased and lower-quality highlights will continue to disappoint and alienate the fan base, leading to decreased profit earned by the Durham Club. Secondly, additional cost of negative perception will be induced if fans realized that the Club knew this problem but did not fix it. Thirdly, participating tennis players will be negatively affected because highlights are important to their contracts with corporate sponsors, and some players might lose contracts simply because their performances are not highlighted due to the biased algorithms. Therefore, keeping the current system will have negative consequences towards the fans, the Durham Club, and the participating tennis players.

Question 1 (a) – Who might have been affected by this decision?

Answer 1 (a) – The fans have been negatively affected due to the biased and lower-quality highlights. The Durham Club might have been negatively affected due to the reduced profits and potentially additional cost of negative perception. The participating tennis players might have been negatively affected because they could lose contracts from corporate sponsors due to the biased highlights.

Question 1 (b) – Which of these consequence(s) do you judge to be the worst?

Answer 1 (b) – I think the negative consequence towards the participating tennis players is the worst. Because we know that for many professional sports players, their major income is from contracts with corporate sponsors. If one player indeed shows fantastic performances, which are not included in highlights, then this player may lose very precious contracts. Without source of income, this player may finally give up tennis, which would be a very bad ending. Therefore, I think the participating tennis players may have to face the worst consequence.

Please continue to the next page for Question 2.

Question 2 – What were the potential consequences of correcting the bias in the system?

Answer 2 – If correcting the bias in the system, there will be beneficial results for the fans, the Durham Club, and the tennis players! Firstly, the fans will be satisfied with the higher-quality highlights. Secondly, although correcting the bias will cost the Durham Club a large amount of money, the Club will earn more profits and feel achieved because they comply with Club's stated mission. Thirdly, the participating tennis players will have equal opportunities to show up in the highlights, and as long as they have great performances, they can earn big contracts with sponsors!

Question 2 (a) – Who might have been affected by this decision?

Answer 2 (a) – Firstly, the fans will be positively affected because they can enjoy higher-quality highlights. Secondly, although this decision will cost the Durham Club a large amount of money, I believe all in all the Club will be positively affected because they can earn more profits and feel achieved for conforming to their stated mission. Thirdly, the participating tennis players will be positively affected because they can have equal opportunities to show up in the highlights and equally earn contracts with their great performances.

Question 2 (b) – Which of these consequence(s) do you judge to be the worst?

Answer 2 (b) – As analyzed above, since all the other consequences are positive, I think probably the "worst" consequence is that correcting the bias in the system would cost the Durham Club a large amount of money, and therefore the Club has no money to solve other pressing problems. I think the worst consequence is that other unsolved pressing problems will induce even worse consequences compared with the biased system.

Question 3 – What other factors besides effects on various parties are involved in the executives' ethical dilemma?

Answer 3 – I think there are 2 factors are involved. First, the Durham Club has to pay a large amount of money to correct the bias, which means then there is no money for the Club to solve other pressing problems. Therefore, the executives felt a responsibility to the Club employees to pay for the correcting money only if it was truly the correct thing to do. Second, the executives also felt a responsibility according to the Club's stated mission, which is their commitment to holding themselves to the highest possible standard in their presentation of tennis.

Question 4 – How should the consequences of the two courses of action be weighted against one another? Do you think the executives made the right decision in the end?

Answer 4 – I think we should weight the consequences of correcting the bias as much more important than those of keeping the current system, because although the Durham Club has to invest a lot of money, correcting the bias will eventually benefit to all parties including the fans, the Club, and the tennis players. Therefore, I think the Club executives made an absolutely correct decision in the end.

Question 5 – Should the Durham Club have had to take on the full cost of fixing the bias, or should GCS have taken more responsibility? What other information not included in the case study might this depend on?

Answer 5 – I think the Durham Club should not have to take on the full cost of fixing the bias, and GCS should have taken more responsibility. This is because the Club is actually a customer of GCS, and if the purchased product (highlight system) itself has some flaws (bias within the system), then GCS has responsibility to provide additional services or help with their customer, the Durham Club.

As for other information not included, I think we have missed one important point here in the case study: what is the attitude of GCS's executives towards the bias in their system? In specific, if GCS's executives realize such bias embedded in the highlight system, why they still decide to publish and sell the product, and why they set a much higher price for the highlight system which does not have such bias? I think answers to these questions are very important, as additional information, to help us better understand and analyze this case study.