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Arsenal vs. Spurs: Rivalry in r/Place

Introduction:

While exploring the r/Place final canvas, I noticed distinct pixel artwork dedicated to both Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur, two soccer clubs with a long time rivalry. Given the competitive nature of their fanbases, I was curious about whether users who contributed to one team's artwork also engaged with the other—or if the two groups remained entirely separate focusing on defending their artwork rather than attacking the other.



Respective team artworks

Analysis:

To explore this, I started by checking the total number of unique users who contributed to each team's main artwork. I also investigated whether any users had contributed to both Arsenal and Spurs regions, despite the artworks being in different locations.

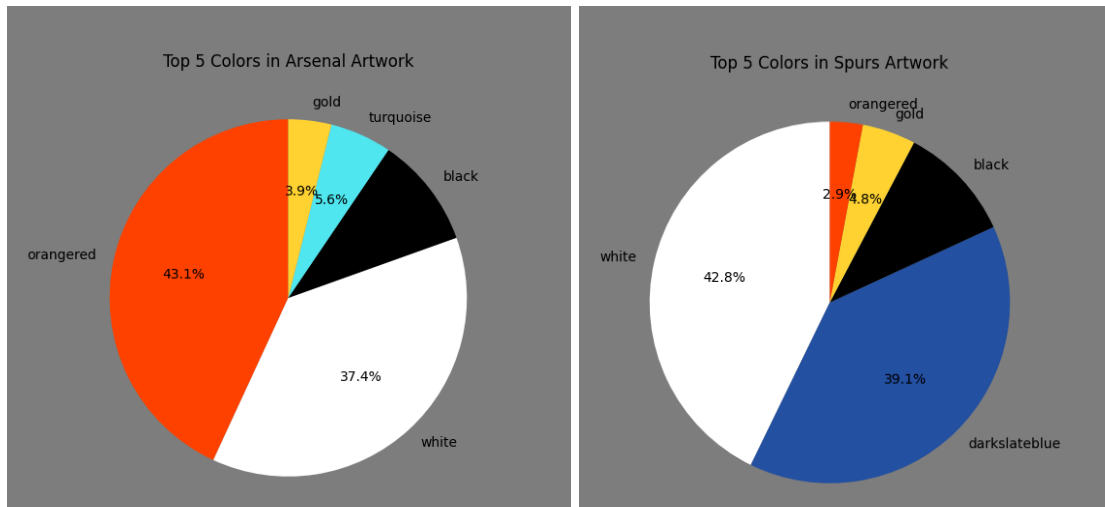
****Results****

Arsenal Users: 50,093

Spurs Users: 13,162

Common Users: 4,127

31.36% of Spurs users contributed to the Arsenal artwork while only 8.24% of Arsenal users engaged with the Spurs artwork. This showed significant overlap despite the artworks not being near each other on the canvas. I wanted to investigate how common users—those who contributed to both Arsenal and Spurs artworks—engaged with each team's artwork. I hypothesized that common users might deliberately place opposing team colors in each artwork.



However, my analysis revealed little correlation between the high number of common users and significant color changes in the artworks. Despite 4,127 users contributing to both, there was only a minor presence of orangered (2.9%) in the Spurs artwork, and no substantial use of dark blue in Arsenal's artwork.



Further investigation into Reddit discussions and community posts revealed that sabotage did occur, but in the form of text manipulation rather than color changes. The examples I found show that rival fans targeted the textual elements of the artwork, attempting to alter slogans or team references rather than disrupting the overall color scheme. Notable examples include Spurs fans changing "COYS" (Come On You Spurs) to "THFC" (Tottenham Hotspur Football Club) so Arsenal supporters couldn't overwrite it with "COYG" (Come On You Gunners), and Arsenal fans replacing "COYG" with "1886" (Arsenal's founding year) to prevent Spurs fans from changing it to "COYS." The example I found particularly funny was Arsenal fans changing the "R" in Spurs to "D" to turn "Spurs" to "Spuds."