



EUROPEAN
QUALIFIERS



MALTA SLOVENIA

FIFA WORLD CUP 2022
EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS
GROUP H

FRIDAY
8 OCTOBER 2021

20.45HRS
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INTERVIEW WITH MALTA COACH DEVIS MANGIA

UPBEAT MANGIA HAPPY WITH MALTA PROGRESS BUT DEMANDS FURTHER IMPROVEMENT

Optimism is high within the Malta squad as last month's remarkable home victory over Cyprus and the bright performances away to Slovenia and Russia provided further confirmation of the team's steady progress over the past 18 months. National coach Devis Mangia has good reason to be pleased about the recent showings but for him the only way is onward and upward as he prepares the team for another two tough World Cup qualifying tests – at home to Slovenia on Friday and the away clash with Cyprus. **Kevin Azzopardi** spoke to **Devis Mangia**...

Buoyed by their strong performances in last month's 2022 World Cup qualifiers, Malta will be aiming to maintain the positive momentum in their upcoming commitments at home to Slovenia and away to Cyprus.

After taking one point from their opening three Group H qualifiers – a 2-2 draw away to Slovakia in March, Malta attained their first win in this World Cup campaign, overpowering Cyprus 3-0 at the National Stadium on 1st September to take their tally to four points. Cain Attard's brace and a Joseph Mbong header crowned a commanding display against Cyprus which was followed

by another two lively outings in narrow defeats away to Slovenia (0-1) and Russia (0-2).

Malta coach Devis Mangia is pleased with the team's showings in September but, typically, he expects his players to show the same desire and strive to raise the bar further, starting with the home test against Slovenia who only prevailed with a Sandi Lovric penalty in last month's encounter in Ljubljana.

"I am satisfied with the team's approach in the last three qualifying matches," Mangia said. "As I always stress, I prefer to concentrate on the team's

performance and, from this point-of-view, we can be satisfied with how we played, even in those matches that yielded no points for us, but we were certainly not happy about the result.

"In the last game away to Russia, the team showed great personality while the one against Slovenia was very balanced. We were analysing this match the other day and seeing how we played and the game episodes, especially that dubious penalty, was bittersweet as we deserved better but I'd rather look on the positive side. Our performances last month were good but we need to build on that."



Joseph Mbong performs an overhead kick in the 3-0 victory over Cyprus.
PHOTOS: DOMENIC AQUILINA



Goalkeeper Henry Bonello intercepts a Slovenia cross.



Malta striker Alexander Satariano drives forward in the away qualifier against Russia.

"As I always stress, I prefer to concentrate on the team's performance and, from this point-of-view, we can be satisfied with how we played, even in those matches that yielded no points for us"

Mangia has largely kept faith with the players who were part of the squad for the September internationals but included two new faces in the provisional list, defender James Brown, who turns out for St Johnstone in Scotland, and Floriana midfielder Adam Magri Overend.

"James Brown is a young defender who can play in different positions at the back, so that can be useful for us," Mangia said. "I'm interested to have a closer look at him during this international window."

"The selection of Adam Magri Overend is another sign for all the young Maltese players that the doors of the national team are open for everyone. Adam is only 21, he is an interesting prospect who is proving himself in the domestic league and therefore deserves

the opportunity to be part of the squad for the upcoming World Cup games."

PHYSICAL CONDITION

With the 2021-22 season gradually gaining momentum, Mangia noted that the physical condition of the players has improved. "Generally, the physical condition has improved compared to last month as the players have been involved in more games and subsequently their match fitness is better," Mangia said.

"There were a few players who looked slightly tired in the first training sessions but that is normal. The current format of the championship is also having a positive effect in my opinion as the games are balanced and competitive, factors that help to

raise the level of performance as the intensity is higher."

With six matches played, the current situation in Group H sees Croatia and Russia lead the pace with 13 points followed by Slovakia on nine. Slovenia, our next opponents, have gathered seven points, three more than Malta and Cyprus.

"Looking at the results so far, it's clear that the top two teams, Croatia and Russia, have established an advantage in the qualification race," Mangia said. "Overall, this has been a well-contested group with many close matches. As I said, I'm satisfied with our progress so far but I'm very curious to see how we will approach our next two commitments."

"What I expect from the team is to keep growing and improving, performance-wise."



"We must take one game at a time but the team has certainly shown that we have the qualities to continue on this path. If we manage to keep up and possibly improve our performance levels, in the medium term we can achieve more positive results in terms of points"

HIGH HOPES

Malta's four-point tally coupled with their confident performances of late have raised expectations of getting more points on board and possibly setting a new record in a qualifying campaign for a major competition.

Mangia sounded an upbeat note but he is not getting ahead of himself. "We can't allow ourselves to be conditioned by such thoughts," the Italian coach said. "We must take one game at a time but the team has certainly shown that we have the qualities to continue on this path. If we manage to keep up and possibly improve our performance levels, in the medium term we can achieve more positive results in terms of points."

