ATHLETICS MALTA NEWSLETTER - ISSUE 14 – July-August 2026
Keeping you informed on developments, achievements, and upcoming events in Maltese athletics.

As we publish Issue 14, our July - August edition, the athletics season is gradually drawing to a close, bringing to an end another memorable year filled with outstanding performances, remarkable achievements, and continued progress across all levels of the sport.

Over the past months, Maltese athletes have continued to excel both locally and internationally, producing formidable results, breaking national records, achieving personal bests, and proudly representing Malta on the international stage. These successes reflect the dedication and hard work invested throughout the year by our athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, and everyone who contributes to the development of athletics in Malta.

Athletics Malta remains committed to strengthening the sport by creating new opportunities, improving standards, and supporting athletes at every stage of their journey. The progress achieved this season demonstrates that these collective efforts are bearing fruit, with participation continuing to grow and performances reaching new heights.

As we approach the final competitions of the season, we look back with pride on what has been accomplished while remaining focused on the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. We hope you enjoy this edition as we celebrate another successful chapter for Maltese athletics and the people whose passion and commitment continue to drive our sport forward.

🌟 Event Highlights

🗓️ June 6 (Saturday)

Open Challenge 6

Challenge Meeting 6 at Marsa Athletics Stadium featured several standout performances, with the sprint events delivering some of the day's closest contests.

Claire Azzopardi (Pembroke) and Thea Parnis (Rush AC) shared victories in the women's sprints. Azzopardi edged Parnis in the 100m, 11.75s to 11.78s, while Parnis responded by winning the 200m in 24.23s ahead of Azzopardi's 24.68s. Alessia Cristina finished third in both events, while Diane Desira set Over-35 national bests in the 100m (12.41s) and 200m (25.81s). Jordan Pace (Savio) won the men's 100m in 10.80s ahead of Jorrin Busuttil (Pembroke), while Graham Pellegrini (Pembroke) continued his strong form by taking the 200m in 21.48s.

In the 400m, Under-18 athlete Nick Bonnet (Pembroke) clocked 49.87s to beat Ali El Fannouri (Rush AC), while Martha Spiteri (Żurrieq) comfortably won the women's race in 56.67s.

Thomas Neil Attard (Rush AC) set a new Under-16 national best of 14.83s in the 100m hurdles. In the field events, Nicolai Bonello (La Salle) cleared 4.80m in the pole vault, while Sophia Curmi threw 55.38m in the hammer, finishing just five centimetres shy of the national record. Antonella Chouhal also set an Over-50 national best with a throw of 46.68m.

🗓️ June 13 (Saturday)

EAP Malta

EAP MALTA INTERNATIONAL - WACT Challenger Meeting 2026

The 7th Edition of EAP Malta international - WACT Challenger Meeting was organised by Pembroke Athleta Athletics & Triathlon and was held at the Matthew Micallef St John Athletics Stadium, Marsa, Malta, on Friday 12th and Saturday the 13th June 2026

The Programme included events for Senior and Youth, Males and Females

- 7 Senior Male WACT Challenger Events
- 6 Senior Female WACT Challenger Events
- 2 Senior Male NON-WACT Events
- 2 Senior Female – NON-WACT Event
- 4 Youth Male events
- 4 Youth Female events
- 4 Pree-Meeting Kids Events

PARTICIPATION

171 Registered Local Athletes

176 Registered Foreign Athletes & Officials - (+8.7% on previous best of 2025

9 Foreign EAP Delegations - Berlin (GER), Budapest (HUN), Celle Ligure (ITA), Codroipo, (ITA), Geneve (SUI), Glasgow (SCO), Mladost (CRO), Nivelles (BEL) and Pula (CRO) were represented

- 36 Foreign EAP Member Athletes and Officials
- 140 Other foreign Athletes & Officials
- 37 Represented Countries
- 4 Senior Meeting Records were broken
- 2 YOUTHS Meeting Records were broken
- 2 National Records (MLT & MKD) were established
- 1 EAP Future (U16) Record
- 1 Local Youth Category National Record.

