



## **MALTA GOLF ASSOCIATION**

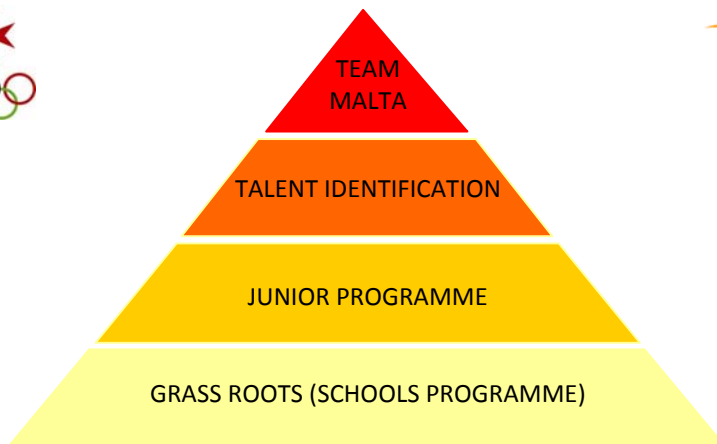
### **NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2009**

### **[WWW.MALTAGOLF.ORG](http://WWW.MALTAGOLF.ORG)**

We are very pleased to forward the latest developments that the MGA is achieving in cultivating the game of golf in Malta as well as information on the performance of our national team players in overseas tournaments. For those of you who are computer savvy the website of the Malta Golf Association (MGA) is a further medium for keeping in touch with these developments.

### **GOLF DEVELOPMENT**

Like all other sports, golf depends on a tiered development programme starting from its grass roots. From its inception in April 2006, the MGA made the development pyramid its focus to develop the game and sought the assistance and advice of the respective authorities to reach its targets.



Martin Westphal was the first golf consultant to visit the island on a regular basis and, during the first 18 months, Martin helped the MGA to initiate the fundamental development structure. Apart from starting a coaching programme for the identified

National Team players, Martin's tasks included the structuring of a junior coaching programme and finding an educational pathway for the RMGC resident professional to complete a recognised PGA Qualification. Furthermore, in these early days, the R&A presented us with a number of driving range golf balls, 36 junior golf sets and 2 Tri-golf (plastic) sets which were passed on to the Junior Academy now being run by the pertinent RMGC committee. Unfortunately, towards the end of 2007, Martin became too involved in the design and building of a new golf course in Bulgaria and he was unable to continue with his consultation appointments.

Towards the latter part of 2008 we were fortunate to have touched base with David Llewellyn who had just finished his five-year assignment as national team coach for the Golf Union of Wales. David is an old friend of Malta and to 'mature' Royal Malta members. He was here in the late seventies, as the resident professional, before a lengthy course closure due to bad weather forced him and his young family to return home to Wales and to re-start on a successful stint on the professional playing tour.



David is a World Champion golfer having won the World Cup for Wales with Ian Woosnam in 1987. He has won fourteen tournaments victories worldwide and further career highlights include being named Henry Cotton's "Rookie of the Year" when aged 20 and breaking the lowest 72-hole score in a European tournament – a record he still holds. With this background David has managed to coach golfers to over 65 international victories.













In his very first consulting visits to Malta, David managed to quickly instil a sense of self-belief in the National Team players. He has been able to guide our players to improve not just their physical swing but also the psychological requirements needed to hold a score in tournament play as well as to the preparation schedules ahead of a round and the pre-shot routines and other contingencies during play.

With a lack of exposure to tournament play abroad, the Malta golf players had so far been just participating in these events. With David Llewellyn's assistance we want to step up into the competing category and prepare our players well for the forthcoming R&A Junior Open in 2010 and in 2012, the World Championships of 2012 and the Mediterranean Games of 2013.

## MALTA FINISHES 8TH IN THE MEDITERRANEAN GAMES

The Malta Golf team, comprising of Andrew Borg, Christopher Bergedahl and JJ Micallef placed 8th with 617 points from twelve places at the Mediterranean Games that were held in Pescara this summer.