Although Mangia and his charges are fully focused on Friday's match against Slovenia,

the national coach is wary of the heightened expectations surrounding the away match against Cyprus in Larnaca in three days' time.

"The next game is always the most important and that will not change," Mangia said. "We are focusing all our attention and energies on the Slovenia match but everyone is conscious of the fact that the following assignment is the away clash with Cyprus.

"That will be the most difficult match of this campaign because after the result in Malta, Cyprus will be very determined to show that they are a different side compared to that game. We are aware of this and to cope with such scenario, we must perform to the maximum of our abilities, we have to be at our best in terms of attitude and focus because the Cyprus match will be the toughest." ↳

MALTA SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS

Henry Bonello (Hamrun Spartans); Jake Galea (Balzan); Matthew Grech (Pembroke Athleta).

DEFENDERS

Samir Arab (Balzan); Steve Borg (Gżira United); James Brown (St Johnstone, Scotland); Karl Micallef (Hamrun Spartans); Zach Muscat (Casa Pia, Portugal); Enrico Pepe (Birkirkara); Kurt Shaw (Sliema Wanderers).

MIDFIELDERS

Cain Attard (Birkirkara); Ryan Camenzuli (Floriana); Triston Caruana (Valletta); Adam Magri Overend (Floriana); Joseph Essien Mbong (Hamrun Spartans); Nikolai Muscat (Gżira United); Brandon Diego Paiber (Floriana); Steven Pisani (Gżira United); Nevin Portelli (Gżira United); Teddy Teuma (R.U. Saint-Gilloise, Belgium); Dunstan Vella (Hibernians); Dexter Xuereb (Santa Lucia).

FORWARDS

Jurgen Degabriele (Hibernians); Shaun Dimech (Valletta); Luke Gamin (Hamrun Spartans); Jake Grech (Hibernians); Paul Mbong (Birkirkara); Luke Montebello (Birkirkara); Alexander Satariano (Frosinone Calcio, Italy).



FIFA WORLD CUP 2022 EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS

GROUP H FIXTURES AND STANDINGS

MATCHDAY 1 - 24/03/2021

Malta 1-3 Russia

GOALS 0-1 Artem Dzyuba 23, 0-2 Mario Fernandes 35, 1-2 Joseph Mbong 56, 1-3 Aleksandr Sobolev 90

Cyprus 0-0 Slovakia**Slovenia 1-0 Croatia**

GOAL 1-0 Sandi Lovric 15

MATCHDAY 2 - 27/03/2021

Russia 2-1 Slovenia

GOALS 1-0 Artem Dzyuba 26, 2-0 Artem Dzyuba 35, 2-1 Josip Ilicic 36

Croatia 1-0 Cyprus

GOAL 1-0 Mario Pasalic 40

Slovakia 2-2 Malta

GOALS 0-1 Luke Gammie 16, 0-2 Alexander Satariano 20, 1-2 David Strelec 49, 2-2 Milan Skriniar 53

MATCHDAY 3 - 30/03/2021

Cyprus 1-0 Slovenia

GOAL 1-0 Ioannis Pittas 42

Slovakia 2-1 Russia

GOALS 1-0 Milan Skriniar 38, 1-1 Mario Fernandes 71, 2-1 Robert Mak 74

Croatia 3-0 Malta

GOALS 1-0 Ivan Perisic 62, 2-0 Luka Modric 76 (p), 3-0 Josip Brekalo 90

MATCHDAY 4 - 01/09/2021

Malta 3-0 Cyprus

GOALS 1-0 Cain Attard 44, 2-0 Joseph Mbong 46, 3-0 Cain Attard 54

Slovenia 1-1 Slovakia

GOALS 1-0 Róbert Boženík 32, 1-1 Petar Stojanović 42

Russia 0-0 Croatia

MATCHDAY 5 - 04/09/2021

Cyprus 0-2 Russia

GOALS 0-1 Aleksandr Erokhin 6, 0-2 Rifat Zhemaletdinov 55

Slovenia 1-0 Malta

GOAL 1-0 Sandi Lovrić 44 (p)

Slovakia 0-1 Croatia

GOAL 0-1 Marcelo Brozović 86

CURRENT STANDINGS

	PLAYED	WON	DRAW	LOST	GOALS FOR	GOALS AGAINST	POINTS
Croatia	6	4	1	1	8	1	13
Russia	6	4	1	1	10	4	13
Slovakia	6	2	3	1	7	5	9
Slovenia	6	2	1	3	4	7	7
Malta	6	1	1	4	6	11	4
Cyprus	6	1	1	4	1	8	4

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■ MALTA SQUAD

MALTA PLAYER PROFILES

FOR WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS AGAINST SLOVENIA (H) & CYPRUS (A)



