



Malta Tenpin Bowling Association

40, Giorgio Mitrovich Street, Pembroke PBK1010, Malta



EUROPEAN MEN CHAMPIONSHIPS (EMC) 2016 **-Team Malta sets new national records**



TEAM MALTA EMC 2016: Mark Spiteri, Mauro Anastasi, Paul Baldacchino (Captain), Rankin Camilleri, Mark Muscat and Kenneth Arpa.

Malta took part in the European Men Championships after an absence of 30 years. Our last participation dates back all the way to Helsinki 1986 when our veteran bowler Roy Swift was team high man.

The EMC is based on a series of events for teams of six top bowlers per country. These events play on basis of Single, Doubles, Trios, Team Event and Masters. Team Malta was selected over a qualification matrix covering 64 games, with the top ranked bowlers qualifying for the team. The team was made up of Paul Baldacchino, Rankin Camilleri, Mauro Anastasi, Mark Spiteri, Mark Muscat and Kenneth Arpa.

The 2016 edition saw a record participation of 37 teams and 220 players.

Paul Baldacchino, the MTBA President, stated; ***'It has been my priority since I took over the presidency of the MTBA to increase our participation in major Championships. We returned to EMC after an absence of thirty years. Last year we returned to ESBC after 36 years and my plans are to introduce MTBA teams for the first time at the European Woman Championships, the European Youth Championships and the Small Nations Championships'***

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Most of our players faced a relatively slow start in the first two events but then picked up the pace. By the time of the Trios event, scores started to pick up and our Trio team made up of Kenneth Arpa, Mark Spiteri and Rankin Camilleri managed to place 4th in their squad in the second block with good scores, including a high team game of 711. This boded well for the team event. The team kept improving and ended the block with two new National records of 1099 team game and 3042 team series. The previous team records stood since the 2008 World Cup in Bangkok.

This is not the first time that team Malta had a slow start in an event but then picked up the pace considerably. The team was made up of highly experienced bowlers who had the knowledge and experience to adapt. Paul Baldacchino commented; **'Out of 37 teams, Malta was one of only 3 teams to miss out on pre-tournament training. This was simply due to financial restrictions since we lacked the funds to lengthen our stay. Unfortunately, this absence robbed us of valuable testing to adapt our play and fine-tune our equipment to the specific conditions of the bowling centre where we have never played before. The team had to sacrifice the early events to find the optimal combinations, something that could have been partially settled in early practice. However, all our players have returned with invaluable experience.'**

The participation of Team Malta was possible thanks to the assistance from the MOC and SportMalta. We also thank our sponsors for the event. Without their help, it would have been impossible to send a 6-man team for such a lengthy event. Our valued event sponsors are:

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