



## Perspective/Opinion

# Match Day Reflection

By Matt Weber, MD

*Dr. Weber, a chief resident in Internal Medicine, takes a lighthearted look at his own Match Day experience ...*

I awoke at nine in the morning, groggily making my way downstairs. I had been off rotations for over a month now and was not accustomed to waking so early in the day. My roommates had been up for a couple of hours, already uniformed in their navy Match Day shirts. They had even taken the time to fill in the blank space on the shirt allotted for their chosen specialty. The space for the location of their residency remained empty.

I poured myself a mimosa—a custom for days of celebration in our house—and set to work on my Match Day shirt. I had purchased pastel permanent markers for us and proceeded to fill in "MEDICINE" but in letters shaped similarly to the various lucky charm marshmallows (mostly the hearts, stars, horseshoes, and blue moons). My roommates laughed. Later, my girlfriend and mother both agreed that it was "dumb."



My roommates and I drove over to the Italian Community Center where our families and Match Day letters were awaiting us. We tried to sneak a few of the hors d'oeuvres from the reception hall but were thwarted by a suspicious Dean. We sat down in the large ballroom with our families and chit chatted about this and that, all of us only able to focus on one thing at that very moment. The Dean/Provost walked to the front of the room and let us know that the match letter-opening would soon begin. Student by student, our names were called out, and we walked to the front of the ballroom to receive our letters. With every name, you felt certain that you would be picked next.

The tension mounted as each person opened their letter, each with a different mix of emotions. I watched some of my best friends walk up and open their letters. Harry was going to the Mayo Clinic, a childhood dream of his; Connor to the Fox Valley to provide primary care to the community he had grown up in; Tarin was going home to California; Alex and Caitlan couples matched to the Twin Cities, partly fueled by their love of Minnesota sports and their hatred of the Packers.

I had brought some props for what I thought would be a funny stunt during my letter opening. I had a bag filled with baseball hats from my top five programs on my list, with the goal of replicating NFL draft day. When my name was called, I walked to the front and immediately tore open my letter which, to my great pleasure, read "The Medical College of Wisconsin." I pulled out the MCW hat and proudly placed it on my head. Unfortunately, no one seemed to notice my humorous joke. I was sure that they would have laughed if they had seen it, so I continued to repeatedly put the hat on in front of the crowd until they appropriately appreciated the gesture. The Dean quickly called out the next student's name and gestured for me to return to my seat. I sat back down, elated by my match into one of the best residency programs in the Midwest, if not the entire country, but simultaneously defeated by the incredible failure of my joke.

Match Day was a day full of anticipation and excitement mixed with feelings of unease and anxiety. Watching your friends fulfil lifelong dreams, cry tears of joy and relief, followed by finally getting to eat the hors d'oeuvres, was an incredible experience I will not soon forget, especially the memory of the whipped goat cheese crostini.

*Matt Weber, MD, is a chief resident in the Internal Medicine residency program and future Hematology-Oncology fellow at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He is still working on his jokes.*