Senior Meeting Records

- Rebecca Bennett (AUS) Women's 400m – 53.21s (also won the 200m)
- Veronica Besana (ITA) – Women's 100mH – 13.31s
- Jemima Farley (SCO) – Women's 5000m – 17:10.37
- Mondray Barnard (RSA) – Men's 110m Hurdles – 13.71s

Youth Meeting Records

- Matteo Gauci (MLT) - Boys U16 800m - 1:59.30
- Leah Frendo (MLT) - Girls U16 Long Jump - 5.04m

National Records

- Jovan Stojoski (MKD) - Men 400mH - 52.23s
- Jordan Pace (MLT) - Men 400mH - 52.46s

EAP Future U16 Record

- Matteo Gauci (MLT) - Boys U16 800m - 1:59.30

June 20 (Saturday)
Open Challenge 7

At the Athletics Malta Challenge Meeting 7 in Marsa, the pole vault events delivered standout performances, with Nicolai Bonello setting a new national benchmark after clearing 4.86m and coming agonisingly close to 4.91m. In the youth ranks, Ella Borg Degiorgio established a new Under-16 national best with a clearance of 3.01m.

On the track, Ben Salnitro produced an impressive 14.04s in the 110m hurdles, setting a new Under-20 national record and securing qualification for the World Athletics U20 Championships.

📅 June 27 (Saturday)
Open Challenge 8 - U12/U14 Young Athletes TF Summer Meet 1
5km National Champs

Challenge Meeting 8 attracted another outstanding turnout, with over 148 athletes ranging from the U12 categories through to Masters competing across a full programme of events. The meeting once again showcased the depth of athletics in Malta, with young talents, senior athletes, and Masters competitors all producing impressive performances in a vibrant and competitive atmosphere. The highlight of the day came in the Masters categories, where three new category records were established. Adrian Mifsud set a new M55 800m record with a superb run, Lisa Marie Bezzina broke the W45 5000m record, while Charles Cilia added another milestone by establishing a new M60 category record in the 5000m. The meeting provided an excellent platform for athletes of all ages to test themselves, achieve personal bests, and continue building momentum as the season progresses.

📅 July 4 (Saturday)
Tal Linja youth international Meeting

Inaugural Tallinja Malta Youth International Athletics Festival a Great Success

The inaugural Tallinja Malta Youth International Athletics Festival marked a successful debut, welcoming more than 210 young athletes from Malta and overseas to the Matthew Micallef St. John Stadium. Organised by Athletics Malta, the festival brought together athletes born between 2009 and 2015, providing them with the opportunity to compete in an international-standard environment while fostering sporting friendships across borders.

The event attracted a strong international presence, including a large contingent from Lombardy, Italy, alongside athletes from several European and African countries. Adding to the festival's significance was the participation of Special Olympics athletes, underlining Athletics Malta's commitment to inclusivity and ensuring opportunities for everyone to participate and excel in the sport.

Supported by Malta Public Transport, the festival exceeded expectations in its first edition and established itself as an exciting addition to the youth athletics calendar. The outstanding participation and positive atmosphere provided a strong foundation for what is expected to become a flagship international youth athletics event in Malta.

🗓 July 8 -12
Open National Championships

The Malta National Championships once again lived up to their reputation as the pinnacle of the domestic athletics season, bringing together over 150 athletes who competed with pride, determination, and an outstanding standard of performance. Across the two days of competition, spectators witnessed thrilling contests, personal bests, and a host of remarkable achievements that highlighted the continued growth of athletics in Malta.

Among the standout performances of the championships was that of young hammer thrower Bianca Shoemake, who delivered a superb throw of 54.69m to set new U20, U23, and Senior National Records, confirming her status as one of Malta's brightest emerging talents. Equally impressive was Sophia Curmi, whose outstanding 55.77m throw established another U16 National Record, further underlining the remarkable progress being made in the women's hammer throw and the exciting future of the discipline.

