

Unveiling the Shifting Dynamics of Global Soccer Rankings

By Jon Doe

Introduction

Historically, due to financial advantages, European and South American teams like Argentina have often dominated the soccer landscape. However, in recent times, countries from other continents, such as Morocco and Japan, have consistently reached the knockout stages of major sports competitions. This raises a compelling question: is the power gap between all six continents and their respective soccer teams finally starting to close?

To investigate this, this analysis will explore a dataset detailing the current FIFA rankings of all 211 member associations and their rankings from twenty years ago. The dataset, which contains metrics such as the distribution of points, aims to reveal the discrepancies between teams of different confederations by providing insight into the changes in their rank and point over two decades.

Methodology:

The dataset was imported into a database hosted on XAMPP's local host server. Three SQL queries were designed to extract meaningful insights:

Query 1: Ranks all confederations based on the average number of points their teams have in the FIFA rankings.

Query 2: Focuses on the average rank of each confederation, highlighting the countries with the best and worst rankings within each group.

Query 3: Calculates the average point differences of all countries within each confederation.

Findings:

Query 1: Average Point Distributions

The first query reveals that CONMEBOL and UEFA teams lead the rankings with averages of 1,555 and 1,381 points, respectively. However, CAF (1,196) and AFC (1,138) are narrowing the gap, reflecting growing strength in these regions

Query 2: Ranking Confederations:

The second query, which filters by average rank, shows CONMEBOL dominating with all its teams in the top 100, while CAF, CONCACAF, and AFC have average ranks exceeding 100. Despite the growth highlighted in CAF and AFC by the first query, the second query suggests otherwise.

Query 3: Identifying Average Point Differences:

The final query analyzes point differences within each confederation. While the first two queries highlighted CONMEBOL's dominance, most South American teams saw rankings decline, resulting in an average point difference of

1.18. In contrast, AFC and CAF teams showed improvement, with Morocco and Nigeria as notable examples.

Visualization:

The dual-axis chart effectively captures the following findings:

Plot Graph:

- X-Axis - Average Points:
 - CONMEBOL teams have the highest average points in the FIFA rankings.
- Y-Axis - Average Point Difference:
 - However, AFC teams have the highest average point differences

Statistics:

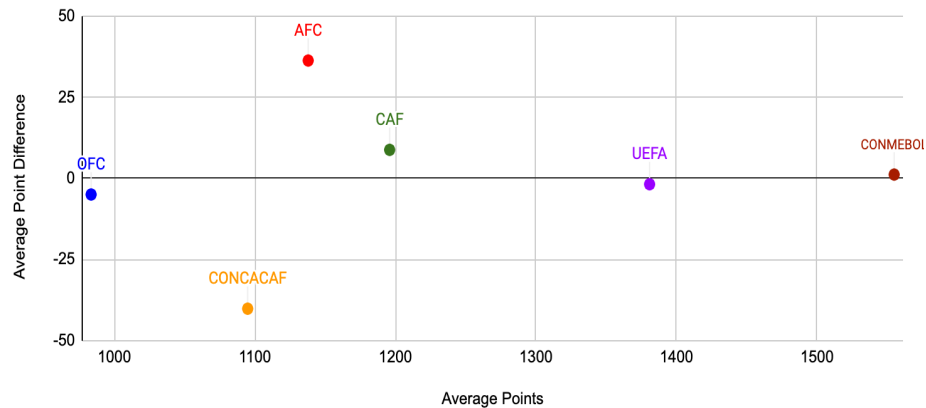
Associations	AvgPD	AvgPoints
CONMEBOL	1.18	1554.936
UEFA	-1.8	1380.894364
CAF	8.8	1195.924815
AFC	36.35	1137.97
CONCACAF	-40.19	1094.9
OFC	-4.97	983.5

Note: AFC - Asia, CAF - Africa, CONMEBOL - South America, UEFA - Europe, CONCACAF - North America, OFC - Oceania

- These statistics clearly show AFC and CAF gaining strength in the world rankings

- **Graph:**

Soccer Associations by Average Points and Point Difference



Conclusion:

This analysis reveals a strong correlation between the average point differences and average points in the FIFA rankings. Though UEFA and CONMEBOL continue to dominate with the highest average points, AFC and CAF exhibit the largest point differences. These findings signify the dynamic nature of global soccer, showcasing how SQL queries and data visualization is the key to uncovering valuable insights into the sport's evolving trends and future trajectory as Asian and African teams strengthen.