

March 2018

Good afternoon all. The Newsletter is a bit late as I was away supporting our Youths in the European Championships and then came back to a backlog of work L

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, 4 Play enjoy the top place (46 points), followed by The Youths (42) and Pin Pulse (38) for Div 3. Div 2 leaders are Bank of Valletta and Supersonic who are tied on 72 points, while J Grima & Co are in 3<sup>rd</sup> with 54 points. On the other hand [okmalta.com](http://okmalta.com) rule over division 1 with a 16 point advantage over nearest rivals Turu's Knights (54), while Fina are in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

**Division 1 players, kindly note that we will be having a one week's break during April on 19<sup>th</sup> April as Team Malta will be away for the MBC.**

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

Males: Mauro Anastasi (203.12), Neil Sullivan (198.71) and Justin Caruana Scicluna (190.82).

Females: Sue Abela (196.32), Sara Xuereb (190.03) and Tiziana Carannante (186.45).

Youths U21: Matthew Magro (189.04) having climbed in 6<sup>th</sup> place in the male averages, Edward Xuereb (182.58) and Kurt Attard (177.63) for the boys, and Sara Xuereb (190.03), Raquel Xuereb (175.72) and Alessia Schembri (171.24) for the girls.

Unlike previous years when the **Masters** was usually held during February, this time this was held during March.

**Round 1** saw 19 players competing in the qualifying round. Usually the top 8 will go through to join the numbers 5-8 seeded for 2017. However this year, since one of the seeded players could not participate, there were 9 bowlers who made it through. Interesting to note that all 4 ladies participating made it for Saturday, with young Sara Xuereb leading the tables with a 1201 series including the ladies' handicap. Another good factor was that 3 of the male youths participating in the European Youth Championships also made it through with Matthew Magro rolling the highest scratch series, and only finished in 4<sup>th</sup> position due to the handicap entitled to the ladies. Kurt Attard placed 7<sup>th</sup>, whilst Miguel Xuereb nipped the 9<sup>th</sup> place. The other bowlers to join the above were Neil Sullivan – who made a comeback after nearly a year missing from competitions, and Philip Gruppetta.

**Round 2** consisted of 6 games for the 12 bowlers - the 9 who passed the qualifications, and the seeded 5-7 players: Rankin Camilleri, Dennis Mercieca and Kenneth Arpa.

Matthew Magro clinched first place rolling a good 1279 series, followed by Sara Xuereb, Neil Sullivan, Rankin Camilleri, Cynthia Duca and Tiziana Carannante. The most exciting part on Saturday was a perfect 300 game by Rankin rolled in game 4. This is Rankin's 4<sup>th</sup> 300 game.

**Round 3** saw the seeded 1-4 players: Justin Caruana Scicluna, Mauro Anastasi, Sue Abela and Mark Spiteri joining the top 6 from round 2. After playing 4 games Mark Spiteri lead, rolling a good 871 series, followed by Neil Sullivan (833) and Mauro Anastasi (821). The other 3 were our female athletes, Sue Abela, Sara Xuereb and Tiziana Carannante.

These 6 were then divided into two groups, Group A seeded players 1-3-5 and Group B 2-4-6. Ironically the leaders of each group, Mark and Neil were the ones to be eliminated after playing the ensuing game, Mark rolling a 155 and Neil a 179. Next game saw Sara and Tiziana being eliminated with both ladies clinching the 3<sup>rd</sup> position.

The finals was between Sue Abela and Mauro Anastasi with the latter rolling a 173 to Sue's scratch 216 game for a total of 224 with handicap. With this win Sue Abela managed to win this tournament twice in its 11 year history, and is the only lady to nip this title so far.



During this month we had 2 of our members participating in events abroad. Paul Gray went to participate in the Arthur's 13<sup>th</sup> Senior Open 2018, held in the Netherlands. He played a 201 scratch average, + an 8 pin handicap, totalling to a 209, placing 55<sup>th</sup> from 73 bowlers.

In France, Sue Abela went to participate in the Storm Open 2018 playing with Team Gravity of Switzerland. Sue ended in the 12<sup>th</sup> position from 20 ladies, and the team finished in the 16<sup>th</sup> position.



The most exciting news however came from Aalborg Denmark, where 6 of our youths participated in the European Youth Championships. Last year we already had Matthew Magro, and Sara and Edward Xuereb who participated in these championships which were held in Finland. This year Kurt Attard and cousins Raquel and Miguel Xuereb joined the team.



Day 1 saw the boys playing the doubles event. Team A was composed of Edward and Miguel Xuereb, whilst team B we had Kurt Attard and Matthew Magro. Out of 43 teams, Team A placed in the 21<sup>st</sup> position - 189.7 average, whilst Team B placed 29<sup>th</sup> - 184.5 average.