More records followed throughout the championships. Thomas Grech set new U20 and U23 National Records in the 3000m steeplechase, while Masters athlete Adrian Mifsud continued to raise the bar with a new M55 800m category record.

In the pole vault, Ella Borg Degiorgio produced an excellent clearance of 3.12m, breaking both the U16 and U18 National Records and marking another significant milestone in her promising career.

The championships were a true celebration of Maltese athletics, showcasing the country's established stars, rising young talent, and dedicated Masters athletes. With outstanding performances across every discipline, the weekend demonstrated the strength and depth of athletics in Malta and provided a fitting climax to the national season.

🗓 July 18 (Saturday)
TF U16-Open TF Summer Meet 1

Summer Meeting 1 welcomed 126 athletes, from the U12 categories through to Masters, for another exciting day of athletics featuring strong performances across all events.

The highlight of the meeting came from Ella Borg Degiorgio, who cleared 3.20m in the pole vault to once again break the U16 and U18 National Records while equalling the U20 National Record.

On the track, Thea Parnis completed an impressive double by winning both the 100m and 200m, while the men's 100m produced one of the closest races of the day, with Jacob Elaida narrowly defeating Luca Gerada before going on to win the 200m.

In the field events, Amy Barberi added another milestone by setting a new U14 National Best in the javelin throw, rounding off another successful meeting showcasing the continued progress of Maltese athletics**.**

July 25 (Saturday)
U16-Open TF Summer Meet 2

Summer Meeting 2, the final local meeting of the season, brought together 141 athletes from the U12 categories through to Masters, providing a fitting conclusion to another successful domestic campaign.

The meeting featured thrilling sprint finishes, with Jacob Elaida narrowly edging Luca Gerada in a closely contested 100m, while Jorrin Busuttil held off Harry Emeh in an equally exciting 200m. In the field events, Asia Psaila produced a standout performance in the ball throw, surpassing the 50m mark, while Jake Caruana set a an outstanding throw of over 61m. Masters athlete Lisa Marie Bezzina also added to the day's achievements by establishing a new W45 800m category record, bringing the local season to a memorable close.

International Event Highlights

June 5-7
Ljubjana-Kamnik (SLO)
European Off-Road Running Championships

Maltese athletes compete amongst Europe’s best in Off-Road Championship

Team Malta delivered a number of encouraging performances at the European Athletics Off-Road Championships held in Kamnik, Slovenia, competing against some of Europe’s strongest mountain and trail running nations.

The first day of competition featured the Vertical race over 8.9km in extremely challenging weather conditions, with heavy rain adding to the difficulty of the course. Tommy Wallbank finished in 69th place, ahead of athletes from nations including the Netherlands, Ireland, Croatia and Romania. Tara Abdilla and Giselle Camilleri also registered solid performances, finishing in 59th and 62nd place respectively.

One of the standout performances for Team Malta came from 15-year-old Iris Merle Camilleri in the Under-20 category. Competing in a demanding 4km uphill race featuring a 420m elevation gain, Camilleri placed 26th overall, finishing ahead of athletes from leading mountain running nations including the United Kingdom, Spain and Slovenia.

On the second day, Team Malta competed in the 54km trail race, marking the country's first participation in the discipline at these championships. Ryan Farrugia finished in 81st place, followed closely by Issac Attard in 82nd, while Aidan Tanti also produced a solid performance in a highly competitive elite field.

Youngster Iris Merle Camilleri also doubled up in the Up and Down race covering 5.9km with a +360m/-360m elevation profile, securing another strong result in 36th place and once again finishing ahead of athletes from several top European nations, including Italy.

The Maltese contingent was accompanied by Head of Delegation Ivan Rozhnov and Team Leader Gerald Grech.

🗓 June 13-14 (Saturday/Sunday)
Mannheim (GER)
Bauhaus Junior Gala

Thea Parnis competed in both the 100m and 200m events, delivering another impressive display of consistency and quality. In the 100m, she equalled her own national record with a time of 11.75 seconds, once again demonstrating her dedication, reliability, and ability to perform at the highest level.
On the second day of competition, Thea returned to the track for the 200m, where she finished second in her heat with a time of 24.35 seconds.