This was the first time that Malta participated in these Games as a team accompanied by their coach and an MGA official (Ian Restall). Andrew had represented the country in the previous editions held in Almeria (2005) and Tunisia (2001) albeit as an individual participant.

| Rank | Name   | 1          | 2          | 3          | 4          | Total      |
|------|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1    |  ITALY        | 143        | 145        | 142        | 140        | 570        |
| 2    |  FRANCE       | 140        | 144        | 145        | 141        | 570        |
| 3    |  TURKEY       | 143        | 143        | 145        | 142        | 573        |
| 4    |  SPAIN        | 146        | 145        | 148        | 152        | 591        |
| 5    |  SLOVENIA     | 155        | 144        | 149        | 152        | 600        |
| 6    |  MOROCCO      | 150        | 153        | 150        | 151        | 604        |
| 7    |  LEBANON      | 155        | 146        | 149        | 154        | 604        |
| 8    |  <b>MALTA</b> | <b>154</b> | <b>157</b> | <b>158</b> | <b>148</b> | <b>617</b> |
| 9    |  TUNISIA      | 157        | 163        | 151        | 151        | 622        |
| 10   |  GREECE       | 153        | 157        | 157        | 156        | 623        |
| 11   |  MONACO       | 167        | 158        | 153        | 164        | 642        |
| 12   |  LIBYA        | 171        | 178        | 162        | 159        | 670        |

In the games at Pescara, Malta placed ahead of Tunisia, Greece, Monaco and Libya but behind Lebanon, Morocco and Slovenia. As was expected the experienced teams hailing from Italy, France, Turkey and Spain took the top four places. With four rounds under 150 strokes, Malta would have placed behind these top four nations.

With Chris and JJ still in their teenage years, the Malta team competed with two of the three youngest participants playing in these Championships. Chris's rounds of +7, +11, +15 and +3 gave him an individual total of 324 (+36) for the tournament and placed him tied 25th in the individuals' table out of 36 players. JJ's +11, +17, +14 and +10 rounds led to his individual total of 340 (+52) and 34th placing.

Andrew played much steadier, with rounds of +3; +2; level par and +1. His 72 holes featured two eagles, nine birdies, forty-six pars, thirteen bogies and two doubles for an individual tally of 294 (+6) and a credible 13th placing – eleven shots behind the winning individual score.

## **TEAM MALTA AND ANDY BORG FINISH SECOND IN THE 26th HELLENIC INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP**

The same players travelled to Corfu in September and achieved an excellent result by placing second in the Nations Cup held in conjunction with the Hellenic Open.

Played over the first 54 holes of the tournament, with the best two individual scores out of three counting on each day, Team Malta registered a total of 452 strokes, i.e. eleven strokes behind the first team fielded by the host country and five strokes ahead of Slovenia.



The championship also proved to be a personal achievement for Andy who, with 293 (72, 71, 74, 76) strokes over 72 holes play, managed to secure second placing just three shots behind

Aaron Leitmannstetter of Germany and three shots ahead of third placed Vangelis Ginis of Greece – and this despite a two month lull in his golf play and practice.

Andy was leading the tournament by three strokes after 33 holes but two bogeys and a par on the next three holes to the German's birdie, par and eagle resulted in Andy dropping to second place at the end of the second day's play. The one shot difference was levelled on the first nine holes on the third day of play but the German regained a three-shot lead on the back nine. It should be said that Andy was one of a handful of players who was suffering from a bout of food poisoning that meant spontaneous (and authorised) stops during the third round.

The final 18 holes were a roller coaster ride for the top two players as the lead was exchanged with Andy actually levelling and gaining a one shot advantage by the 12th hole. However this was followed by unfortunate double bogey on the par-four 13th to give Leitmannstetter the advantage that he maintained until the end of play.

The younger Maltese players shared equal fortunes registering 320 strokes and joint 16th place. Chris's 80, 79, 79 and 82 were played to JJ's 85, 76, 79 and 80. More importantly, their seventies' scores in the second and third day of play were vital to the Team Malta placing in the Nations Cup and indicated that lower scores were within the players' ability.

With this result, all three players attained an equitable and historical result for Maltese golf making it the first time that silverware was brought back to our shores by a golf team; the second time by an individual.