Day 2 was a memorable one for the girls' doubles. Both Raquel and Sara were superb rolling a 197.6 average. Their 490 game was the highest recorded in the Doubles 6 game block, as was Sara's 279 game. In the end they tied with England in 4<sup>th</sup> place, both on 2371 series and we had to go for a roll off. Unlucky for Malta we lost out by a solitary pin to England, who ended up winning the gold. It was a bitter sweet moment for the Maltese girls, bitter as 1 pin was all that deprived them of a medal, and sweet because everyone was congratulating tiny Malta for playing so well.



Day 3 we had the boys 4 men team, and Malta finished in 16<sup>th</sup> place from 19. They averaged 183.4 picking up on a slow start on Day 4.



On the other hand, the girls could not play the team since we did not have 4 players, but they still played for the All Events. From the 18 bowlers who did not have a team Sara placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Raquel 6<sup>th</sup>.

The Boys Singles were played on Day 5, and the best show was from young Edward Xuereb who rolled an impressive 1234 series, placing 26<sup>th</sup> out of a strong field of 90 boys. Matthew Magro rolled a 1133 finishing in 53<sup>rd</sup> place, Miguel Xuereb 1087, 65<sup>th</sup> position and Kurt Attard 1037 in 73<sup>rd</sup> place.

Day 6 we had the girls playing the singles, with Raquel Xuereb rolling a 1120 series to finish in 11<sup>th</sup> place, from 31. Her sister Sara had a shaky day, bowling a 1080 to finish in 16<sup>th</sup> place.

Adding all 3 series together these were the placings in the All Events BOYS:

Edward Xuereb – 199.4 – 37<sup>th</sup> place. Credit goes to our young star who showed sheer determination.

Matthew Magro – 188.1 – 51<sup>st</sup> place.

Miguel Xuereb – 180.1 – 67<sup>th</sup> place.

Kurt Attard – 176 – 72<sup>nd</sup> place.



The girls All Events was a completely different story as both girls earned a place in the Masters, Sara in 12<sup>th</sup> place with a 194.8, and Raquel nipping a place in the 24<sup>th</sup> spot by a mere 4 pins, much to the joy of all Maltese supporters (187.8).

Game 1 saw Raquel face Peppi Konsteri of Finland in a best out of 3 games. Xuereb won the first game 177-167, but then Peppi won the 2<sup>nd</sup> game 245-180. 3<sup>rd</sup> game was very close, and whilst Peppi rolled a 215, we were waiting for Raquel to double, so she will win the game. Unfortunately the 7 pin was left standing solid on the lane, much to our chagrin, and ironically Raquel was out by 4 pins.... However hats off to our young athlete, who showed resilience and never gave up.



On the other lanes, Sara had to play against local Danish girl Line. First game was very close, yet Sara managed to nip it by 3 pins. Undeterred by the huge amount of Danish supporters cheering for Line, Sara went on to roll an impressive 269 game, to Line's 159 efforts, to secure a place with the top 16.



Her 2<sup>nd</sup> game was against Judith Frimen of Sweden. Sara won game one 219 – 198, but the Swedish girl bounced back, winning the 2<sup>nd</sup> game by 5 pins. Game 3 was also very close, but Sara managed to beat her opponent 210-199 to make it with the top 8.

Sophie Thompkins of England, who had already won 2 gold and a silver medal, was our next rival. Sara once again won the first game 217-212 but then Sophie bounced back with a 225-214. Still raw from the pain of having to lose a medal to the English duo, Sara played like a girl possessed rolling strike after strike, for a 265 game against Sophie's 181, thus ensuring a place in the top 4 for a medal.



Sara had to face Jacqueline Witura of Austria, who had rolled an impressive 1402 series in the singles. Sara easily won the first game 203-148. However Jacqueline soon bounced back and won the 2<sup>nd</sup> game 189-174. Sara improved to a 193 game, but the Austrian had a couple of lucky strikes to roll a 268 thus proceeding to the finals. Still our Sara once again wrote history being the first athlete to ever win a medal during such a prestigious event, proudly showing off a bronze medal round her neck.



This upcoming weekend 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 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April, with the round robin and finals to be played on 15<sup>th</sup> April. Lane assignments will be up soon.

We will also have team Malta composed of Sue Abela, Sara Xuereb, Mauro Anastasi and Justin Caruana Scicluna competing in the Mediterranean Championships. We are all rooting for more medals, and we will be following keenly.



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/>

I wish you all a good day!

Regards

Liliana