

Slazenger Middlesex Summer League 2015
Highbury Tennis Club, Men's 3, Division 11
Bulletin 2, 11 July 2015

Well, the inaugural season is over, so here is a brief update, before we all head off for the Summer...

Events

HTC Men's social evening, Wednesday 15 July, at the Highbury Barn, from 20:30. Hope to see you there.

Southgate, the Weld have proposed an autumn friendly, probably at their place (not tied to 21:00 finish), so those interested in this please confirm early. This will be approached as a first come, first selected exercise.

Results

Mostly gorgeous weather, and great matches.

In order, and by reference to the appropriate movies and morals/lessons learned from them (M3 scores first):

30 April, Match 1, home to David Lloyd Enfield 2: ***The Big Lebowski***

"Fuck it Dude – let's go bowling..."

M3 suspended disbelief as the other side actually turned up after a number of mixed signs during the day. Shame they did, since they had both Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer playing for them, well a pair of coaches anyway. Jeremy W and Henry saved M3 blushes with a bagel, at least.

2-22, ouch!

Team: Jeremy W/Henry; Nigel/John N; Jens/Ian

8 May, Match 2, away to Southgate, the Weld: ***Dodgeball***

"Remember the 5 D's of Dodgeball: Dodge, Duck, Dip, Dive and Dodge..."

We remembered, and M3 dodged, ducked, dipped, dived and dodged its way to its first victory.

16-8, get in!

Team: Henry/Will; Geoff/Matthew; Jens/Nigel

12 June, Match 3, home to Pavilion IV: ***Dumb & Dumber***

"Just when I think you couldn't possibly be any dumber, you go and do something like this... and totally redeem yourself."

Well, er, not quite! Redemption lies in the ability to seize the advantage when it is there. Unfortunately, with a good 75% of the games going to at least one deuce, it can be seen that M3 stayed dumb and learned a sobering lesson from this one. The match was on that Friday when huge thunderstorms had been threatened, and the skies finally did open to force the match to go short. Result: we gained a point. Thank you, God!

3-21, a misleading score – but, then, you have to take your chances.

Team: Hubert/Jeremy W; Jens/Nigel; Howard/John

30 June, Match 4, away to Pavilion IV: ***Some Like It Hot***

"Well, nobody's perfect."

Maybe we will be someday. This was frustrating encounter, which M3 really ought to have won with the team's play on the night. There was a collective feeling that some of the home

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calls left a little to be desired at key points. Even the eternal diplomat Mr Billen was prompted into an "Are You Sure?" or two (roughly translates as "the ball was in, for crissakes!"), and was more than a little miffed, when denied an ace, because the receiver had been "distracted" by a player on the adjacent court ever-so-slightly encroaching into his field of vision and claimed a let. Mmm...

12-12, a draw, but we was robbed!

Team: Jeremy W/Matthew; Jens/Nigel; Howard/Tot

2 July, Match 5, away to David Lloyd Enfield 2: **Scott of the Antarctic**

[At the South Pole] "Great God! this is an awful place."

For "South", read "North". Alas, an expedition that was doomed to failure. A lack of available players meant we could only field 4 for the encounter with the division's Death Star. Much credit to the four who travelled and to Jeremy F and Matthew in particular, who had a 5-7 set against the home P2, which could well have gone their way.

0-24, but a glorious defeat.

Team: Jeremy F/Matthew; John/Nigel

10 July, Match 6, home to Southgate, the Weld: **Return of the Jedi**

"Obi-Wan has taught you well."

We played a pair of very enjoyable fixtures against the Weld; a nice friendly club, with much good humour on court. A few lengthy sets left us short of time with loss of two sets. M3 ought to have been home a dry but for wasted leads in the first sets of the third rubber, but application of rules 10(b) and 14 gave M3 a narrow victory, in what might otherwise have been another draw. Thanks to Alan and Pedro for that. Much personal satisfaction derived from pulling off a shot, which resulted in a cry of "Cheeky!" from one of the opposing Chrises (see annex 1).

14-10

Team: Alan/Pedro; Jeremy W/Matthew; John/Nigel

So 2 wins, a draw and three defeats in what was a respectable first season. The help from M1 and M2 players kept things respectable, although the squad as a whole showed definite signs of improvement as the tournament progressed.

Final standings will depend on other results, but this was a good start from which to build in future tournaments.

