

Good afternoon all.

The Newsletter is a bit late as I was away supporting team Malta in the Mediterranean Championships and then came back to a backlog of work.

Once again March was quite eventful, especially in the international arena, and you will find this exciting news further down.

The **MSV Life Leagues** have now moved on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. As at end March, Atlas Insurance enjoyed the top place (62 points), followed by The Scotsman Pub (57) and Pin Pulse tied with Move It (40) for Div 3. Div 2 leaders are MIA (59), followed closely by Strike Me Jabaal (56) and Brutal Legendz tied with Blitzkrieg (51). On the other hand FINA rule over division 1 with a 10 point advantage over nearest rivals Turu's Knights (56), while [okmalta.com](http://okmalta.com) are in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

**Division 1 player's kindly note that we will be having a one week's break during April on Maundy Thursday so there will be no play on 13<sup>th</sup> April.**

Composite average for the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the year is as follows:

Males: Justin Caruana Scicluna (204.25), Mauro Anastasi (203.21) and Claude Camilleri (202.77)

Females: Sue Abela(199.77), TizianaCarannante (195.52) and Melissa Swift (190.34).

Youths U21: Matthew Magro (186.21), Kurt Attard (182) and Edward Xuereb (179.19) for the boys, and Sara Xuereb (189.05), Raquel Xuereb (169.11) and Alessia Schembri (152.22) for the girls.

Whilst we're on the subject of the youths, the three youths who will be participating in the European Youth Championships in Finland, mainly Edward Xuereb, Matthew Magro and Sara Xuereb have been accepted by Sport Malta as Elite Sports Persons, and were awarded a commitment letter by the Sponsors Bank of Valletta. They will be leaving to participate in these championships on 8<sup>th</sup> April.

Good Luck to all 3.



Exactly mid-March, our Team composed of Sue Abela, Sara Xuereb Justin Caruana Scicluna and Mauro Anastasi went to participate in the **Inaugural Small Nations Cup**, which will hopefully be a sort of prelude to the 2019 games.

There were 5 nations participating: Cyprus, Luxembourg, Iceland, San Marino and Malta.

Malta started off the debut in the Small Nations Cup with both teams on the podium in the Mixed Doubles Event. Each country had two teams in the event. Malta1, composed of Sue Abela and her son Justin Caruana Scicluna clinched gold, beating Cyprus in the finals. Malta's second team made up of Sara Xuereb and Mauro Anastasi clinched the bronze medal.



Next Event was the doubles, and both the men's team as well as the ladies' team had to settle for a bronze, as although both teams finished 1<sup>st</sup> after the 6 games, they lost the semi-final game.

The bowlers from Malta then dominated the Mixed Team event, and cruised to the gold medal Saturday afternoon. Sara Xuereb, Sue Abela, Justin Caruana Scicluna and Mauro Anastasi, were the only team that averaged over 200 in the six-game preliminaries (4864 pins; 202.67 avg.) to earn the No. 1 seed. They flew past No. 4 Luxembourg, with Catherine Chesney, Nora Turci, Alain Lieners, David Manderscheid, in the semi-finals, 850-686. They then defeated Cyprus with Neoklis Erodotou, Nandia Irodotou, Niki Schiza and Ioannis Konstantinou in the gold medal match, 849-710, to win the second gold medal for Malta.



The top 4 women and the top 4 men with the highest 18-game totals in Mixed Doubles, Doubles and Mixed Teams advanced to the medal round.

On the men's side, Mauro Anastasi who finished first in the all events was beaten by Cyprus' Erodotou, whilst Justin who was seeded in 2<sup>nd</sup> place lost against Iceland's Jónsson. Both our boys had to settle for a bronze medal.

Sue Abela had also finished 1<sup>st</sup> in the all events and faced Nandia Erodotou and was unlucky to get a split in the last frame, which made her lose the game and settle for 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Seeded third, Sara Xuereb eliminated Magna Yr Hjalmtysdottir of Iceland in the semi-finals, 192-190, and then went on to defeat Nandia Erodotou of Cyprus in the gold medal match, 201-176. Thus Sara Xuereb won not only the Master's Title, but also a merited gold medal in this event.



Malta led the medal tally with 3 gold and 6 bronze medals. Iceland was second with 2 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze. Third placed Cyprus took home 1 gold, 4 silver and 1 bronze. Luxembourg received 1 silver and 1 bronze, while the host country San Marino got one bronze medal.

Just a week later, team Malta composed of Sue Abela, Sara Xuereb, Justin Caruana Scicluna and Mark Spiteri travelled to Ljubljana, Slovenia for the **20<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Championships**.

The first event was the Ladies' Singles. Sue Abela brought home the first medal bowling a 1291 series to secure top place. Sara Xuereb ended in 10<sup>th</sup> place with a 1080 series, whilst Mark Spiteri finished in 14<sup>th</sup> place with a 1104 series and Justin Caruana Scicluna in 22<sup>nd</sup> with a 1022 series.



