



Malta Open 2026

Here we are team England LJs in Malta, 16th to 19th April 2026.
Left to right Andy B, Suzanne B, Yunus S, Me Heather W and Don B!

So, this is my 2nd year at the Malta Open, and it's only their 4th year of running it. The Malta International is part of the Future Series, which is one of the lower Grade tournaments in the BWF calendar, however this means it is perfect for new players to earn ranking points and start their way in the International Rankings of BWF.

Day 1 - Thursday

I didn't arrive at the lovely Dunes Hotel until 2am, after being dropped off by a rather grumpy taxi driver who had been calling someone else's phone while trying to find me. Not my fault 😊

Because it was so late — or early, by then — I had a room to myself. Unfortunately, my door accidentally slammed shut when I reached the room, and apparently I still managed to wake Suze in the room next door 😬

There are five English line judges: Don, Suze, Andy B, Yunus and I. As we were last year, we have been made team leaders again.



Pm Thurs Andy got attacked by a bottle of water He survived!

Opening results

- English Men's Doubles pair Wakefield and Griffiths got the day off to a strong start by coming through qualifying.
- Unfortunately, Claire and Kenny lost their match.

- One English Ladies' Doubles match went to three games, ending in a very tight 28–26 scoreline in favour of the Ukrainian pair.
- Matthew Warring from Scotland won both of his qualifying matches and progressed to the second day.

Day 2 - Friday

We got the important stuff done first: group photo time! It wasn't a huge group, although a few local volunteers helped out each day. We worked in teams of three or four, with two people on each court at a time, sitting on the corner to cover the baseline and long line. You've all been there — such fun 😊 We stayed on the same court all day, rotating within our group. It worked well, but it was tiring!



I was very lucky today in that court four had all the Brits and the Maltese yes!

Morning matches

This morning was packed with Men's Singles, plenty of energy, and lots of shouts of "yeah!" I line judged Charlie Castle's match, which went to three games and really felt like one he could have won.

A close call

During Charlie's final end, I was sitting in the corner when a shuttle landed out near the back line, right by my leg. Charlie came running towards it and only just avoided ending up in my lap 🤪😬😬😬

Player to watch

Most of today was singles. One player who stood out was Bharath Lasheeth from the UAE. I remembered him from the All England Juniors two years ago, where he won the Mixed Doubles, and he has improved significantly since then.

Long day

It was a very long day for me and Don, as we were on the last match of the day, which did not finish until 9.30pm!

Later in the tournament

Matthew Haynes Malta Badminton Coach and Trainer

Had an interesting chat about how Matthew has been at the heart of setting up the players and upping their standard of play through use of the Malta Open and taking players to other tournaments like in Israel and then later in Latvia. His methods are having an impact as this year he had the most Maltese players competing at 14 I believe. They were in every category. The whole ethos of the Maltese Open is about community. The players help set up and take down the courts etc, they are encouraged to line judge from a young age and feel part of it.

For this reason, and for how welcoming and generous they are to all the Technical Officials, this is one of my favourite events in the calendar.



And now a few final photos from the trip.....





Regards

Heather Watson