Data warehousing and data mining report

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# Introduction

The following report provides a detailed explanation of our idea and dataset, how we prepared our data, the algorithm we used to make our prediction and our subsequent results and findings. Also included is our insights on how we felt the process went and our general thoughts on the results and predictions with which we obtained.

# Idea and dataset description

## Idea

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world and is played by 250 million players in over 200 countries and dependencies. The premier league is arguably the most popular league in the world with huge financial strength, TV coverage and entertaining matches. However, this does not imply that it produces the highest quality of football.

Our idea was to take the statistics and results from the last number of years in the premier league, clean the data to obtain only the attributes we wanted, pass this data through an appropriate algorithm and generate a prediction for the result of a given game based on this. Our hope was to predict whether a game would end in a home win, away win or a draw.

The reason we decided to take on this idea is that there is a real-world application. Betting is a huge part of all sports, soccer being no different, with up to one billion euros being placed on each premier league games globally according to the Tribune. Our idea was that if we could generate predictions with a reasonable accuracy there would be a possible monetisation opportunity. With a reasonable prediction accuracy for example, you could have a bot place smart bets across a host of games to try and make money. You would only place bets across games where the odds, along with our predictions would indicate you are going to at least make your money back. Obviously, this is all theoretical but we were curious to find out the possibilities and that is why we went with the idea.

## Dataset Description

The datasets were obtained from www.football-data.co.uk/data.php. Each dataset was split up into its respective season and contained stats about all the matches in that given season. Each dataset contained a different number of attributes some contained 28 while others contained 65, some relevant and some not. Also, there was 380 rows per dataset. We collected the datasets from the 2000/01 season to the 2017/18 season. This meant we had 6840 rows of data to work with. We also used a dataset pertaining to Premier League standings for the relevant years. This is a dataset we generated ourselves. It was arranged alphabetically by team and contained the teams finishing place for the last 18 years in the Premier League. This dataset also contained multiple empty values for newly promoted teams and teams that haven’t been in the Premier League in years e.g. Wimbledon.

After concatenating all the datasets and incorporating the Premier League Standings dataset we then had to perform some major cleaning on the dataset. This will be discussed further on in the report.

The differing numbers of attributes was difficult to deal with and was something that would not be feasible to work with. Some of these attributes related to in-games stats and bookies odds. We had no use for in-game stats as it would be pointless to make a prediction on a game in the middle of one. Although, the bookies odds could have proved useful and could have improved our prediction accuracy, we did not have the bookies odds for much of the dataset and thus we could not use them to make our predictions. As such we decided that we wanted to make our prediction solely based on the two teams and their form. The results would not be swayed by any third party and all predictions could be made using some basic stats of the two teams.

There are some attributes which weren’t relevant on their own but proved useful when used in conjunction with others meaning we had to generate some of our own attributes. After cleaning, we were left with a dataset which contained 6840 rows and 12 attributes. Some of these attributes included Home Team Points, Away Team Points and Difference in League Position. The target label for the dataset was ‘H’, ‘A’ or ‘D’ which mean Home Win, Away Win or Draw.

Generating our final dataset to be passed into our algorithm was a challenge in terms of deciding which attributes to use, and then extracting these attributes. Our data contained categorical labels and none of the data was standardised, meaning how we cleaned the data was very important. Once we generated the final dataset we then split it up into a training and testing set. Our training set contained 17 years of data from 00/01 to 16/17 and our testing set contained the most recent full season, the 17/18 season. Although this was not an optimal split it allowed us to make predictions for one whole season.

# Data Preparation

# Algorithm description

# Results and Analysis