Away Transport

I know you will all be keen to hear of the parallel life over the season of HTC M3's away transport, the captain's classic Merc W124 E280 estate in AELTCC green, fondly known as "Angela" (think about it!).

Well the stresses and strains of the M3 season rather took it out on the old wagon, which entered a phase of high maintenance to coincide with the ups and downs of M3:

- The glorious comfort of new self-levelling rear suspension was somewhat undermined by the decision to refurbish its wheels, resulting in the loan of a ridiculous set of low profile wheels/tyres. Result: even driving over a painted white line triggered the equivalent of steam-driven Cakewalk ride for all on-board. New wheels look nice, though;
- Knock-on of the ridiculous loan wheels was ruptured radiator and various episodes or loss of coolant, the worst of which involved a massive over-heat on the M2 in 30°

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heat, during a two and half hour tailback queue. Cut a long story short: new radiator, new water pump;

- Anonymous abuse of rear bumper whilst parked resulted in need for complete repaint of the tail end.

Angela, though, got us to two away matches, without, ahem, major incidents, which is the important thing. Ironic that the German masterpiece of engineering is a greater financial black hole than Greece...

Sadly, despite my encyclopaedic knowledge of this marque, I did not receive a call from the BBC to be the new presenter of *Top Gear*. Never mind.

Infinity and Beyond...

Feedback welcome.

There will be no M3 competitive matches before the next Summer season, but there are tentative plans for an M2 winter squad.

I may organise one-off practice sessions over the autumn/winter if there is sufficient interest.

For M3, the only way is up, baby!

Cheers all,

Jens

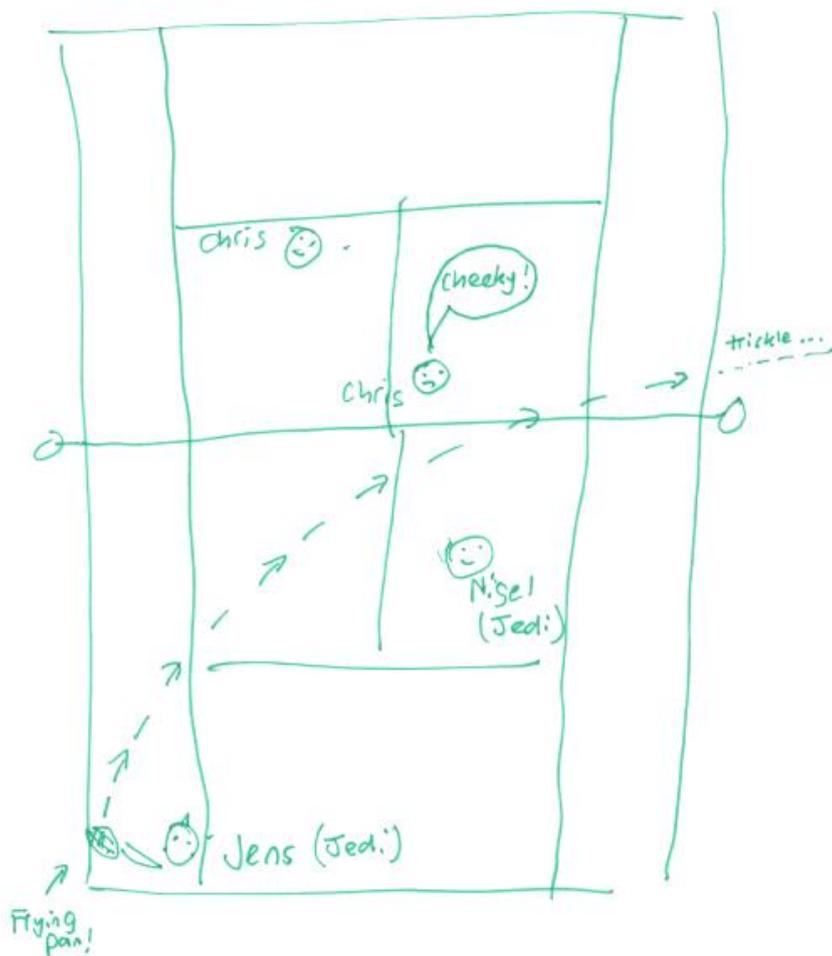
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annex 1

Eat yer heart out, Roger!

The backhand overhead cross-court drop shot...



HTC M3 v Southgate the Weld 10/07/15