

## Among permanent prize holders

By Kirill Pirogov

### Belarus captures its fourth bronze at European Motoball Championship

In Ukrainian Voznesensk (Nikolaev Region), the hosting team has been beaten 8:2 by Belarus, leaving our team to take a confident bronze. During the preliminary stage, Belarus lost to Russia and Germany, while beating Ukraine and Holland. In the semi-finals, we lost to Germany as Russia smashed Ukraine. Russians eventually won the European Championship gold, defeating Germany in the finals.

This year's bronze is Belarus' fourth to date, with gold captured only in 2004. We have seven times claimed silver at European championships.

## Stepping up hockey ratings

### Dinamo Minsk ranked 40th among European clubs

Dinamo is representing Belarus in the Continental Hockey League and, for the third year in a row, is the only Belarusian club in the top 100 European hockey teams. The rating — annually compiled by the French Hockey Archives Internet portal — relies on teams' performances in domestic and international championships, as well as their rating in the championships of the countries in which they perform.

The 2010/11 season has placed Dinamo in 40th position (a 25 step rise on last year's result). Over the past two seasons, the team has advanced 54 places, with their progress much rooted in their success at the last CHL championship. Having occupied 16th place in the regular season, Dinamo reached the Gagarin Cup draw (for the first time in their three years of playing with the League). In the first play-off round, they eventually lost to Western Conference leader Yaroslavl Lokomotiv (in seven matches). In previous CHL matches, the Belarusian club failed to reach play-off rounds, occupying 19th place in 2010 and 22nd in 2009.

## Dress rehearsal

### Minsk hosts international grass hockey tournament

Nice combinations, beautiful goals and confident saves by the goalkeepers resulted in a great event, explains the Director of Minsk's Grass Hockey Club, Alexander Novik. The host team was playing an experimental line-up, with coaches 'testing' potential newcomers.

The Minsk club is to play not only in the Belarusian Super Cup but in international matches. In Minsk, the team failed to play consistently, losing to Ukrainian Olimpia-Kolos Sekvoya, from Vinnitsa, and to Russian Dinamo, from Elektrostal. However, it drew against Stroitel Brest, from Belarus, to come third. They anticipate future wins.

# Yelena partners equine Passat with victorious results

Yelena Telepushkina of Belarus wins FEI World Cup Eventing stage on Passat

By Yuri Karpenko

The Republican Olympic Equestrian and Breeding Centre in Ratomka, not far from Minsk, hosted events in three categories. Experienced riders performed in 3-star class events, competing for qualifying points for the London Olympics, while others enjoyed 1 and 2-star classes, aiming for European championships.

"At present, our triathletes have a good chance of earning places at the Olympic Games," notes state equestrian coach Natalia Yuranova. "They have just five stages of tournament at which points can be earned, with eight events in dressage and 25 others. We shouldn't miss out and the whole team could even qualify. Anything might happen in the team competitions; we could even reach the top six."

Major hopes are pinned on Yelena Telepushkina, Vyacheslav Poito and Alexander Fominov. Two stages have been already held, with Fominov coming fourth during the first and Telepushkina celebrating her success during the second. They planned to increase their scores at

Ratomka. Ksenia Rybak was the fourth member of the Belarusian squad. She is daughter to famous Belarusian triathlete Mikhail Rybak, who took part in world and European championships, as well as in the Olympic Games. Last year, she rode for the junior team but is now competing against experienced riders. She has done well in earning qualifying scores.

World Cup events are organised in zones. This time, riders from Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Poland and the Baltic States arrived at Ratomka, with the major struggle seen between Belarus and Russia. Yelena Telepushkina and her horse Passat won, after confidently sailing through all events. Her victory was in no doubt, while Vyacheslav Poito came third, followed by Alexander Fominov.

"Of course, the results please us," notes Ms. Yuranova. "Important scores have been earned, so our athletes have shown that they're able to rise to the challenge. We're also satisfied with the performances of our young athletes. They did well during their 1 and 2-star classes but we must be realistic, as much lies ahead."



Graceful equestrian competition in Ratomka

## Correction of mistakes proves successful

BATE Borisov footballers defeat Northern Ireland's Linfield at home in return match of Champions League second qualifying round, reaching tournament's next stage



Alexander Pavlov finds Linfield's goal

The first match, held in Belfast, finished with a draw — 1:1. A score draw at home would have been sufficient to send Borisov through to the next round. However, after the first game against the semi-professional club from Northern Ireland, Belarusian fans were expecting a confident win from their favourite yellow and blue team.

The first half of the match in Borisov was characterised by cautious play, although the home team was dissatisfied with their lack of goals. Linfield deliberately focused

on counter-attack while BATE also played carefully, especially near their goal. The match was rather dull until the second half; only two dangerous moments were created around Linfield's goal.

In the second half, the Borisov players began to behave more aggressively, with Artem Kontsevoy bursting into the penalty area in the 58th minute. He hit the bar but Pavel Nekhaichik knocked the ball back in with his head. Three minutes later, Alexander Pavlov broke the rival's defence in the centre to

score at short range, bringing the score to 2:0. BATE managed to hold on to its position for the rest of the match, remaining closer to its third goal, than Linfield to its first.

"There was some nervousness in the team during training for the match. The result of the away match was good, but the quality of our game left much to be desired. Accordingly, we were anxious throughout the first half — until Pavel Nekhaichik scored. We then relaxed, playing more diversely, although cautiously near our goal. Having worked on our mistakes from the first match, we deserved to reach the next round," noted BATE head coach Victor Goncharenko at the after-match press conference.

Linfield coach David Jeffrey stressed, "BATE is a very technical squad, good at keeping possession of the ball and delivering a pass. I'd like to wish BATE success in the next round; we'll be rooting for them. I believe that we bit off more than we could chew today."

Lithuanian Ekranas Panevėžys will be BATE Borisov's rival in the next stage of the tournament. It defeated Valletta of Malta 4:2 away and 1:0 at home.

## High results in competitive struggle

By Yuri Kovalev

### European Athletics Under-23 Championship in Czech Republic brings five medals for Belarusian national team

The result is good, as proven by the fulfilment of the team's targets. The Ostrava event saw acute competition from top athletes, so the Belarusian squad did well, performing with spirit and determination. On the eve of departure for the Czech Republic, head coach Anatoly Baduev accentuated that our young athletes' Olympic prospects would be decided.

Alina Talay seems set to have an excellent chance of qualifying, having done well at the European Team Championships in Stockholm, taking silver in the 100m hurdles. Several weeks later, she reached the finals in Ostrava, again taking silver, yielding only to Swiss Lisa Urech. However, Urech failed to compete against Alina in the finals, where Talay produced a satisfying 12.91 second finish. This proves her reliability and mental strength, which should stand her in good stead.

The remaining medals for the Belarusian team were earned by Anastasia Kashtanova (second in discus throwing), Eduard Mikhan (silver for the decathlon), Oleg Dubitsky (third in hammer throwing) and Yana Maximova (bronze for the heptathlon).