My primary goal with this project from the beginning was to learn as many new skills as possible as a crash course intro to web development. I definitely accomplished this goal, having learned the core skills of front-end web development (JavaScript, HTML, CSS). I also became proficient with the D3 data visualization library for JS at an intermediate level. The website freecodecamp.org was essential early on for learning the basics, and my groupmate Colin was great at answering my sometimes naïve questions as they came up while working together. And while I’ve used Git and other source control tools in the past, this project was the first time I really learned to properly use branches and pull requests to collaborate in a group effectively. Again, Colin was a huge help with this.

Because this was a partner project rather than a larger group effort, Colin and I worked together closely on nearly every aspect of the project. At the beginning of the project Colin took the lead on data collection, working on the workshop code used to collect our data from Overwatch matches as well as a python script to parse the data into JSON files, while I worked on the planned 3D aspects of the project. I learned the basics of the 3D modeling program Blender as well as a community-made data mining tool called DataTool to extract map assets from the game. We still intend to implement 3D mapping functionality but chose to focus on the 2D data visualization aspects of the project for the initial release. Following this pivot my primary responsibility became the D3 line charts, including all of the interactivity (tool tip on hover, timeline brushing/filtering, etc.) and linking between charts. Colin’s focus was on the player path mapping, and while we worked on the layout and design of the app together he took the lead as necessary.

In terms of overall group accomplishments, Colin and I were happy with the app we had ready for the Expo. All of the features that we were able to implement were polished and worked well together as a cohesive app for visualizing game data. We both plan to continue working on this project together to make something really useful for the collegiate Overwatch community, and we’re excited to keep iterating on what we have in the coming months. We also worked together quite well this semester and didn’t have any issues with communication or collaboration.

As I mentioned previously, I did learn a lot from Colin while working on this project. I feel much more capable of working in a small group on a development project than I did before last semester. While I wouldn’t say that I was “dead weight” at any point, I think there were times where my need for support slowed down the work that Colin might have gotten done otherwise, and he was definitely an early leader on the project until I got more caught up in terms of my web dev skillset. Closing this gap and feeling like a properly contributing member of the group was my biggest personal challenge during both semesters of work, but I’m really happy with where I ended up.