**HENRY
BONELLO**

GOALKEEPER

CLUB Hamrun Spartans FC
DOB 13 October 1988

CAPS 31

NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

29 February 2012
Malta 2 Liechtenstein 1
(Friendly)



**JAKE
GALEA**

GOALKEEPER

CLUB Balzan FC
DOB 15 April 1996

CAPS 2

NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

27 October 2020
Malta 2 Gibraltar 0
(Friendly)



**MATTHEW
GRECH**

GOALKEEPER

CLUB Pembroke Athleta FC
DOB 19 February 1996

CAPS 0



**SAMIR
ARAB**

DEFENDER

CLUB Balzan FC
DOB 25 March 1994

CAPS 1

NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

7 October 2020
Malta 2 Gibraltar 0
(Friendly)



**STEVE
BORG**

DEFENDER

CLUB Gżira United FC
DOB 15 May 1988

CAPS 61 (3 goals)

NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

7 October 2011
Latvia 2 Malta 0
(Euro Championship Qualifier)



**JAMES
BROWN**

DEFENDER

CLUB St Johnstone (Scotland)
DOB 12 January 1998

CAPS 0



**KARL
MICALLEF**

DEFENDER

CLUB Hamrun Spartans FC
DOB 8 September 1996

CAPS 4

NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

26 March 2019
Malta 0 Spain 2
(Euro Championship Qualifier)



**ZACH
MUSCAT**

DEFENDER

CLUB AC Casa Pia (Portugal)
DOB 22 August 1993

CAPS 47 (1 goal)

NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

4 September 2014
Slovakia 1 Malta 0
(Friendly)

MALTA SQUAD

**ENRICO PEPE****DEFENDER**

CLUB Birkirkara FC
DOB 12 November 1989
CAPS 5
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
6 September 2020
Malta 1 Latvia 1
(UEFA Nations League)

**KURT SHAW****DEFENDER**

CLUB Sliema Wanderers FC
DOB 1 April 1999
CAPS 14
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
12 October 2019
Malta 0 Sweden 4
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**CAIN ATTARD****MIDFIELDER**

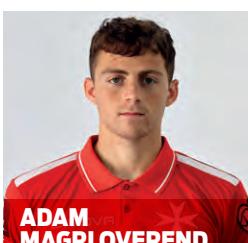
CLUB Birkirkara FC
DOB 10 September 1994
CAPS 10 (2 goals)
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
27 May 2016
Czech Republic 6 Malta 0
(Friendly)

**RYAN CAMENZULI****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Floriana FC
DOB 8 September 1994
CAPS 19
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
25 March 2015
Georgia 2 Malta 0
(Friendly)

**TRISTON CARUANA****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Valletta FC
DOB 15 September 1991
CAPS 8 (1 goal)
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
26 March 2018
Finland 5 Malta 0
(Friendly)

**ADAM MAGRI OVEREND****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Floriana FC
DOB 3 May 2000
CAPS 0

**JOSEPH MBONG****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Hamrun Spartans FC
DOB 15 July 1997
CAPS 32 (2 goals)
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
29 May 2018
Armenia 1 Malta 1
(Friendly)

**NIKOLAI MUSCAT****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Gżira United FC
DOB 13 July 1996
CAPS 3
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
18 November 2019
Malta 1 Norway 2
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**BRANDON PAIBER****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Floriana FC
DOB 5 June 1995
CAPS 1
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
15 November 2019
Spain 7 Malta 0
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**STEVE PISANI****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Gżira United FC
DOB 7 August 1992
CAPS 31
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
28 March 2015
Azerbaijan 2 Malta 0
(Euro Championship Qualifier)

**NEVIN PORTELLI****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Gżira United FC
DOB 16 September 1999
CAPS 0

**TEDDY TEUMA****MIDFIELDER**

CLUB Royale Union St Gilloise (Belgium)
DOB 30 September 1993
CAPS 14
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT
3 September 2020
Faroe Islands 3 Malta 2
(UEFA Nations League)

MALTA SQUAD



DUNSTAN VELLA

MIDFIELDER

CLUB Hibernians FC
DOB 27 April 1996
CAPS 8
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

1 June 2018
 Georgia 1 Malta 0
 (Friendly)



DEXTER XUEREB

MIDFIELDER

CLUB Santa Lucia
DOB 21 September 1997
CAPS 1
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

30 May 2021
 Northern Ireland 3 Malta 0
 (Friendly)



JURGEN DEGABRIELE

FORWARD

CLUB Hibernians FC
DOB 10 October 1996
CAPS 11 (2 goals)
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

29 May 2018
 Armenia 1 Malta 1
 (Friendly)



SHAUN DIMECH

FORWARD

CLUB Valletta FC
DOB 8 August 2001
CAPS 9 (2 goals)
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

7 October 2020
 Malta 2 Gibraltar 0
 (Friendly)



LUKE GAMBIN

FORWARD

CLUB Hamrun Spartans FC
DOB 16 March 1993
CAPS 31 (1 goal)
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

27 May 2016
 Czech Republic 6 Malta 0
 (Friendly)



JAKE GRECH

FORWARD

CLUB Hibernians FC
DOB 18 November 1997
CAPS 18
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

29 May 2018
 Armenia 1 Malta 1
 (Friendly)



PAUL MBONG

FORWARD

CLUB Birkirkara FC
DOB 2 September 2001
CAPS 9
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

