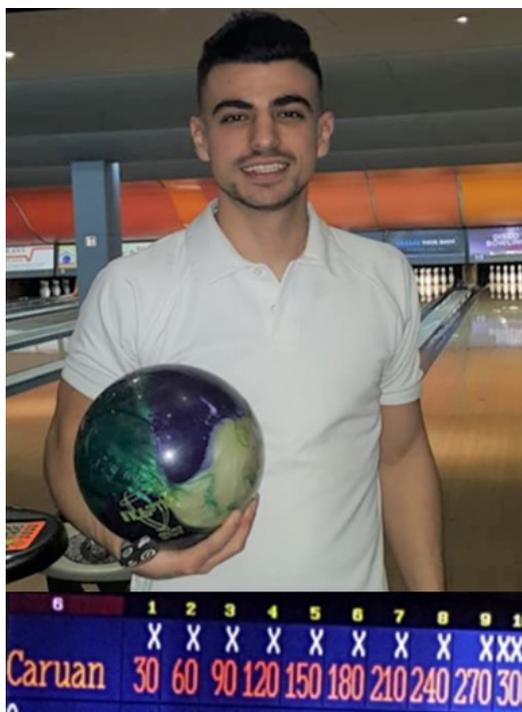


## JANUARY 2020 – BOWLING NEWSLETTER

Once again January started with a bang, with Justin Caruana Scicluna rolling his 14<sup>th</sup> perfect game, during the very 1st week of the MAPFRE MSV Life League. Last year we had no less than 10 – 300 games, 3 of which were bowled by Justin.



### MAPFRE MSV LIVE LEAGUES



January team positions during the league as follows:

Division 3 – 3 teams on 8 points after week 1: Strike Force, The George's and One 4 All.

Division 2 – Brutal Legendz (18), MIA (16), and Up Your Average (14). MIA and Up Your Average already faced the BYE.

Division 1 – Okmalta.com (24), FINA (18), XS Park Towers and Strike Me Jabaal (16)

### COMPOSITE AVERAGE

At this very early stage of the year, the top composite average athletes as at end January are: Justin Caruana Scicluna (216.03), Mauro Anastasi (215.08), and Nicholas Muscat (211.08). In the female category Sue Abela retained the top spot (203.09), Sara Xuereb (200.86) and Cynthia Duca (194.59).

Top bowlers for the U19 youths are Sara Xuereb (200.86), and Kathryn Fenech (133), while in the boys' division we have Nicholas Muscat (211.08), Miguel Xuereb (196.03) and Matthew Magro (195.31).

### TOP 24 CHALLENGE

The top 24 bowlers were determined according to the average bowled throughout the year 2019. For the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row this was a hotly contested tournament. All 24 accepted the challenge to play this year, and although this is basically a handicap tournament, all bowlers bowled scratch due to the high-level of bowling reached last year. Format was in a 6-game series.

The event was won by the young up and coming Nicholas Muscat, who at just 15 years wrote history by becoming the youngest bowler to nip this title. Muscat also succeeded in rolling his personal best in 6 games for a total of 1349. Starting on the wrong foot, with a low 157 game, he soon shook this off, peaking with a 279 to win this challenge.



Following closely was last year's winner Mauro Anastasi who had to content with 2<sup>nd</sup> place with his 1309 total. Third place was nipped by Matthew Howard who rolled a 1297 series.



## MEDITERRANEAN BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIPS XXIII QUALIFYING

The tournament consisted of 24 games and saw a record number of 28 people participating, including 3 of our junior bowlers Kayden, Julian and Chris. Unfortunately, we also had 4 people dropping off, midway due to injuries / illness.

Day 1 – Only 4 bowlers rolled a 1700+ series: Mark Spiteri 1744, Justin Caruana Scicluna 1728, Nicholas Muscat 1718 and Sue Abela 1703. 2<sup>nd</sup> in the female category was Sara Xuereb with a 1696 and followed by Melissa Swift.

Day 2 – The scores were considerably higher with Justin rolling a 1830 and Mauro a 1825 series, to lead the group with a 3558 and 3406 respectively. Nicholas retained 3<sup>rd</sup> place with his 1655 series. In the ladies', Sue and Sara retained the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> spot, although Cynthia Frendo Duca managed to inch closer to Sara with just a 4-pin margin.

Day 3 – Justin dropped his score to a 1647, but the previous days' advantage meant he still placed 1<sup>st</sup> just 5 pins ahead of doubles' partner Mauro who rolled another impeccable 1794. Philip Gruppetta rolled a good 1703 series to leapfrog Nicholas by 9 pins to clinch 3<sup>rd</sup> place. In the ladies' category Sue's 1630 series was also enough to retain the lead. On the other hand, Sara rolled a brilliant 1758 series to ensure her place in the team with a 4902 total, starting with a brilliant 290 game opener. 3<sup>rd</sup> place went to Melissa who rolled a 1649 for a total 4685.

