

MBA NEWSLETTER April 2023

Hello all and welcome to the April edition of the MBA Newsletter. April had a couple of important events (EYC and Masters in particular), as well as the continuation of the National Leagues that have now started round 2. The doubles league organised by Eden has also started, so while most of you know what happened as all is mostly already out on Facebook, its good to have a quick recap as always.

Lets start with the EYC, also as that is how April kicked off, with the EYC being held in Vienna between the 1st and 10th of April.

As you all know, the team was made of 4 boys, Nicholas Muscat, Kayden Lagana', Dwayne Zahra and Chris Fenech, while the girls team was composed of Ruslana Grima , Kathryn Fenech, Mia Bugeja and Karlise Bartolo.

The girls team had a dramatically better performance compared to last year, and indeed the team event was an event where they really showed superb team spirit as well a solid performance, even with many more girls taking part this year compared to last year, and at a higher level. All 4 bowled an average which was over 9 pins higher than last year, and the results showed both individually and as a team. The team finished in a solid 10th place, including a superb 771 second game, with Kathryn leading the team with her 179 scratch average. The doubles teams finished 21st and 22nd respectively out of 35 teams, and the best result in the singles was by Karlise, who was even in the lead at one point , including her personal best game of 261. Karlise ended in a superb 9th place, rolling an excellent 195 scratch average over these 6 games to finish only 33 pins from a medal position.




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The boys had another excellent performance this year. While they did not manage to win medals, they still performed very strongly and with just a bit of less bad luck, a medal or two would have been possible . Just as with the girls, the level for the boys this year was even higher than last year with a very full compliment of teams.

The doubles saw Kayden Lagana' and Nicholas Muscat just missing out on a top 4 position, as they ended in 5th place , 62 pins behind 4th, while Chris and Dwayne ended in 23rd place out of 45 teams.

As a team, they finished in a strong 8th place, with Kayden leading the charge with a brilliant 219 scratch average that included a 279 3rd game. This game was also highest as a team with an 844 scratch. The singles saw Dwayne Zahra being the strongest performer with a 216 average that placed him in 15th place.

With their performances overall , both Dwayne Zahra (18th) and Kayden Lagana' (22nd) qualified for the Masters Step 1 with Nicholas agonisingly close in 25th place just 48 pins away.



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Step 1 Masters EYC

Dwayne faced Jussi Laine from Finland. Game 1 was very close and Dwayne was unlucky with a low count in the last frame, and Jussi won game 1 213-210. Game 2 saw Dwayne unable to find the right line as Jussi win 216-151, and this was where Dwayne had to bow out after another excellent EYC performance.

Kayden faced Aleks Szczepaniak from Poland, and this was a battle that was even harder than pronouncing Aleks's surname! Game 1 saw Aleks triumph with a 235-191; this meant Kayden needed to win game 2 to set up a decider, and boy what a game this was. 277-259 to Kayden, with the pins being absolutely hammered by both bowlers. This game was by far one of the most exciting and set up an exciting game 3, as Kayden simply kept hammering away and a purple patch of strikes in a row saw him win game 3 with a 265 -230, and on to Step 2! A brilliant 735 series by Kayden saw the Malta fans screaming with joy and waiting to see who would be the next opponent. It was the super Swede Kevin Melin.

Game 1. Kayden gets off to a good start and wins 227-214; game 2 goes to the Swede (239-179) and so game 3 would once more be the decider. This proved to be another close match, with Keviin edging Kayden out 225-206 as the Swedish coached looked nervously on as 2 of the 4 Swedes were already knocked out by then!

Nicholas and Kayden (222 and 248 respectively) put their names in the records for Doubles team scores abroad with their 470 as a game , as well as a series for the doubles team with their 2616 (Nicholas 1351 and Kayden 1261) .

Overall, as mentioned, another very solid EYC performance by our youths. We now lose 2 of the boys (Nicholas and Dwayne) and 2 of the girls (Ruslana and Kathryn) as all 4 will no longer be young enough in 2024. The girls team proved that sending 4 girls, even at a young age, is worth it as they gain the required experience to be ready to perform at a higher level as they grow older. With the boys, we had a very strong team and am sure that we will have an equally strong team in 2024 and beyond!

Masters Local event

The Masters is one of the most prestigious local events, and is also one of the most challenging due to the format with multiple steps and direct clashes in the race to the final. True to its history we had ups and downs at various stages.

The qualifying, where 8 had to qualify out of the 13 who took part, saw young Nicolai Mallia bowl a brilliant 1299 series over 6 games all over 200, to lead the pack, ahead of Philip Gruppetta and Sue Abela. The other 5 qualifiers were Dwayne Zahra, Ruslana Grima, Miguel Xuereb, Dennis Mercieca and Tomas Caruso.

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Step 2 would see the 5-8 seeds join these 8, and bowl another 6 games. This time, another left handed youth dominated matters , with Dwayne Zahra absolutely running away with it, with a 1313 total, over 100 scratch ahead of second place Sue Abela. The other 5 qualifiers were Miguel Xuereb, Mauro Anastasi, Rankin Camilleri, Philip Gruppetta, and Neil Sullivan.

Last day saw these 7 being joined by seeds 2-4, Kayden Lagana', Nicholas Muscat and Mark Spiteri as Matthew Magro, the number 1 seed, was unavailable as he is in the US

After the 5 games it was yet another youth's turn to shine, Nicholas Muscat. After a shaky start in game 1 due to some shoe issues, resulting in a 150 game 1, a quick fix to the shoe meant things got better and Nicholas simply took off, with a 240 average over the next 4 games including a 275 and a 279. The ever green Sue Abela did her best to end up in second place, followed by Philip Gruppetta, Dwayne Zahra, Kayden Lagana' and Mauro Anastasi.