3 September 2020
 Faroe Islands 3 Malta 2
 (UEFA Nations League)



DEVIS MANGIA

HEAD COACH

DAVIDE MAZZOTTA

FIRST ASSISTANT COACH



GUILLERMO GIACOMAZZI

ASSISTANT COACH



ALESSANDRO ZINNARI

TECHNICAL CO-ORDINATOR



LUKE MONTEBELLO

FORWARD

CLUB Birkirkara FC
DOB 13 August 1995
CAPS 14
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

26 March 2017
 Malta 1 Slovakia 3
 (World Cup Qualifier)



ALEXANDER SATARIANO

FORWARD

CLUB Frosinone Calcio (Italy)
DOB 25 October 2001
CAPS 11 (1 goal)
NATIONAL TEAM DEBUT

11 November 2020
 Malta 3 Liechtenstein 0
 (Friendly)



MARIO CAPECE

GOALKEEPERS COACH

Keith FENECH – Team Manager
 Luca PAGANI – Fitness Coach
 Francesco ZANASI – Fitness Coach
 Facundo STYK – Match Analyst
 Pamela SCHEMBRI – Communications Director/National Team Media Officer
 Daniel McKEAN – Team Doctor
 Luke BUSUTTIL LEAVER – Physiotherapist
 Julian RIZZO NAUDI – Physiotherapist
 Simone DONATO – Physiotherapist
 Aaron ANCILLERI – Masseur
 Frankie CIANTAR – Kit Manager
 Mark PISCOPO – Kit Manager

INFORMATION CORRECT AS OF 06/10/2021.

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MEMORABLE NIGHT!

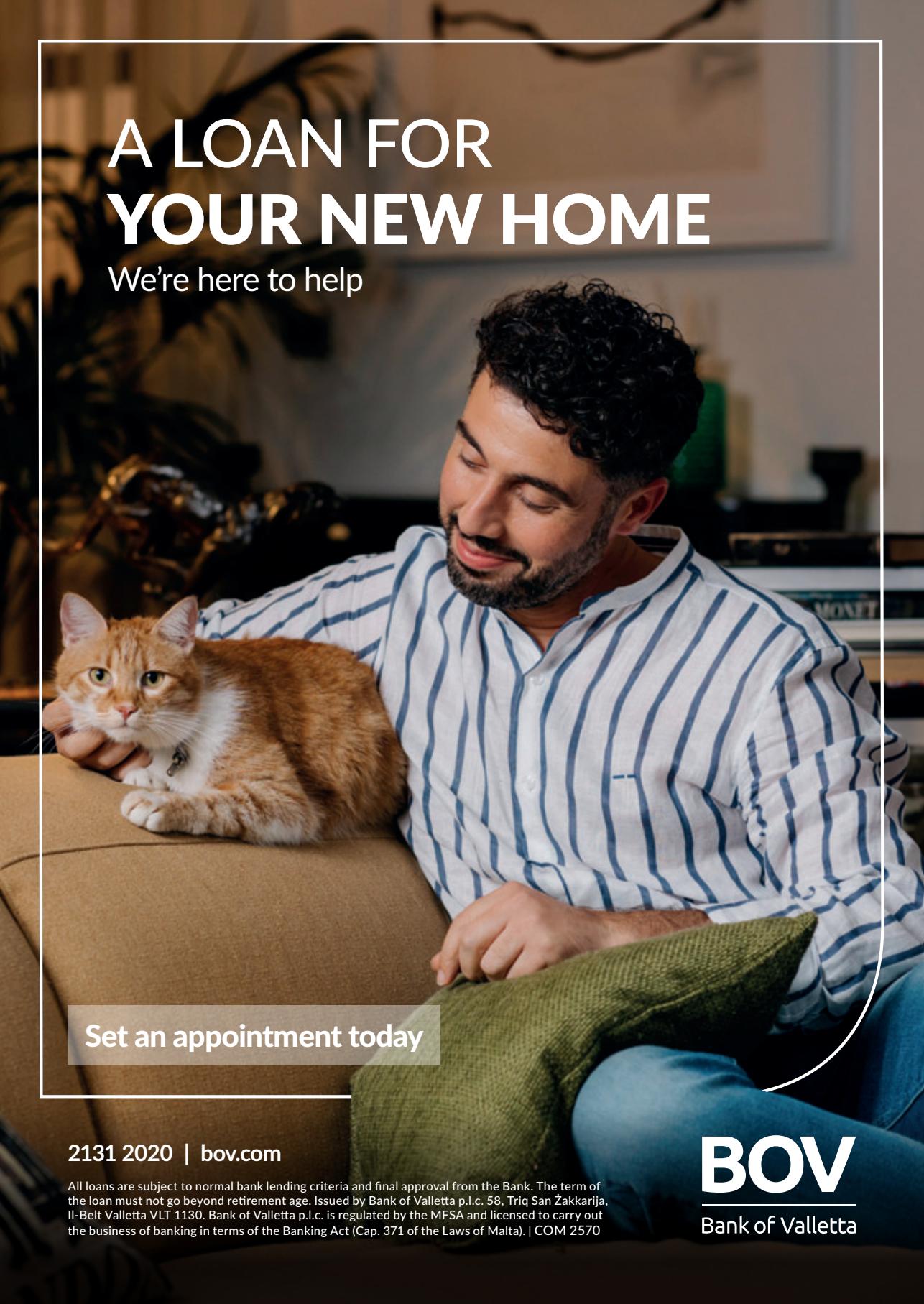
Malta turned on the style to beat Cyprus 3-0 in a 2022 World Cup Group H qualifier at the National Stadium on 1st September, 2021. It was a night to remember for Cain Attard who repaid coach Devis Mangia's faith with a well-taken brace either side of half-time with Joseph Mbong also putting his name on the scoresheet with a powerful header at the start of the second half. The electric performance delighted the Maltese fans who were allowed back into the stadium for a national team's match after a lapse of 18 months due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Malta's first victory in this World Cup qualifying campaign moved them on four points in Group H.

