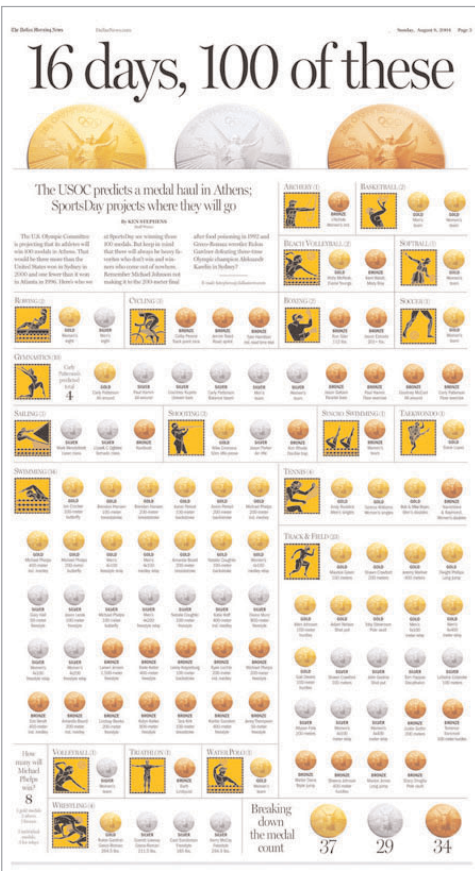# How to do full-page INFOGRAPHICS
IF YOU'RE NOT A GRAPHIC ARTIST

By ROB SCHNEIDER — Design Editor, Sports, *The Dallas Morning News*

## What I'm talking about

▷ Full pages or large packages that visually tell a story

▷ These aren't traditional graphics (because I can't draw)

▷ And they can be done by one person

Why me?

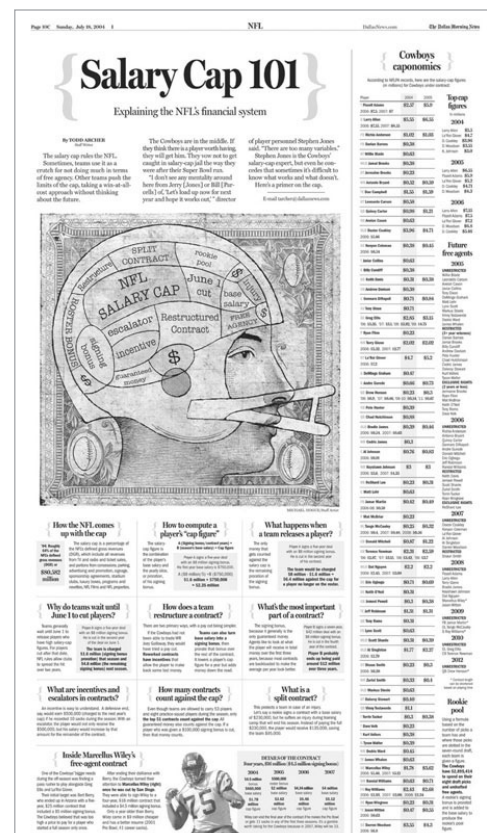▷ Because I've worked hard to make my pages consistently better (and I've made plenty of mistakes)

Why are these pages valuable?

▷ It gives you a chance to visually get in depth with something interesting and newsworthy

▷ It's a surprise for the reader

▷ It's something one person can do
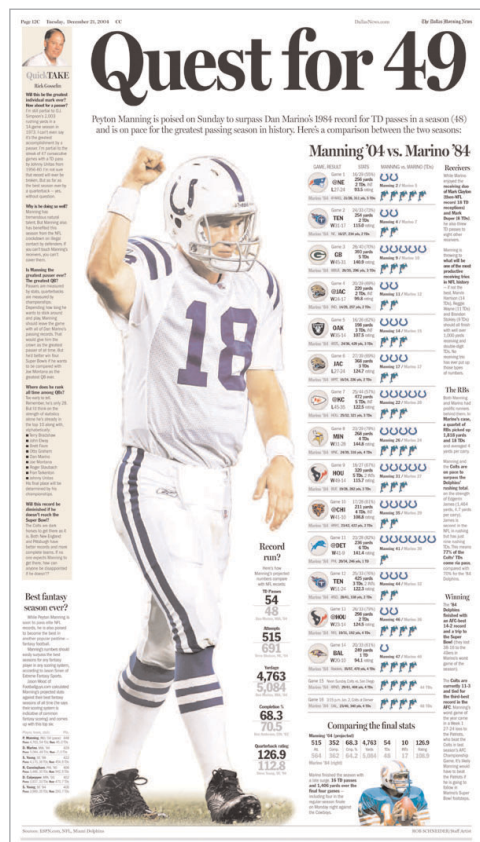
What does a successful page have?

▷ It has the same principles as well-designed pages

▷ The lead visual grabs you

▷ So does the headline

▷ It is organized

▷ It tells a story non traditionally

▷ It breaks down something complex

▷ It has fun

▷ Readers can spend 10 seconds or 10 minutes with it

▷ It has a flow

▷ It respects the readers' time

How to do full-page INFOGRAPHICS

IF YOU'RE NOT A GRAPHIC ARTIST

WALKING THROUGH THE PROCESS

Brainstorming
▷ Before you start talking visuals, talk about what you want the page to accomplish
▷ Have a clear focus on what the page will do or will answer (it can change as you research)
▷ Do the hard work for the readers
▷ It helps to be passionate about the subject

The power of sketching
▷ It helps you work out problems before they get on the page
▷ It's amazing how it ends up looking like the final product

Researching
▷ The great thing about writing the info yourself is you know what will work
▷ When someone else (writer, wire, etc.) gives you the info, be the reader's advocate when editing it.
▷ Get it down to the bare minimum.

Ask for some help
▷ There are plenty of people and services that will give you the information you need and all they ask in return is a credit

Laying it out
▷ Find a structure that works best for the most important information on the page.
▷ Figure out what the most important part of the page and start with that.

Picking the visual
▷ It's the first thing your readers will see and will set the tone for the page. Ask yourself: should it be a photo, an illustration? It depends on the subject.

The headline is essential
▷ It's the first thing they read and it sets the tone for the page

Sweat the details
▷ It's often the little details on your page that will make or break its success. What can you add that readers can't get elsewhere? What extra facet can you deliver?

Work hard to break down a complex issue
▷ Use the resources and intelligence of your newspaper to educate your readers on something they don't know.

The final touches
▷ When should you start refining and getting others involved:
1st draft, 50-70% done
▷ You absolutely need to start showing it to people (because you are way to engaged in the project now).
▷ Let them act as readers.

Things to tweak
▷ **Layering**
Not just the top, but the second, third and fourth ...
▷ **Navigation**
Find and create planes, lines to move readers around the page. Color can do the same.
▷ **Icons**
Find ways to let small visuals convey information
▷ **Tearing it up**
You can't be afraid to break the page down to make it stronger
▷ **The secondary headlines**
Decks, cutlines and subheads are crucial for navigation and flow of a successful page
▷ **White space**
Crucial to helping organize the info and helping the page to loosen up
▷ **Proper size**
Make sure that every item takes up the space it deserves (not too big, not too small)