Wednesday we had the male and female doubles. Justin and Mark played a total of 1210 and a 1216 respectively. Heading into the last game defending champion Italy (1999), Malta (1996) and Greece (1977) were within 22 pins in the battle for third place. Marco Reviglio and Pierpaolo De Filippi closed with 432 to secure the bronze medal with 2431 (202.58). Evangelos Krizinis and Ioannis Stathatos toppled 448 pins but fell six pins short to finish in fourth place with 2425. Malta's Mark Spiteri and Justin Caruana Scicluna had to settle for fifth place with 2416.

On the women's side, singles champion Sue Abela teamed with Sara Xuereb won the second gold medal for Malta in this Championships with 2330 total and an average of 194.17. Abela topped 1164 pins and Xuereb, added 1166 pins.

Trailing the Maltese by 98 pins to land in second place were singles bronze medallist Alexandra Lopes D'Andrade and Amelie Keloganian of France, who joined forces for 2232 (186.00) to earn the silver medal. After a slow start, defending doubles champion Italy with Sara Giustini and Simona Pia Maria Fasol rolled five games between 372 and 386 to leap into third place and to take the bronze medal with 2229 (185.75).



Thursday we had the mixed doubles with Sara Xuereb and Mark Spiteri bowling in the morning, whilst Sue Abela and Justin Caruana Scicluna bowled in the afternoon. Sara and Mark bowled well to finish in the 2<sup>nd</sup> position during the morning's session with a tally of 2338 as Sara bowled a 1082 while Mark bowled a 1256 series. They hung on to the 3<sup>rd</sup> place till the very last frame of the 6<sup>th</sup> game, when Spain's Orche and Jimenez had the best game of the whole tournament to chuck the Maltese duo out by just 19 pins. Sue Abela and Justin Caruana Scicluna finished in 15<sup>th</sup> place with a 2212 series.



All hopes were placed on the 4 person team, with a lot of Maltese supporters following the live streaming. Scores were as follows: Sue Abela 1026, Sara Xuereb 1072, Mark Spiteri 1251 and Justin Caruana Scicluna 1081 and the team had to settle for 6<sup>th</sup> place.

With these results Sue Abela clinched 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the all events to win a bronze medal, whilst Sara Xuereb and Mark Spiteri both finished in 6<sup>th</sup> place to play the Masters the following day.



Unfortunately for Malta, Sara Xuereb had to face Sue Abela as 3 faced 6. Experience prevailed as Abela ousted her team mate Sara Xuereb, 419-345, and last year's silver medallist Giola Pastou of Cyprus, 406-362, to advance to the title match. Abela, who was targeting for her 36<sup>th</sup> gold medal in the 20-year history of the event, had to settle for the silver medal.



Meanwhile Mark had to face All-events bronze medallist and three time gold medallist in the 2016 MBC Evangelos Krizinis of Greece and he did not disappoint as he won 445 – 397, but then had to bow his head to Anze Grabijan who was playing on home turf, the latter ending as the Champion, while Mark place third and won the bronze medal.

In all Malta won 2 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze Medals during this edition. In all the 20 Editions Sue Abela, is the only athlete who participated in all of them, and she is the MBC's all-time title leader with 35 gold, 19 silver and 17 bronze medals for a massive tally of 71 medals. Sara participated for the first time and won 1 gold medal, Justin participated 7 times and won a total of 1 gold, 1 silver and 5 bronze (total 7), while Mark participated 6 times and won 3 gold, 3 silver and 4 bronze (total 10). Most importantly Malta is in top place for the overall total medal honours.

| No. | Federation   | Gold       | Silver     | Bronze     | Total      |
|-----|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1   | Malta        | 39         | 25         | 33         | 97         |
| 2   | Greece       | 37         | 29         | 31         | 97         |
| 3   | France       | 22         | 15         | 14         | 51         |
| 4   | Italy        | 19         | 31         | 35         | 85         |
| 5   | Israel       | 14         | 14         | 23         | 51         |
| 6   | Spain        | 11         | 19         | 13         | 43         |
| 7   | Turkey       | 8          | 12         | 11         | 31         |
| 8   | Cyprus       | 7          | 8          | 11         | 26         |
| 9   | Slovenia     | 6          | 8          | 9          | 23         |
| 10  | Catalonia    | 4          | 7          | 6          | 17         |
| 11  | Croatia      | 1          | 0          | 2          | 3          |
| 12  | San Marino   | 0          | 1          | 1          | 2          |
| 13  | Gibraltar    | 0          | 0          | 1          | 1          |
|     | <b>Total</b> | <b>168</b> | <b>169</b> | <b>190</b> | <b>527</b> |

During April we shall also be holding the Gold Cup open for the Ladies whose average is 175 or under and men who do not exceed 180 average. Dates of tournament are 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, with the round robin and finals to be played on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Anyone wanting to participate, please do not leave it till the last minute as this tournament is usually very popular and squads will be filling up fast. In fact so far we have 30 entries.

In the meantime continue to follow us on [www.bowlingmalta.org](http://www.bowlingmalta.org) and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Malta-Tenpin-Bowling-Association-127928316689/>

Liliana Spiteri