The finals are then bowled with qualifiers 1,4, and 5 in 1 group, and 2,3 and 5 in group 2, all playing 1 game, low man out, and then a second game, with the winners contesting the final.

Group 1 saw Nicholas bowling a 233, while Dwayne and Mauro both struggled and ending up with a 159 and 167 respectively with both opening their last frame (split Mauro, wash out for [Dwayne]). The tables turned suddenly in game 2, as the tough pattern changed and saw Nicholas only manage a 149 against Mauro's 200.

Group 1 saw Sue take the lead in game 1, with the final spot again going to the very last shot in the last frame. With Kayden a bit behind before the start of the last frame, and with both Philip and him with a strike in the 9th, Kayden could not shut out Philip as all Philip needed was a spare in the last frame. Kayden hammered in 3 strikes to end up with a 176, while Philip

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ended up missing the headpin, leaving a wash out. Cruelly, the headpin wrapped around the 10 pin in the spare attempt, and this left Philip with a 175, a tough 1 pin loss.

Game 2 saw the 2 Brunswick team mates fight it out; however the superior experience of Sue overcame Kayden's youth and she reached the final with a clear win , 224 (232 with HC) -141.

The final saw Mauro and Sue battle it out , and at the end , Mauro overcame Sue in a tough clash on a tricky pattern. 210 was Mauro's final score, against Sue's 161 (169 with handicap)



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Leagues

The Premier League is now in the second round, with week 11 just concluded at the end of April.

Team BOOM are still undefeated, though only just on week 11 as they drew 4-4 against BOV. BOOM have 75 point, 7 ahead of OkMalta.com. 3rd place we have Tm Brunswick on 58.

Relegation battle looks like it will be between 4 teams , with Brutal Legendz on 29, just ahead of TWIN and BOV on 28 each, with Royal Shock still distant on 16 points.

High bowlers of the week in April

Week 10: Kayden Lagana' (Tm Brunswick) and Sue Abela (Tm Brunswick)

Week 11: Benny Hili (Brutal Legendz) and Tiziana Carannante (Turu's Knights)

Premier league will skip 8th May as the national team will be taking part in the Mediterranean Bowling Championships.

Second Division

Week 13 of 22 weeks has been completed, and Leaders Emma's Kitchen increased their hold on to first place over last month, as now , with 81 points, they have 16 points ahead of 2nd placed Ten Pin Breakers on 65, with One 4 all in 3rd place on 61 .

High bowlers of the week in April :

Week 11: Aaron Belli (Team MIA) and Josephine Borg (Vintage)

Week 12: Aaron Belli (Team MIA) and Michaela Briffa (Strike Force)

Week 13: Aaron Belli (Team MIA) and Karlise Bartolo (Emma's Kitchen)

COTT

The 3rd COTT was held on the 12th of April with Ruslana Grima bowling extremely well in the ladies category with a 205 average scratch , that with her 60 pins handicap saw her overcome Rachel Chircop, who also bowled well above her normal average with a 162, and with her 150 pins HC gave Ruslana a run for her money finishing only 22 pins behind.

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The men saw a very tight battle between Kenneth Arpa and Kayden Lagana', with the former edging out Kayden by just 9 pins (1102 vs 1093).



The Cisk ESB Doubles have started at the end of the month, and day 1 already brought some surprises with Tm Brunswick made of the mighty Sue Abela and Kayden Lagana' losing to the young ladies of Strike Queens in the form of Kathryn Fenech and Celianne Micallef, and with Generation XYZ (Mark Spiteri and Cynthia Duca) also dropping 2 points against the very young Mikhail Mallia and Nathan Marquette (Young Strikers). The outstanding performance of PowerFruit with Dwayne Zahra (726) and Philip Gruppetta (705) was however clearly the news that rocked the day in their 8-0 defeat of MIA. KMS motors were the only other team to win 8 points.

Mediterranean Bowling Championships

The team composed of Sue Abela, Cynthia Frenedo Duca, Mauro Anastasi and Kayden Lagana' will be off in a few days to take part in the MBC in San Marino, between the 8th and 14th of May. Website <https://mbc2023.etbfchampionships.eu>

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We wish them all a great performance and look forward to continuing our successful tradition at these games.

As indicated earlier, a couple of records were established during the EYC

Nicholas and Kayden (222 and 248 respectively) put their names in the records for Doubles team scores abroad with their 470 as a game , as well as a series for the doubles team with their 2616 (Nicholas 1351 and Kayden 1261) .

Composite Average as of end April

Men Top 3: Kayden Lagana' (213.97), Nicholas Muscat (207.31), Mauro Anastasi (203.96)

Women Top 3: Sue Abela (197.14) Cynthia Frendo Duca (181.18) Tiziana Carannante (180.57)

U21 Boys Top 3: Kayden Lagana' (213.97) , Nicholas Muscat (207.31), Dwayne Zahra (195.69)

U21 Girls Top 3: Ruslana Grima (176.29) Karlise Bartolo (167.62) Kathryn Fenech (162.30)

Next up: Sprint Tournament end of May, remember to apply in time if interested ! There are also a few spots left in the Malta Open, so , don't miss out!

Wish you all a great month of bowling!

David

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