Topic 2: Is sports data copyrightable?

For: Sports data should be copyrightable.

Sports data should be copyrightable by the players as well as the sports analysts since they are ones creating and recording the data. As the games take place, the players are creating the data, even if they aren’t the ones recording or keeping track. Also, the data is individual to the player or team and without them it wouldn’t exist. Since a sports analyst is someone usually hired by a team or a league to improve a team or broadcast, the data published by them are works they are paid to create. As paid professionals, both players and sports analysts have spent a large amount of time specialized training and I think it would be fair to allow them to protect their work with copyright. Copyright would allow players to protect information about them and keep them confidential so that other teams are unable to gain any information on them.

Against: Sports data should not be copyrightable.

Sports data is something that is created as a sports game takes place. It cannot be owned by anyone since anyone watching or participating in the game could observe it and record what happens. Since anyone could record the data as facts, protecting the data is difficult since they belong to multiple parties. All the parties involved also use the data, for recreational and professional uses. Fans and match commentators use sports data to learn and convey the overall strength as a team. Players and teams use data from their previous matches to improve their play and study their opponents. If there was a copyright on sports data, facts about sports matches or records would not be able to be shared. If it was copyrightable, there is no clear owner of the data, the players, the teams, the league, or even the people at the game and because of this, it makes sense for everyone to have access to sports data.