The Maltese contingent will have the same players for 3 years in a row now: Sue Abela who has the absolute record of participating in the Mediterranean Championships for all the 23 years it's been held, Justin Caruana Scicluna (10<sup>th</sup> time), Mauro Anastasi and Sara Xuereb both 4<sup>th</sup> time. Championships will be held in Paris from 22<sup>nd</sup> till 28<sup>th</sup> March. We wish them good luck.



## 1st EUROPEAN SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS - VIENNA

The 1st European Senior Championships were held in Vienna. Team Malta was composed of Sue Abela, Mark Spiteri, Kenneth Arpa, Dennis Mercieca and Giancarlo Tolu. These athletes were chosen according to the scratch placings in the National Senior Championships.



## MALE DOUBLES' EVENT

There were 47 teams participating. Team A was composed of Mark Spiteri and Dennis Mercieca and their total pinfall (2451) placed them 14<sup>th</sup>, just a pin less than England and Spain. Giancarlo Tolu and Dennis Arpa played as Team B and scored a 2292 to place in the 35<sup>th</sup> position. We also have a new Doubles Senior Record, as Dennis and Mark smashed their own 484 record, by rolling a 494 game in the 5<sup>th</sup>, thanks to a brilliant 279 game by Dennis.



## MEN'S TEAM EVENT

The men rolled a total 4626 series, with their highest game being an 812. They placed 12<sup>th</sup> from 22 teams, with Giancarlo playing a 1040, Kenneth 1142, Dennis 1175 and Mark a 1269.



## ALL EVENTS MALES

The below was the final result in the all event:

Mark Spiteri – 3793 – 13<sup>th</sup>  
Dennis Mercieca – 3571 – 39<sup>th</sup>  
Kenneth Arpa – 3525 – 47<sup>th</sup>  
Giancarlo Tolu – 3280 – 85<sup>th</sup>  
From a total of 96 bowlers.

## LADIES DIVISION

Sue Abela was the only woman to represent Malta in these championships, therefore the Doubles' and 4 Person Team event were played to count for her All Events total. She rolled a 1227 and a 1168. Sue was impressive during the Singles Event where she played an amazing 1343 to finish in the top spot ahead of Italy, England and France.

She then had to play the semi-finals against Fely Wisniewski of France, whom she easily beat 234-173. Proceeding to the finals she faced Helga Benedetto of Italy to lose 188 – 203 and bag a silver medal.



The best for Sue however was a historical gold medal in the All Events with a magnificent 3738 total, followed by Italy 3681 and England 3659. This is the first gold medal for Malta in The All Events at European Level, and definitely a superb achievement by the unstoppable Abela.



## MASTERS

With their performance in the All Events, both Mark Spiteri and Sue Abela earned a place in the Masters, Sue placing first, in the top 8 thus ensuring the top 16, whilst Mark finished in the 13<sup>th</sup> position.



### STEP 1

Mark had to start from Step 1, with Sue securing this step to go through to Step 2 due to her higher placing. Mark's first encounter was Iceland's Freyr Bragason. He succeeded in winning the first game by a solitary pin 172-171, before rolling a good 226 to beat the Freyr's 211, to advance to the top 16.

### STEP 2

Sue started against Sara Aviram Harlap from Israel and unfortunately lost both her encounters 180-203, and 168 – 189 thus halting her run to proceed further, and finishing with the top 16.

On the other hand, Mark faced Peter Knopp from Germany and he beat him 223-214 and 219-183 to advance to the top 8.

### STEP 3

Marco Reviglio from Italy was his next encounter. Mark won the first match 225-212, but Reviglio forced another game, winning the 2<sup>nd</sup> 222-159. Mark then rolled a brilliant 256 to Marco's 237 to proceed to the Top 4, and thus securing a medal.

### STEP 4 – SEMI FINALS

This time round it was Andy Gillespie from Scotland, and the Scottish nipped the first game 192-175. But Mark fought back winning the ensuing 2 games 236-168, and 261-176 to find himself facing Austria's Manfred Panzenboeck, who was playing on his home turf.

### FINALS

Mark surged through with an amazing 241 and 257 games to easily beat the Austrian contender and wrote history in being the 1<sup>st</sup> European Senior Champion, bringing home a much-coveted gold medal in the male category.

The eventual European Female Champion is Tuula Tamminem from Finland who beat Martina Beckel from Germany.



Well done to both Sue and Mark who flew Malta's flag up high, putting our tiny island on the European Map.

**Our next upcoming events are:**

- **Malta Sports Awards – 22<sup>nd</sup> February**
- **The Presentation Dinner – 28<sup>th</sup> February (we will be announcing the venue next week)**
- **AGM – 1<sup>st</sup> March**

Please visit our website: [www.bowlingmalta.org](http://www.bowlingmalta.org) as this is being updated frequently, while daily news can be found on our facebook page.

I wish you all a good day!

Regards

Liliana