



Brest Zubrs in action

Worthy result among the strong

Brest Zubrs placed third in qualification round of European Baseball Cup

Six teams participated in the tournament held in German Solingen: Kaunas Lituania (Lithuania), Therwil Flyers (Switzerland), Stal B&S Kutno (Poland), KNTU-Kirovograd (Ukraine), Solingen Alligators (Germany) and Brest Zubrs. Matches were held in a circular system, with Belarus defeating Lithuania, Poland and Switzerland but losing to Germany, who later won the tournament, followed by Ukraine.

"To my mind, third place in this event is a worthy result," stresses the head coach of the squad from Brest, Igor Lukashevich. "This shows that we are developing in the right direction. Last year, at this prestigious tournament, we came fourth. As ever, we had no legionaries on the squad, although we're allowed three; we could have perhaps won with their help. In Solingen, three out of six teams used outside players, including Germany."

Based on the results of the qualification round for the European Cup, Alexey Lukashevich of Belarus has entered the top three pitchers of the tournament. Team mate Ilya Kashaevsky was named best in three-base hits. Brest Zubrs is nine-time country champion of Belarus in baseball and has won the Belarus Cup eight times.

Eighth Yunost attempt

Continental Hockey Cup champion Yunost Minsk through to super finals of next year's tournament

Based on the results of the draw for 2011/12 Continental Cup, held in Hungarian Budapest, 19 teams are to take part in the preliminary stage, with the super finals taking place in Ruan (France), from January 13th-15th, 2012. Beside the host team — local Ruan — Yunost Minsk has qualified for the finals without having to perform in the qualification round. Two more teams are to be chosen via the three-stage selection system. The finals will be a single round event.

Sadly, most leading hockey states in Europe (Sweden, Finland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Switzerland, Germany and Austria) have again ignored the Continental Cup. Russia sent its Rubin squad from Tyumen, from its 2nd Division.

Yunost has participated in the tournament seven times, winning in 2007 and 2011. In 2010, the Minsk squad came second, losing to Austria's Red Bulls.

Victory at third attempt

Belarus defeats Luxembourg 2:0 at home, breaking run of losses

By Yuri Karpenko

After the recent qualification match for Euro-2012 against France (1:1) Belarusian national football team head coach Bernd Stange made three changes in his line-up. He replaced Sergey Veremko with Yuri Zhevnov as goalkeeper (who also became captain), and injured central defender Alexander Martynovich with Sergey Omelyanchuk (who played in mid-field against France last). Meanwhile, veteran Alexander Kulchy was brought back into play after serving a disqualification penalty, taking the position of main halfback. Interestingly, he played his record 92nd match with the national team.

The first half of the match saw the host team take total control of the centre of the field, confidently pushing Luxembourg back and affecting several beautiful strikes. Sadly, no score was forthcoming and, after halftime, Stange sent on Sergey Kornilenko (famous for his high kicks). However, two minutes later, his penalty skills were employed instead. After Kulchy's strike, a Luxembourg defender grabbed the ball with his hands, allowing the referee to give Kornilenko the opportunity for a flawless 11m penalty kick.

In the 73rd minute, Belarus doubled its lead, with Anton Putilo dribbling past Joubert and scor-



Belarusian Igor Shitov and Luxembourg's Massimo Martino fight for the ball

ing the second goal for Belarus. This inspired bolder play and final victory, ending the squad's run of defeats by Luxembourg (Belarus, coached by Stange, had previously played two matches against the team, earning just one point).

At the after-match press conference, Stange commented that Luxembourg had proven a

tougher rival than skilled France, with two challenging matches over four days. Belarus scored 4 points out of 6 possible — a good result. The German expert promised that a 'new' team will be presented to fans at coming matches — not in its line-up but in style of play. He emphasised that our players need to take a more ac-

tive stance.

Belarus is now second in its group, with three more matches to play. On September 2nd, the team will face Bosnia and Herzegovina at home and, on September 6th, will play against them again, away. The qualification round ends on October 7th, with an away match against Romania.

Continuing under flag of Montreal Canadiens

By Yuri Kovalev

Belarusian striker with Canada's Montreal Canadiens, Andrey Kostitsyn, extends contract for another year

"Andrey Kostitsyn is an important forward on our squad, so we're happy to extend his contract. Drafted and developed by the Canadiens, Andrey is among our point leaders every year," notes the club's general manager, Pierre Gauthier, on the official website.

Last season, Kostitsyn, 26, occu-

pled fifth position among the squad's strikers, having earned 45 points (20 goals and 25 goal passes) over 81 matches during the regular championship. His total number of goals (scored during regular championships) reached 87 last season, making him the top Belarusian shooter on the NHL. He is now ahead of Vladimir Tsyplakov, who retired in 2001.

At the last World Championship in Slovakia, Kostitsyn played five matches, earning seven points and becoming the best striker on the Belarusian team.

Out of competition



Nadezhda Ostapchuk wins

Fourth track and field commercial Brilliant League sees Nadezhda Ostapchuk debut this season

The acting 2010 European champion and winner of last year's Brilliant

League in shot-putting has proven her outstanding capabilities again. In Eugene, USA, despite acclimatisation factors and jet lag, the Belarusian was the clear winner, leaving none of her rivals a chance. Ostapchuk is now leading the season, having sent the shot 20.59m on her best attempt; no other athlete crossed the 20m mark. Nadezhda may have more surprises in store, but is suffering from various old injuries. 2011 is, no doubt, important for her, but all eyes are really cast towards the 2012 Olympics.

Another titled shot-putter from Belarus performed in Eugene — Natalia Mikhnevich. Sadly, she finished in fifth position, but this is her best result to date and she still has hopes for the Games.



Daniel Nestor and Maxim Mirny retain their trophy

Another height conquered by Mirny

Five years on from his last doubles success, at the Roland Garros, Max Mirny claims main prize again

In 2006 and 2005, the Belarusian shared his success with Sweden's Jonas Björkman. This time, Mirny partnered Daniel Nestor of Canada, being favourites for the title, seeded second. They still faced challenges, with their semi-final match against French Michael Llodra and Nestor's former partner, Serbian Nenad Zimonjic, proving no piece of cake; the fate of the tournament was decided over two tie-breaks.

At this stage, Mirny and Nestor's main rivals — the Bryan brothers — were knocked out of the competition, losing unexpectedly to unseeded Sebastian Cabal and Eduardo Schwank.

The Colombian-Argentinean duo's success was the revelation of the tournament.

In the finals, Max and Daniel thus faced the dark horse of the event. The third set was decisive. During nine games, each player's serve remained unbroken; another tie-break seemed unavoidable. However, with the score at 5:4, Max and Daniel returned Cabal's serve brilliantly, realising the first break-point, which was simultaneously the match point.

"Any Grand Slam title is a special event; a win with a new partner is even more worthy," comments the Belarusian tennis player. "We realised that, theoretically, we suit each other well and can play beautiful tennis. Theory, however, must be supported by practice, which is what we'd done."