

## **NATIONAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS**

This year we had a record number of 42 competitors some of who participated in more than 1 category. It was a pleasure seeing such a big group.



## **U12 – MINI JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS**

This was the 3<sup>rd</sup> time the association held these championships for the growing number of young bowlers interested in our sport and this year we had no less than 12 competitors, 4 girls and 8 boys. All our youngsters had to play 4 games on day 1 and another 4 games on day 2. From day 1 Edward Xuereb took the early lead and after the 1<sup>st</sup> day he was leading by 98 pins, and by the 2<sup>nd</sup> day he had amassed a lead of 274 pins. This was Edward's 2<sup>nd</sup> title as Mini Junior Camp, having won this honour also in 2014.

The tussle was for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place as Nicholas Muscat was leading by just 8 pins on day 1, but then Shadon Psaila nipped the runner up position by 2 pins on day 2, with Nicholas finishing in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

In the girls' category it was Ruslana Grima who led all the way and won the title, whilst Kathryn Fenech finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and Sarah Cassar clinched the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot.



### **U16 – JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS**

This year we had 18 boys and 4 girls competing for the Junior Championships and all players had to play 12 games, 6 games on day 1 and 6 games on day 2. This year Sara Xuereb had no tangible competition as the other 3 competitors have only been bowling for a couple of months and she easily won the title for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in a row. 2<sup>nd</sup> place went to the U12 Champion Ruslana Grima, whilst her sister Noleen Grima nipped the 3<sup>rd</sup> place.



The boys' category was a keen race between last year's U16 champion Matthew Magro and Edward Xuereb. The latter ended day 1 with a 1156 series, to lead the boys' category by 59 pins. Matthew Magro rolled a 1097 series and was in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, whilst Kurt Attard bowled a 964 series for 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Nothing changed on day 2, as Edward Xuereb managed to retain the top position to win the U16 championships with a 186 average. The youngster is surely following in his sister's footsteps and like Sara he was crowned U16 champion at just 12 years of age. Matthew Magro had to settle for 2<sup>nd</sup> place with a 178 average, while Kurt Attard trailed in 3<sup>rd</sup> with a 159 average.

### **U23 – INTERMEDIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

6 girls and 10 boys participated in this category, all trying to make the round robin. While the girls had no problem making it through as there were only 6 competitors, it was a different matter altogether in the boys' category! Day 1 saw Philip Gruppetta take the early lead with a 1188 series, with Edward Xuereb hot on heels, and Matthew Magro, Jurgen Harrington, Cedric Farrugia and Matthew Agius occupying the top 6 places. Day 2 saw no changes in the top 3 spots, while Jurgen had to relinquish his post to Luke Burke.

#### **Round Robin Girls**

Donna Vella lost all encounters, to finish in 6<sup>th</sup> place, Juliana Bonanno and Alessia Schembri both won 2 games to finish in 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place respectively. Michaela Briffa won 4 matches to place 3<sup>rd</sup>, as did Raquel and Sara to clinch the other two spots for the step ladder.

#### **Round Robin Boys**

Once again the boys were all on even footing and all 6 could make it with the top 3. Philip lost 3 of his matches, but the cushion he had amassed during the previous 2 series ensured he remained in the 1<sup>st</sup> position. The young Xuereb astounded everyone by winning 4 of his matches, to finish in the 2<sup>nd</sup> position, while 3<sup>rd</sup> spot went to Matthew Magro who won 3 matches.

#### **Step Ladder**

Raquel faced Michaela in a high scoring match, the former winning 225-201. On the other hand the boys' game ended with Matthew Magro beating Edward Xuereb 190-145. Both winners then had to face Sara and Philip who had to be beaten twice. Raquel won the first game against her sister Sara 195-166, while Magro won against Philip 196-150. Being the underdogs they both had to beat the leaders in a 2<sup>nd</sup> match. However the reigning champs were not willing to let go of their 3 year reign and they fought to win the game: Sara beating Raquel 215-158, and Philip winning over Matthew 192-156. Both champions have been undefeated for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

