Two Forehands are Better than One!
By Jennifer Pustz | Health and Wellness Intern

Check out the video at: https://youtu.be/M6umOtOGaXs

When Malik and Miles George, ’22, twin brothers from Woodbridge, New Jersey, started at MIT in Fall 2018, they brought many of their shared interests with them. In the classroom, they both plan to major in Course 20. To fulfill their Physical Education and Wellness GIR, they started by bringing their love and talent for racquet sports to the badminton court.

As doubles partners on their high school varsity tennis team, Miles and Malik had a unique advantage. One brother is left-handed, the other right-handed. When they were positioned correctly, they could each rely more heavily on their forehand stroke which is usually stronger than ones backhand. Although they took badminton together, they played with different partners. Learning to communicate with new people effectively was one of many valuable experiences they took away from the court and into their new lives at MIT.

Both brothers appreciated the communication skills that they developed on the badminton court. “Communicating with my partner has been challenging because I am used to playing doubles in tennis with my brother so most communication was just implied because of our connection. Now, I must get used to the playing styles of my teammates and adapt so we can have a winning strategy.” Although they have been fortunate to make the transition to MIT with each other, their badminton experience has given them opportunities to get to know other students quickly and to work together toward a common goal.

Malik and Miles have found that communication and other skills developed on the badminton court have translated well in the classroom. They have felt more comfortable meeting new people and working in groups. Miles also pointed out that the strategy he learned in badminton, such as how to use the different strokes at the right time, has been a valuable lesson. “Knowing how to use strategy to make life easier certainly has helped me in my classes. Instead of working harder, I just need to work smarter.”

In addition to these valuable life skills, Miles and Malik also emphasized how much fun they had in badminton class. Malik’s favorite memory was learning the clear shot, in which the birdie is hit high to the back of the court to move one’s opponent backwards. This shot “allows me to hit the shuttlecock (birdie) as hard as possible and with all my energy at once, without going out of bounds.” Miles added that he plans to teach other friends to play and that badminton is “really fun, a really great workout, not too hard to grasp, and overall a great time. Anyone with the space should certainly sign up for the class.” Check out mitpe.mit.edu for racket sport offerings and registration dates.