Emeh Harry also competed in the 200m and produced a strong performance, finishing fourth in his heat. His effort was rewarded with a new personal best time of 22.08 seconds, marking an important milestone in his athletic progression.

In the 110m hurdles, Benjamin Salnitro made an excellent start and was well positioned throughout the early stages of the race. Benjamin showed great determination to recover and secure fourth place with a commendable time of 14.21 seconds.

🗓 June 20-21 (Saturday-Sunday)

Volos (GRE)
Balkan Senior Championships

A team of senior athletes took part in the Balkan Senior championships in Volos (Greece) between the 20th and 21st June.

Malta participated with a strong contingent of 15athletes across several disciplines mainly 100m, 200m, 400m, 400m H,800m, 3000m Steeple chase, 5000m, discus and 4x100m men.
Most of our athletes performed exceptionally well especially when you consider that other countries included the likes of Greece, Turkey, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania amongst others.

Malta's best result came in the 800m Men where Jared Micallef claimed a gold medal. Another outstanding performance was achieved by Isaac Bonnici when the under 23 national record was broken in the 800m with a time of 1’51.82”.

The team was led by Karl Farrugia and assisted by Steve Camilleri.

🗓️ July 4 (Saturday)
Balkan U18 Championships

Team Malta enjoyed a memorable completion at the Balkan U18 Athletics Championships held in Novo Mesto, Slovenia, on 4 July 2026. Despite fielding one of the smallest delegations, the team achieved its best-ever result at the championships, highlighted by Malta's first-ever Balkan Athletics medal. Matthew Azzopardi claimed a historic silver medal in the 800m, setting a new Maltese U18 National Record and Personal Best of 1:53.48. Isaac Luca Scicluna also achieved a Personal Best in the same event with 1:57.84, while Nick Bonett produced strong performances in both the 400m and 200m, finishing fifth in the latter. Iris Merle Camilleri competed in both the 1500m and 3000m, recording Season’s Best in the longer distance. Overall, the team returned with one silver medal, one National Record, two Personal Bests, one Season's Best and valuable championship experience, marking another important milestone for Maltese athletics.

🗓️ July 11 (Saturday)
Balkan U20 Championships

The Maltese team competed at the Balkan U20 Championships held on 11 July 2026 at the Nicolae Mărășescu Athletics Stadium in Craiova, Romania. Following a pre-competition training session on 10 July, Malta was represented in three events and produced several encouraging performances. Benjamin Salnitro competed in the men's 110m hurdles, while Thea Parnis Coleiro impressed by qualifying for the women's 100m final with an excellent 11.95s before finishing 5th in the final in 12.06s. The highlight of the championships came from Mireya Bugeja, who executed a perfectly judged race to win the women's 1500m gold medal in 4:25.81, delivering one of Malta's finest performances at the championships.

🗓️ July 16-19
European Athletics U18 Championships

European Athletics U18 Championships (Rieti-ITA) Nick Bonett and Matthew Azzopardi represented Malta at the European Athletics U18 Championships in Rieti, accompanied by head of delegation Coach Luca Falzon. Matthew delivered a solid performance in the 800m, finishing strongly in his heat with a time of 1:54.94 to rank 16th overall in the first round. Later that afternoon, Nick raced in the 400m, clocking 50.59 against a highly competitive field to finish 34th overall in his first round. Congratulations to Nick and Matthew on another proud showing for Malta

July-Aug 27-01
Commonwealth Games
Glasgow (GBR)

Graham Pellegrini competed in both the 100m and 200m events. In the 100m, he recorded a time of 11.84s (+1.7 m/s), finishing 56th out of 73 finishers. His personal best set this year stands at 10.69s. In the 200m, he clocked 21.20s (+2.4 m/s) to finish 31st out of 59 finishers. Although the performance cannot be recognised as an official seasonal best due to the wind reading exceeding the allowable limit of +2.0 m/s, it represents his fastest performance of the season under all conditions and points towards a strong return to top-level competition following a below-par 2025 season.