## ANDY BORG MAKES THE WAGR



With his performance in the Mediterranean Games and his second placing at the Hellenic International Golf Championship, Andy Borg has managed to put his name and country down in the World Amateur Golf Rankings as administered by the R&A Championships Limited.

This is the first time that a player from Malta has managed to feature in such Rankings since they were started in January 2007. The World Amateur Golf Rankings System ranks the top Amateur Golfers in the world on the basis of their average performance in Counting Events on a rolling cycle over the previous 52 weeks.

Andrew became eligible to be World Ranked after his aggregate individual score at the Mediterranean Games placed him 13th overall. His runner-up position in Corfu last week gave him his first 65 points in the system and an overall standing of 2708.

More information on the WAGR can be viewed at <http://wagr.randa.org>.

## MALTA GOLF ASSOCIATION LINKS UP WITH THE GOLF FOUNDATION

During a courteous meeting held with Mike Round, CEO of the Golf Foundation, at the Foundation's headquarters in Hoddesdon, England in September, information was exchanged on the Golf to Schools programme developed by the Golf Foundation in an effort to promote the game of golf amongst school children in Great Britain.



The Golf Foundation's programme uses Tri-Golf equipment and resources for children between 5-11 years of age and Xtreme Golf resources for children between the ages of 12-19. The programmes are designed to introduce golf to young people in their school environment in a fun and safe way.

Parallel to these, the Golf Foundation runs a Junior Golf Passport designed to help young players learn about golf in a structured and mapped way. The Junior Golf Passport links the school learning with that of the golf club and helps junior golf committees to manage the progression of young golfers.

The Malta Golf Association aspires to take the game of golf to schools in Malta on very similar lines as the Golf Foundation has been successfully doing in Great Britain. The Tri-Golf and Xtreme Golf resources, apart from introducing the game in an environment well within the possibilities of school administration (indoor games), help children to identify with good Life Skills.



*Respect • Co-operation*

*Perseverance • Honesty*

*Self-motivation • Concentration*



Through the golf playing skills of putting, short game, long game and the golfer's code, the programme encourages the individual's personal skills of self-motivation, concentration and perseverance as well as those related to others – honesty, respect and co-operation.

The Golf Foundation has generously agreed to assist the Malta Golf Association with all the advice, resource materials and training workshops required to start a pilot scheme in Maltese schools and the groundwork has been laid to enable development officers to visit Malta in winter and hold a training workshop as well as a junior golf festival for the identified schools in the pilot scheme.

The project is being coordinated with the Sports Promotion Unit within the Malta Sports Council.

## GETTING IT RIGHT

As an Organisation with the development of golf amongst children/young people very much at heart, we want to provide the best care for them, support the organising committees, staff and volunteers through appropriate procedures and guidelines and reassure parents that the entire process is child centred.

We understand that we have a legal and moral duty to ensure the children's safety. The most effective way to do this is to have child protection policies and procedures in place informing and promoting good practice to create a safe sporting environment for children and young people and protect them from harm. The standards seek to provide a benchmark to help those involved in golf make informed decisions enabling them to notice and challenge practice that is potentially harmful. With this spirit, the MGA has recently published its *Children in Golf – Standards of Good Practice*. Firmly based on the Malta Sports Council Child Protection Policy and Procedures, the documents (available on the MGA website) call on the initial advice of another friend of Malta – Malcolm Reid from Royal Ascot – and on the expertise of Child Protection agencies in the UK.

The underlying principles are: • children and young people have a right to enjoy their sport, free from all forms of abuse and exploitation • all children and young people have equal rights to protection from harm • all children and young people should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities should be challenged • sporting organisations/clubs have a duty of care to children and young people who take part in sport • everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.

## WHO IS HE?

He will be revealed during the presentation lunch of the MGA Emirates Shield. On behalf of my Executive Council, I wish you a very enjoyable tournament and thank you for your kind support in everything. Indeed thanks also to our sponsors, the Board of Management and Captain's Committee at the Royal Malta Golf Club for making it all possible.

Yours in golf

William Beck

*MGA Hon President*