PHOTOS: DOMENIC AQUILINA



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PREVIOUS ENCOUNTERS

Malta goalkeeper David Cluett stops a Slovenia attack during the 1994 match at the National Stadium.

MALTA LOOKING TO IMPROVE RECORD AGAINST SLOVENIA

The 2022 World Cup Group H qualifier at the National Stadium will be the eighth meeting between Malta and Slovenia. Malta's best result is a goalless draw in the 1996 International Tournament as Slovenia have won the other six matches. **LENNARD KELDER** looks back on these previous encounters...

12/02/1994

MALTA 0-1 SLOVENIA
(Malta International Tournament)

The first time Malta met Slovenia was in 1994 when the Malta FA invited the Slovenian national team to take part in the International Tournament. Slovenia, who had gained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, won the bi-annual tournament after beating

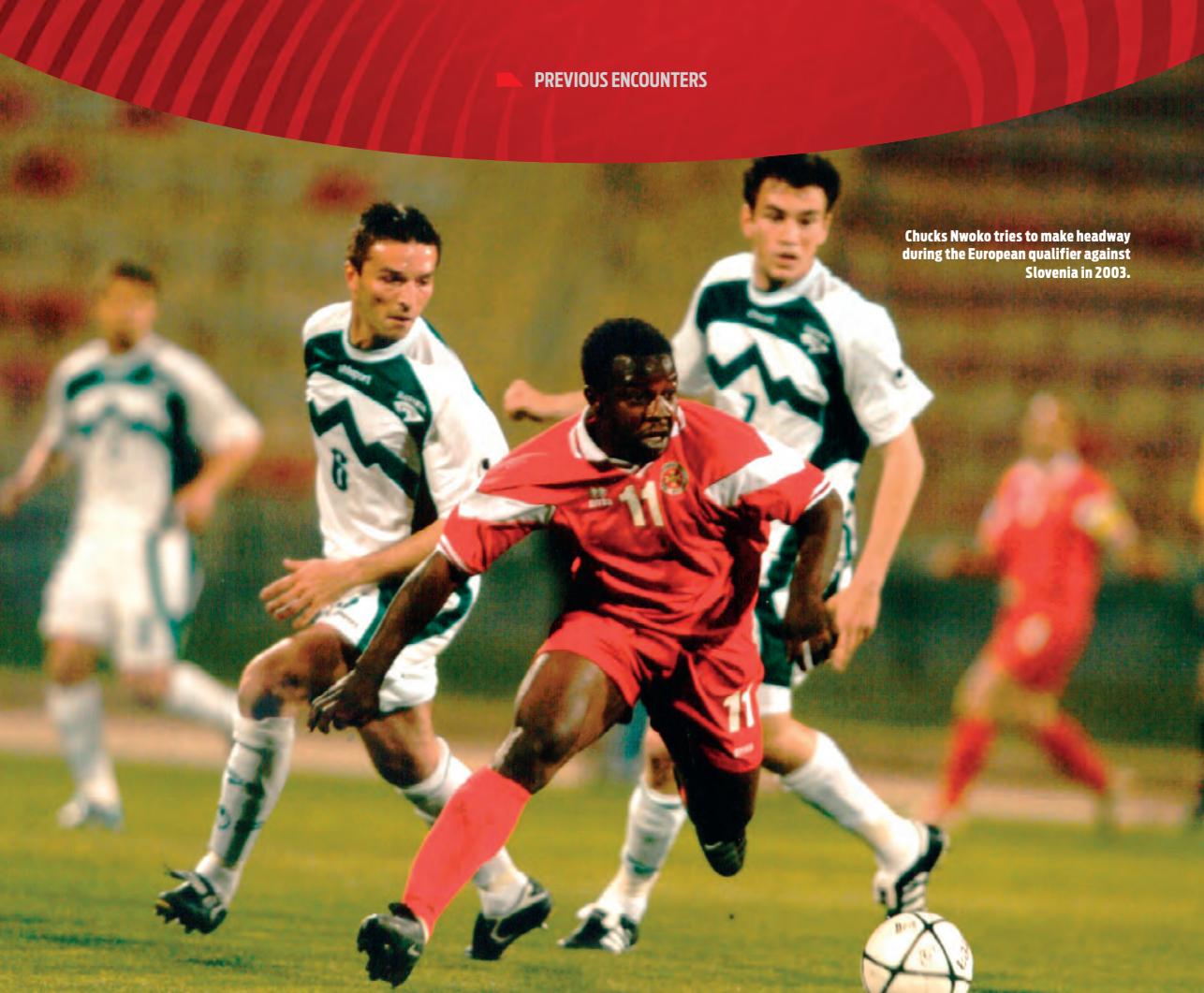
Georgia 1-0, a 2-2 draw against Tunisia and a 1-0 victory over Malta. The winner was scored by Primoz Gliha in the 54th minute.