Claire Azzopardi also contested both the 100m and 200m. She finished 27th out of 52 finishers in the 100m with a time of 11.87s (-0.3 m/s), compared to her SB of 11.68s. In the 200m, she recorded 24.16s (+1.4 m/s) to place 23rd among 35 finishers, with her PB set this season at 24.01s. These performances are consistent with the high standard she has maintained throughout the season and provide further encouragement as she continues her progression towards future major championships.

Matthew Galea Soler represented Malta in the 400m. Despite having to contend with very strong and unfavourable wind conditions, he recorded a time of 47.38s, close to his season's best of 47.07s. He finished 23rd out of 46 finishers, with the top 16 athletes from the heats joining the eight pre-qualified athletes in the semi-finals. This performance ranks as his third-fastest of the season and further demonstrates the consistency he has shown at this level over the past two years.

Gina took on the now rarely contested classic one-mile distance, stopping the clock in 4'48.33. Finishing outside her national record, she matched the relentless early pace through the opening kilometre before the decisive move came with a lap and a half remaining. Despite battling all the way to the finish, the surge proved one step too far for the local star, who crossed the line in 10th place after a determined performance

Following his impressive qualification from the heats, Jared lined up in the second semi-final against some of the world's finest 800m athletes. Determined to give himself every opportunity of reaching the final, he committed to the demanding early pace, passing 400m in 50.9s. He maintained his effort into the closing stages, but as the field accelerated around the final bend and into the home straight, he was unable to match the decisive finishing speed of the front runners, all of whom recorded times faster than his national record. He finished with a time of 1'48.24"

It was a courageous and committed performance. At this level, success often depends on the willingness to test one's limits, and Jared did exactly that. On this occasion, the pace proved to be beyond his current capabilities, but the experience of racing aggressively against the world's best will provide invaluable lessons and further motivation as he continues his development on the international stage.

Rachela Pace competed in Group B of the women's long jump qualification. With her opening jump of 6.16m, she immediately placed herself in a strong position to challenge for a place in the final. She followed this with a second-round jump of 6.06m, leaving her requiring a mark of 6.23m or better on her third and final attempt to secure qualification among the top 12 athletes across the two qualifying groups.
Rachela produced an improved jump in the final round, but unfortunately it was ruled a foul, leaving her in a heart-breaking 14th place overall, just two places short of qualifying for the final.

Although she came close to matching her season's best of 6.30m, it was disappointing that, by only a few centimetres, she missed the opportunity to compete in the final scheduled for Saturday evening. Nevertheless, her performance demonstrated that she was competitive at this level against the strong filed of 24 athletes.

🌟 Other Top performances overseas by Maltese athletes

- Benjamin Salnitro delivered two strong performances in Valencia, progressing from the heats to the final with a wind-assisted 14.08s.

- In Canada, Gina McNamara recorded a solid 800m run in 2:11.33.

- Gabriel Farrugia impressed in Stadtallendorf, Germany, at the Lightning 10,000m, clocking 30:05 and improving his own U23 national record by 41 seconds, coming agonizingly close to breaking the 30-minute barrier once again.

- Iris Merle Camilleri ran the 1500m in 4:45.17 in Toulouse, a significant time for a 15-year-old.

- At the Track Nights meeting in Vienna, Maltese distance runners delivered a series of strong performances over 5000m. Gabriel Farrugia continued his impressive progress by lowering the Under-23 national record to 14:31, improving on the previous mark. In the same event, Dillon Cassar produced an outstanding run of his own, clocking a personal best of 14:28. His performance was enough to secure victory in his heat, highlighting his excellent form and adding another significant milestone to his season.

- Bianca Shoemake finished 5th in the Cypriot Championships with a throw of 52.07m just shy from national record.

