



MALTA GOLF ASSOCIATION INFORMATION BULLETIN

MALTA JUNIOR OPEN 2023



The fifth edition of this tournament has recently been held at the Royal Malta Golf Club. The format of the competition was medal stroke play with the winner declared as that having the best gross aggregate score over 54 holes. The conditions, for the competition, took care of gender equality by making sure that both the best boys and the best girls in each category were equally awarded. The tournament, endorsed by The R&A towards the World Amateur Golf Ranking points system, also invited an additional category enabling players between 18 and 21 years of age to compete for their own awards.

The latter attracted participation from seven boys and one girl whilst the main tournament, for the under-18, had another fifty-five participants out of which twenty-five were girls and thirty boys. More than half the field registered with a handicap index of 5 or better out of which fourteen had a handicap of scratch or better. The best girl entry was Nina Holzenbein with a handicap of +3.7 whilst the best registered boy was Lasse Bonig with a handicap of +3.9. Only eleven players had a handicap of 10 or over whilst eight players in the field were junior members at Royal Malta.



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The three days were played under difficult weather conditions characterized by rain on the first day and gusting winds on the second day. On the third day, the wind prevailed albeit somewhat of lesser intensity but play had to be suspended for an hour due to heavy rainfall and lightening. Out of 189 scores over the three days, only nine were to level par 68 for the course or better and only one aggregate score over the three days was under par for the course.

The under-21 girls category was won by Zsofia Foldhazi-Nagy from Hungary by default. Zsofia was the only girl participating in this category and was awarded for her efforts to participate nonetheless. In the under-21 boys, Rene Bergendi from Slovakia played a three under par in the first round. This gave him a three shot lead over Gianbattista Perilli from Germany which he never surrendered to win the category by an aggregate score of 201 to Perilli's 205. Malta's Oliver Stuart's third round of three under par leapfrogged him over Germany's Lasse Bonig to claim third place.

In the girls' under-18 category, Turkey's Deniz Sapmaz and Belgium's Sixtine De Cordes led the field with two over par scores after the first day play. Sixtine's struggled in the wind on the second day to drop tied fourth at the end of the tournament but losing a place on the podium to Turkey's Zeynep Sualp on countback. Sapmaz consistent scores of 70 and 69 on the second and third day of the tournament gave her an aggregate of five over par to claim first place over Germany's Nina Holzenbein by a comfortable seven shot margin. Maria Moczarska from Poland placed third.

The under-18 boys category was mainly contested by four participants. Jonas Rother from Germany, Eric Casademont Vinyoles from Spain, Max Tabone from Switzerland and Noah Gratil from Malta. At the end of the first day, Jonas had a one shot lead over Eric and Noah with Max a further shot back. After the second round, Jonas retained his one shot lead this time over Max whilst Eric was four shots back and Noah dropped to six shots back. With a third round of one under par for the course, Jonas retained his lead at the end of fifty-four holes play to win the tournament by three shots over Eric despite the latter carding a two-under par round on the third day. Max finished third with four shots behind the leader whilst Noah retained his fourth overall position.

The other prize on offer was for the best net score from a local player. This was claimed by Hugh Zhang who played five over his handicap over fifty-four holes.

On behalf of the Organising Committee, I extend our appreciation to the sponsors, the volunteers and to all those who helped to make this tournament a wonderful success.

William Beck
9th April 2023