

MEDITERRANEAN BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIPS XX QUALIFYING

The MBC pattern was a difficult sports pattern which saw a lot of our athletes struggling on it, coloured with a lot of unusual splits like in the case of Mauro getting a Lilly with all his revs!

Day 1: Sue Abela finished in 1st place just 2 pins ahead of young star Sara Xuereb (1521), with Melissa following (1498). Justin Caruana Scicluna lead from the start with the only 1700+ series of the night (1727), followed by Mark Spiteri (1666) and Dennis Mercieca (1646).

Day 2: Sue Abela excelled on day 2 with a 1662 series which saw her increase her lead on Sara to 90 pins, whereas Melissa retained the 3rd spot but lagged 109 pins behind 2nd place. All top male bowlers dropped their averages on day 2, with Justin rolling the only 1600+ (1609) but obviously more than a 100 pins lower than on day 1, Mauro bowled a 1588 to clinch the 2nd spot, just 3 pins ahead of Spiteri whose 1534 series ensured he dropped to 3rd place. Dennis shot a low 1493 and dropped to 4th. The highlight of the day was a 290 by Philippe Vancell.

Day 3: Although she rolled a low 1513, Sue's advantage of the previous 2 days, persevered and she finished in the top spot with a 195.71 average. The tussle was then between Sara and Melissa, the latter rolling good 229 and 247 games in the 6th and 7th and was only 20 pins away from Sara. Very unusual for the ladies' category as it all boiled down to the last game. Sara opened a spare, but Melissa had a split, so all was even. However Sara managed a good finish from frame 8 onwards to end the game with a 215 to Melissa's 179 with the final score being: Sara (4627) and Melissa (4571).

The men's division was very intense, though for the 2nd spot, as Justin went on relentlessly to once again shoot the highest series of the tournament (1761). The tussle was between Mauro, Mark and Dennis. By game 4 Mauro rolled a 759, Mark an 808 and Dennis an 825. Spiteri then rolled a 232 to continue to gain grounds, and by the 7th game he was 116 pins over Mauro and 189 pins over Dennis. Last game he dropped to a 188, but a 203 from Mauro and a 230 by Dennis was not enough to make him lose the 2nd spot.

One must note that there were only 2 bowlers who managed to finish over the 200 average: Justin (212.38) and Mark Spiteri (203.25).

The Maltese contingent will be composed of: Sue Abela who has the absolute record of participating in the Mediterranean Championships for 20 years out of 20, Justin Caruana Scicluna (7th time), Mark Spiteri (6th) and Sara Xuereb (1st). Championships will be held in Slovenia from 26th March to 2nd April.