- Bianca Shoemake Shoemake delivered an exception performance in Gallouira, Cyprus breaking the U20/U23/Senior national record with a throw of 53.70m.

- At the FISEC Games in Budapest, Malta celebrated outstanding performances in the 800m, with Isaac Luca Scicluna claiming the bronze medal after a superb third-place finish, while rising star Matteo Gauci finished an impressive fourth and set a new U16 National Best of 1:57.84, highlighting the bright future of Maltese middle-distance running.

📌 INTERNATIONAL OPPURTUNITIES

In July 2026, Mariah Barbara travelled to Rieti, Italy, after being selected as one of only five international volunteers to work in the Athlete Zone at the European Athletics U18 Championships.

The championships brought together Europe's top under-18 athletes, while the Athlete Zone provided a welcoming space where competitors could relax, socialise, and participate in interactive activities between events. Throughout the championships, Mariah assisted in coordinating activities, welcoming athletes, and creating a friendly and inclusive atmosphere that encouraged connections between young athletes from different countries.

This valuable experience provided her with first-hand insight into the organisation of a major international athletics event, strengthened her communication and teamwork skills, and allowed her to work alongside an outstanding international volunteer team while engaging with talented athletes from across Europe.

📌 ORGANISATIONAL UPDATES

Club Release Period Opens – 16 August to 21 September

In accordance with Article 22.2.1 of the Athletics Malta Statute, the annual club release period for eligible athletes will open on **16 August** and close on **21 September**.

Athletes wishing to request a club release must submit the duly completed and signed release form within this period. All applications should be sent by email to **secretary@athleticsmalta.com**, with a copy (CC) to **president@athleticsmalta.com**. Only applications received within the official release period will be considered, in accordance with the Athletics Malta Statute. No late applications will be accepted.

Release form can be found on:

DOWNLOADS - Athletics Malta

Ongoing facilities Works & Projects

The National Stadium at Marsa is currently undergoing significant improvements as we continue to enhance our facilities for athletes, officials, clubs, and visitors.

Among the projects nearing completion are the club storage areas, the planting of a substantial number of trees and shrubs in collaboration with Tal-Linja and Projects Green, together with the installation of a comprehensive irrigation system. We have also set up a new podium backdrop and created a screening system to divide the call room, providing a more private space for officials and a dedicated First Aid area during our smaller meetings.

One of the most notable additions, made possible through the support of Tal-Linja, is the new Athlete Hang Out area. This space has been designed to provide athletes with a comfortable environment where they can relax, socialise, or work in a welcoming setting.

These developments represent a considerable investment by Athletics Malta in its facilities. We kindly ask everyone to respect and take care of all installations and equipment so that they can be enjoyed by the entire athletics community for years to come.

At the same time, several other important projects are progressing. The tenders for improved accessibility, including upgrades to the bridges and the installation of a lift, have been concluded and awarded. We are also working closely with SportMalta and the Ministry for Education and Sport on a number of major initiatives as we prepare to host the Commonwealth Youth Games in October 2027.

National Team Training camps*:*

With so many competitions underway, we are still preparing for 14 of our youth platinum athletes to go on a training camp in Cles, Italy, starting on 1st August 2026.

Important Information for Athletes & Clubs

With the 2026–2027 season starting soon and the road running season set to commence shortly, clubs are reminded that athlete licence renewals will soon be required.

Clubs are encouraged to complete the renewal process and register their athletes within the stipulated deadlines to ensure eligibility for competition from the start of the season.

A kind reminder that the €20 athlete licence fee must be paid to Athletics Malta before entries open. Timely renewal and payment will help ensure a smooth and efficient registration process for all participants.

Upcoming Competitions

Upcoming Competitions – August 2026

Local	International
	Aug 5-9 World Athletics U20 Championships
	Aug 10-16 European Athletics Championships
	July 16-19 European Athletics U18 Championships
	Aug 22- Sept 3 World Masters Athletics Championships

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Stay connected. Stay inspired.