MALTA David Cluett, Joe Camilleri, John Buttigieg (Gilbert Agius 65), Joe Galea (Michael Spiteri 46), Silvio Vella, Kris Laferla, Joe Brincat, Nicky Saliba, Charles Xerri, Martin Gregory, Hubert Suda.

COACH Pietro Ghedin



Srecko Katanec with the International Tournament trophy won by Slovenia in 1994.



Chucks Nwoko tries to make headway during the European qualifier against Slovenia in 2003.

09/02/1996

MALTA 0-0 SLOVENIA

(Malta International Tournament)

Slovenia returned to defend their trophy in the 1996 tournament. They kicked off with a resounding 7-1 win over Iceland with Beveren forward Saso Udovic scoring five goals. However, in their match against Malta, Slovenia could not go beyond a goalless draw on day two of the tournament. On the last day, Russia defeated Slovenia 3-1 to win the tournament unbeaten.

MALTA Reggie Cini, John Buttigieg (Gilbert Agius 87), Jeffrey Chetcuti (David Carabott 48), Michael Woods (David Camilleri 67), Darren Debono, Silvio Vella, Richard

Buhagiar, Ivan Zammit, Noel Turner, Gilbert Agius, Hubert Suda (Nicky Saliba 85).

COACH Robert Gatt

30/04/2003

MALTA 1-3 SLOVENIA

(European Championship Qualification)

The third meeting on Maltese soil took place in 2003 as both nations were drawn in Group 1 of the Euro 2004 qualifying round. Playmaker Zlatko Zahovic opened the scoring in the 15th minute and Ermin Siljak hit a brace, on 36 and 57 minutes, to seal Slovenia's win. Michael Mifsud scored a late consolation goal on the stroke of time.

MALTA Mario Muscat, Brian Said, Luke Dimech, Simon Vella, Ian Ciantar, Stefan Giglio (William Camenzuli 69), David Carabott, Noel Turner, George Mallia, Chucks Nwoko (Danijel Bogdanovic 63), Michael Mifsud.

COACH Sigfried Held

11/11/2016

MALTA 0-1 SLOVENIA

(World Cup Qualification)

A Benjamin Verbic goal two minutes after the break was enough to hand Slovenia their third victory against Malta at the National Stadium. Goalkeeper Andrew Hogg was prominent with several great saves in the first half. After Slovenia's

goal, Malta ventured forward in search of an equaliser but the visitors stood firm to preserve their advantage. Dover Athletic defender Sam Magri made his debut for Malta in this match.

MALTA Andrew Hogg, Sam Magri, Andrei Agius, Joseph Zerafa, Ryan Camilleri (Steve Borg 68), Zach Muscat, Gareth Sciberras, Rowen Muscat, Luke Gambin, André Schembri, Michael Mifsud (Jean-Paul Farrugia 44).

COACH Pietro Ghedin

AWAY MATCHES

07/09/2002

SLOVENIA 3-0 MALTA
(European Championship Qualification)

MALTA Mario Muscat, Brian Said, Luke Dimech, Darren Debono, Jeffrey Chetcuti, David Carabott, Stefan Giglio, George Mallia (Danijel Bogdanovic 71), Gilbert Agius, Chucks Nwoko, Michael Mifsud (Adrian Mifsud 88).

COACH Sigfried Held

10/06/2017

SLOVENIA 2-0 MALTA
(World Cup Qualification)

MALTA Andrew Hogg, Alex Muscat, Andrei Agius, Steve Borg (Sam Magri 89), Clayton Failla, André Schembri (Michael Mifsud 62), Ryan Fenech, Zach Muscat, Bjorn Kristensen (Luke Gambin 46), Alfred Effiong, Steve Pisani.
COACH Pietro Ghedin

04/09/2021

SLOVENIA 1-0 MALTA
(World Cup Qualification)

MALTA Henry Bonello, Enrico Pepe, Zach Muscat, Kurt Shaw, Cain Attard, Triston Caruana (Steve Pisani 79), Teddy Teuma, Juan Corbalan (Ryan Camenzuli 46), Joseph Mbong (Luke Gambin 73), Shaun Dimech (Paul Mbong 58), Alex Satariano (Luke Montebello 77).
COACH Devis Mangia ↗



Malta midfielder Teddy Teuma makes a challenge during the 1-0 away defeat to Slovenia.



