

The Jesters Club (Hong Kong Outpost) v Cathay Pacific 14th June, 2024

With coordinates programmed into the onboard systems, seatbelts adjusted, seats upright and squash bags thrown in the hold (boot of Carmen's BMW!) the Hong Kong Jesters Team departed Hong Kong Island as scheduled to touch down at Cathay City in Lantau 45 minutes later.

On arrival at Cathay City, we taxied to the parking bay coming to rest near a DC-3!



(The impressive DC 3 at Cathay City entrance painted in the colours of "Nikki" Cathay's second aircraft.)

We headed to the check-in desk in the main building where IDs were scanned before being issued with a pass as we headed to the inner sanctum of the Cathay Pacific empire.

A quick warm up allowed us to locate all the peculiarities of the old courts and store them for future use.

This 5 aside fixture was the first time both teams had met and despite the usual last-minute changes to the rosters we were hoping it would be a close affair.

Off first for Jesters was John, on paper we thought this would be a win for Jesters. However, despite a strong start in the first, we didn't quite factor in the toll that being a new parent had taken on John and his lack of court time began to show half-way through the second game as he looked to have blown one of his engines. He didn't really make it back from that and Rob from CX prevailed 3-0.



(John looking fresh at the beginning of his match)

Second on court was Simon vs Carmen, Simon already written off by Gillem as a one game wonder, won the first and it was beginning to look as scripted as Carmen soared to a 2-1 lead.



(Simon and Carmen displaying solid technique during their 5 setter)

Simon in the 4th embedded the ball into the gallery above, which required Gillem's assistance and a Snooker Spider to dislodge it. Was this some tactic to slow the play? Well, whatever it was, it seemed to do the trick as Simon proceeded to take the 4th 12-10 and then the 5th 11-4. Great win and we were all square.



(Gillem adding snooker to his repertoire!)

Gillem recently crowned Hong Kong Masters Open Over 55's winner after defeating fellow Jester Phil in the final was feeling sprightly, that was until he realised his opponent was 20 years his junior, Nick who had flown into Hong Kong from the US. Valiant effort from Hong Kong's answer to William Wallace who managed to sneak a game in an encounter that ended 1-3.

Meanwhile the two captains were up next, opting to play to 15 instead of 11! This was to be my undoing as despite in game one having several game points I lost it 17-19. With the absence of oxygen coming down from the ceiling, I never really came back from that and was soon thinking of whether the food after would be more like economy or business class.

Lastly, Julian, chalking up another qualifying match for Jesters was pitched against Tom. Julian fighting hard in the first 3 games was the wrong side of 2-1 before Tom over-exerted himself, pulled up short and was taxiing back to the changing rooms gifting the Jesters another point to give a final score of 3-2 in favour of the Pilots.



(left to right: Jesters - Julian, Simon, David, Gillem, John. Cathay - Russell, Carmen, Rob, Tom and Nick)

Ceasing an opportunity to register another win, Gillem was quick to take up the offer of doubles securing another point for the Jesters and therefore brought the overall match score to a slightly dodgy 3-3, though in the end the score didn't matter so much, we were all winners as we had dinner and drinks and the Cathay Hospitality to look forward to.



v



14/6/24 6.30PM @CATHAY CITY

HK JESTERS			CATHAY
GILLEM TULLOCH	1	3	NICK
SIMON DISSLER	3	2	CARMEN LEE
JULIAN TANNER	3	2	TOM RHODES
DAVID CROSS	0	3	RUSSELL LAMB
JOHN THOMPSON	0	3	ROB
GILLEM / CARMEN	3	1	SIMON / RUSSELL
MATCHES	3	3	
GAMES	10	14	

Food ordered, we waited and we waited, feeling we'd picked the wrong seats and were stuck at the back of the plane we replenished our drinks several times, the food arrived and was worth the wait, we were happy to give it the thumbs up as it certainly wasn't served in plastic trays with disposable cutlery!



(David, Russel and "Nikki" posing for a last photo)

As we dashed to take-off back to the Island, the two Captains stopped for a last photo with Nikki.

Our sincere thanks to the Pilots who welcomed us with that fine Cathay hospitality to this previously unvisited part of Hong Kong, we look forward to landing there again in future!