Step 1: Reading your Y-DNA Matches: Detailed instructions

To view your matches click on **Y-DNA Matches** within the "Y-DNA Results and Tools" section of your dashboard. This guide will provide detailed assistance in deciphering these matches.

The screen that will open contains a series of lines that look like this, one for each match. Each such entry names and provides information from your match. There are two options: **Detail View** and **Table View**, selectable to the far left of the **Search**. We will look here at the first.

The top row of each match's line contains your match's name. Beneath the name, the entry indicates the FT-DNA tests that the match has taken. This information will be helpful in comparing your Y-DNA results with atDNA (autosomal) results and in determining the advantages of your purchasing upgrades to obtain more markers in your Y-DNA test.

To the right in the top row are three icons. The first opens the **Family Tree** for the match. If this icon is filled in (like in the first match), the match has added a tree; if just an outline (like in the second match), no tree has been added.

The second icon connects to a **Notes** pad for this match. The dialogue box will open and by pressing EDIT in the bottom right hand corner you can compose a note that if saved before exiting the edit will be there in the future when you go back to this match. This can be a helpful place to keep information on dates you contacted the match, questions you asked and answered s/he provided. The information will be close at hand as you work with your match list.

The third icon opens the FT-DNA **Time Predictor**. This provides an estimate based on a broad accumulation of Y-DNA research on the most likely time when your "most recent common ancestor" with the match lived. This information will assist in you and the match identifying that common ancestor.

Below this top line is a row separated into columns containing some results of this match's test.

The first column – **Markers Tested** – merely repeats the information above that identifies how many markers the match has tested. With more efficiency of display this would not be there. No new information.

The most critical new information reported for the match lies in the second column, indicating the **Genetic Distance** from your Y-DNA to the match. Roughly speaking this is the number of mutations that have occurred in the generations between your common ancestor and you and your match's generation. Generally you will want to begin your search for the common ancestor with your closest matches (the smallest number here). If this number is 0, yours is a full match for this test at either his marker level or yours, depending on which is less. There are no mutations that separate you from the match. As you correspond with this match you will explore to find out the name of your common ancestor and in doing so how far back you can reliably take your male line.

Skip the next two columns for the moment and focus on the last two columns: the match's **Paternal County of Origin** and **Paternal Earliest Known Ancestor**. It is important to remember that this information does not come from the processing of your or your match's scientific DNA tests, but is reported by the match. One of the dimensions of exploring your results with your match may be a discussion of how much confidence the match has in this information. You will see here the importance of a critical addition to your dashboard to maximize your exchanges: provide your Paternal Earliest Known Ancestor. Again we will explain how to do this in the next step.

Particularly important is the last column: the match's **Paternal Earliest Known Ancestor**. If you recognize this person as someone in your male line, you will know that the mutation that separates you from the match (unless in fact the genetic distance is zero) occurred after this common ancestor. You and your match will begin working with others who share this ancestor to locate the generation that initiated the mutation. If this male ancestor is in fact earlier than your known earliest male ancestor, then you will begin working with your match to extend your male line further into the past.

Returning to those middle two columns, they will be more useful in identifying your heritage earlier than the genealogical time range (roughly the last 12 generations or approximately since 1500). The third column in the chart reports the **Big Y STR Differences** if both you and the match have taken the BigY-700 test. It will be in the form x of y where x is the number of differences discovered on analyzed STR data in the two BigY-700 tests, and y is the total number of STRs analyzed in the test. If this ratio is high it will indicate more genetic distance. If either you or the match has not taken the BigY-700, you will have no results. For most of your matches at this time, they will not have taken the test.

The fourth column reports the paternal Y-Haplogroup for your match. In most cases this will be the same as your Y-Haplogroup, but the data is of little significance in working with your ancestors within the genealogical time range.
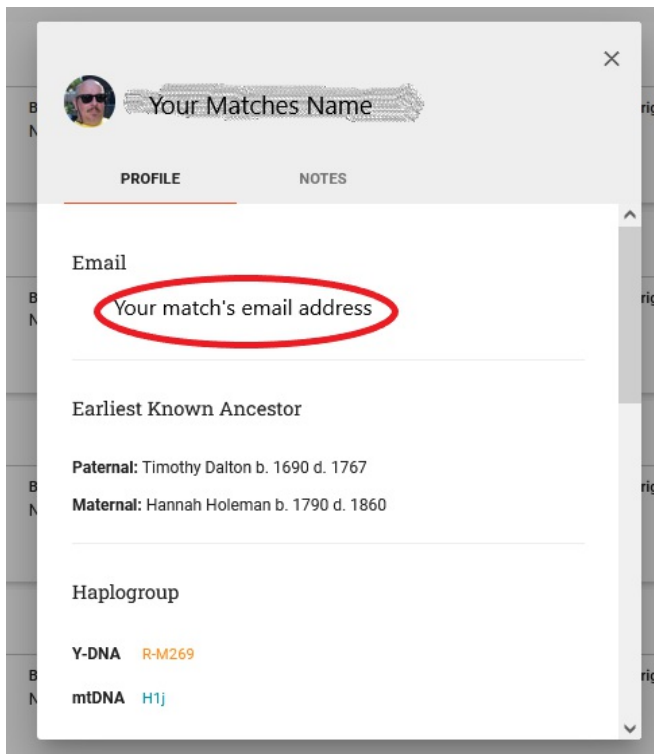
Below these columns of information from your match are two additional items. Just below the left side is a blue colored **Link on Family Tree**. This will only be useful if the match is in fact

already included on your family tree. Clicking on the link will connect you to their cell on your tree. If you have not yet added your family tree (See Step 2) or you did not include your match there will be no use for this link.

Finally, in the lower right corner of your match's results the date on which this match was added to your list of matches is recorded. This information can be useful when you are checking your list to see if there are new matches recently added.

Finding Correspondence Information

Click on the name on the top line for your match and it will open a box that provides you the email address of the match and some additional results for this match's test that is useful in more advanced work.

The matches Profile will open and appear as on the left. The email address will obviously be key in communicating with your match. One caution, the older the match's date of submission of this information, the more likely the email address is not valid. If your match is not keeping up with their email address, then obviously they are probably not interested in communicating with you and further pursuing their genealogy. Sorry.

The information below repeats information on the main listing but a screen shot of this page may assist in having it handy when corresponding with this match.

Click on the NOTES choice at the top of this opened box and you will see any notes that you have added for this match. And you can make notes of your dates and content of correspondence with this match.