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FACTS AND FIGURES

2

David Carabott, then on the books of Valletta, captained Malta twice in matches against Slovenia. The Citizens were also represented by Kris Laferla and Michael Mifsud. The other three captains were John Buttigieg (Floriana), André Schembri (Boavista) and Henry Bonello (Hamrun Spartans).



3

Three players made their Malta debut against Slovenia:

David Camilleri (Hamrun Spartans)

9th February, 1996 - Friendly Tournament (0-0)

Noel Turner (Sliema Wanderers)

9th February, 1996 - Friendly Tournament (0-0)

Sam Magri (Dover Athletic)

11th November, 2016 - World Cup (0-1)



22

The players who featured for Malta in matches against Slovenia represented 22 clubs, 13 of which were foreign. Valletta were the most represented with a total of 22 players followed by Hibernians (14), Birkirkara (13) and Sliema Wanderers (12).

4

Michael Mifsud has made the highest number of appearances (four) against Slovenia, followed by Gilbert Agius (Valletta), David Carabott (Hibernians 1, Valletta 2), Zach Muscat (Arezzo 2, Casa Pia AC 1) and Luke Gamin (Barnet FC, Luton Town, Hamrun Spartans) with three each. Mifsud represented two clubs (Kaiserslautern and Valletta).



7

Michael Mifsud (pictured above) scored Malta's only goal in the previous seven matches against Slovenia. It was his seventh goal in his 23rd appearance for the national team. Playing for German club Kaiserslautern at the time, Mifsud netted in the 3-1 defeat during a European Championship Qualifier, played on 30th April, 2003 at the National Stadium. He was 22 years and 13 days.

19

The youngest Malta player to face Slovenia is Alex Satariano (Frosinone Calcio) aged 19 years, 10 months and 10 days, on 4th September, 2021, during the 1-0 defeat in the 2022 World Cup qualifier at the Stozice Stadium, Ljubljana.

The oldest Malta player was Michael Mifsud (Valletta) at 36 years, one month and 24 days, on 10th June 2017, in the 2-0 defeat in the 2018 World Cup qualifier at the same stadium.

66

A total of 66 players have been selected by four different coaches (Pietro Ghedin, Robert Gatt, Sigfried Held and Devis Mangia).



MALTA'S NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM CHOSE



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SLOVENIA SQUAD

Goalkeepers

Jan OBLAK

CLUB ATLETICO MADRID (Spain)
DOB 07/01/93 CAPS 40

Vid BELEC

CLUB US SALERNITANA (Italy)
DOB 06/06/90 CAPS 18

Igor VEKIC

CLUB FC PAÇOS DE FERREIRA (Portugal)
DOB 06/05/98 CAPS 0

Defenders

Miha MEVLJA

CLUB ALANYASPOR (Turkey)
DOB 12/06/90 CAPS 41 (1)

Petar STOJANOVIC

CLUB EMPOLI (Italy)
DOB 07/10/95 CAPS 30 (1)

Jaka BIJOL

CLUB CSKA (Russia)
DOB 05/02/99 CAPS 22

Jure BALKOVEC

CLUB KARAGUMRUK (Turkey)
DOB 09/09/94 CAPS 16

Miha BLAŽIĆ

CLUB FERENCVAROŠ (Hungary)
DOB 08/05/93 CAPS 15

Žan ROGEJ

CLUB WSG TIROL (Austria)
DOB 25/11/99 CAPS 1

Žan KARNICNIK

CLUB NŠ MURA
DOB 18/09/94 CAPS 0

Žan KOLMANIC

CLUB AUSTIN FC (USA)
DOB 03/03/00 CAPS 0

Midfielders

Jasmin KURTIC

CLUB PAOK (Greece)
DOB 10/01/89 CAPS 71 (2)

Domen CRNIGOJ

CLUB VENEZIA (Italy)
DOB 18/11/95 CAPS 19 (3)

Leo ŠTULAC

CLUB EMPOLI (Italy)
DOB 26/09/94 CAPS 16

Sandi LOVRIC

CLUB FC LUGANO (Switzerland)
DOB 28/03/98 CAPS 14 (3)

Jon Gorenc STANKOVIC

CLUB SK STURM GRAZ (Austria)
DOB 14/01/96 CAPS 6 (1)

Adam Gnezda CERIN

CLUB HNK RIJEKA (Croatia)
DOB 16/07/99 CAPS 4

Max Elšnik TIMI

CLUB NK OLIMPIJA LJUBLJANA
DOB 29/04/98 CAPS 0

Forwards

Josip ILICIC

CLUB ATALANTA (Italy)
DOB 29/01/88 CAPS 74 (13)

Benjamin VERBIC

CLUB DINAMO KYEV (Ukraine)
DOB 27/11/93 CAPS 34 (5)

Andraž ŠPORAR

CLUB MIDDLESBROUGH (England)
DOB 27/02/94 CAPS 31 (4)

Luka ZAHOVIC

CLUB POGON SZCZECIN (Poland)
DOB 15/11/95 CAPS 7

Benjamin ŠEŠKO

CLUB RED BULL SALZBURG (Austria)
DOB 31/05/03 CAPS 5

David TIJANIC

CLUB GOztepe (Turkey)
DOB 16/07/97 CAPS 1

Head Coach

Matjaž KEK

INFORMATION CORRECT AS OF 06/10/2021.

