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## Editor's Note

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The recent World Cup football tournament held in Russia proved to many people what they may not have believed before — that this sport, dubbed “the beautiful game”, can reach artistic heights that from a viewer’s aesthetic perspective could be compared with any accessible through more commonly accepted means, such as music, drama or the so-called fine arts, for instance.

But there is one big difference between football and what is generally regarded as art: it does not have to be aesthetically pleasing to be successful. There is a phenomenon that is known in the game as “winning ugly”. To a diehard fan of a particular club or country, however much they’d love their team to be regarded as some of the great Brazilian teams of the past were, as purveyors almost of “magic” in terms of what highly skilled feet can do with a football, when it comes right down to it — with championship points at stake — they’ll settle for a functional win based on stopping the other side from playing, or even a drab draw.

When art has other priorities apart from pleasing the public’s sensibilities, as it does when employed by designers to sell a product or a service, then the similarities with sport become even more apparent. If it works

and the public “bites”, that’s what matters at the end of the day. Nice if it can do this by producing something beautiful — but not essential. Whatever works is valid.

Over the next three issues of SIGNED, we intend to draw out some of these analogies. Size, for example, can be a determining factor. Cycling, except when staged as a team sport — and even then where the “time trial” is concerned — is fundamentally performed alone. And many of the challenges faced by a sole creator in the design world are comparable to those that have to be met by a bike-rider.

By the same token, collaborations between two creators can be equivilated to the to-ing and fro-ing of a pair of fencers; while the compartmentalisation of duties and sharing of a large pool of resources such as are available to a large design agency are analogous to the way in which responsibilities are spread in a 13- or 15-man rugby team.

The fairly recent phenomenon of Design Thinking, as well as considerations of scalability, become particularly relevant in joining up these theoretical dots and could cast a whole new light on what you do — or hope to do — for a living. Food for thought — and stimulation for the soul!

# TO WIN “BEAUTIFUL” OR “UGLY”?