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■ 2021-23 UEFA UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP

AWAY DOUBLE-HEADER AWAITS MALTA UNDER-21 TEAM



Rodney Vassallo

The Malta Under-21 team resume their UEFA European Under-21 Championship Group C qualifying campaign with an away double-header against Lithuania (8 October) and Slovakia (12 October).

Led by coach Gilbert Agius, the Maltese youngsters enjoyed a flying start to their group commitments, beating Northern Ireland 4-1 at the Centenary Stadium before going down to Russia (0-6) in their first away qualifier. Mattia Veselji scored a first-half brace in the victory over Northern Ireland with Jake Engerer and Ayrton Attard getting the other goals for the Maltese team who will be looking to emulate that performance in their upcoming

qualifiers and learn from the difficult outing against Russia.

These qualifying commitments in a group also containing Spain, who have won their opening two matches, are part of the learning curve for this young crop of players who will benefit from the experience, increasing their knowledge and familiarity with the unified playing philosophy as part of the long-term vision for the development of the national teams in all age-groups.

Agius has named a host of new players in his squad for the October matches with the Piètà Hotspurs duo of Samuel Okoh and Sheldon Mizzi, Larens Vella of Rabat Ajax, Balzan's Adam Bradshaw and Victor Degiorgio, who plays for Maryville University in the United States,

confirmed in the final 22-man list for this away double-header.

The Malta Under-21 contingent is scheduled to travel to Lithuania on Wednesday 6th October, two days ahead of their third qualifier in this campaign at the SRC Alytus Stadium in Alytus. Lithuania are currently bottom of Group C after losing to Slovakia (1-3) and Spain (0-2) in their opening qualifiers.

From Lithuania, the Malta U-21 squad will head to Slovakia for their second match during this month's window – on 12th October at the FC Nitra Stadium. Slovakia also have three points after their opening 3-1 home victory over Lithuania was followed by a 1-0 defeat away to Northern Ireland.

MALTA UNDER-21 SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS Rashed Al-Tumi (Nocerina), Cain Formosa (San Ĝwann), Amara Sylla (Birkirkara).

DEFENDERS Matthew Ellul (Hibernians), Christian Gauci (Valletta), Karl Mohnani (Melita), Samuel Okoh (Piètà Hotspurs), Carlo Zammit Lonardelli (Sirens).

MIDFIELDERS Ayrton Attard (Hibernians), Adam Bradshaw (Balzan), Aleandro Garzia (Floriana), Marcus Grima (Balzan), Liam McKay (Santa Lucia), Sheldon Mizzi (Piètà Hotspurs), Bradley Sciberras (Floriana), Andreas Vella (Santa Lucia).

FORWARDS Jamie Carbone (Santa Lucia), Victor Degiorgio (Maryville University, US), Jake Engerer (Sliema Wanderers), Jamie Sixsmith (St Andrews), Mattia Veselji (Floriana), Larens Vella (Rabat Ajax). ↗



Malta U-21 players celebrate one of their goals against Northern Ireland.
PHOTO: STEPHEN GATT

2021-23 UEFA U-21 CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING ROUND MALTA'S GROUP C MATCH SCHEDULE

3 SEPTEMBER, 2021
Malta 4-1 Northern Ireland

7 SEPTEMBER, 2021
Russia 6-0 Malta

8 OCTOBER, 2021
Lithuania vs Malta

12 OCTOBER, 2021
Slovakia vs Malta

12 NOVEMBER, 2021
Malta vs Spain

16 NOVEMBER, 2021
Northern Ireland vs Malta

25 MARCH, 2022
Malta vs Russia

29 MARCH, 2022
Malta vs Lithuania

3 JUNE, 2022
Malta vs Slovakia

7 JUNE, 2022
Spain vs Malta

CURRENT STANDINGS

	PLAYED	WON	DRAW	LOST	GOALS FOR	GOALS AGAINST	POINTS
Spain	2	2	0	0	6	1	6
Russia	2	1	0	1	7	4	3
Northern Ireland	2	1	0	1	2	4	3
Malta	2	1	0	1	4	7	3
Slovakia	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Lithuania	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

INFORMATION CORRECT AS OF 06/10/2021.



Ayrton Attard picks his spot to score Malta's fourth and final goal in the victory over Northern Ireland.



Action from the away qualifier against Russia.



RESPECT

