



Dmitry Kasperovich performs

## Gymnasts return with medals

**Gymnasts Dmitry Kasperovich and Anastasia Marachkovskaya come second in vault, at Challenge Cup in Cottbus**

Kasperovich has come second in the men's vault finals, boasting 16.112 points. The event is held under the aegis of the International Gymnastics Federation and has been won by Igor Radivilov of Ukraine — with 16.250 points. Bronze goes to Chilian Enrique González Sepúlveda — with 16.000 points. Marachkovskaya also came second, with 13,875 points (just behind Brittany Rogers of Canada — who claimed gold with her 13.962 points).

## A good place for playing

**In 2016, Belarus is to host the UEFA European Women's Under-17 Championship**

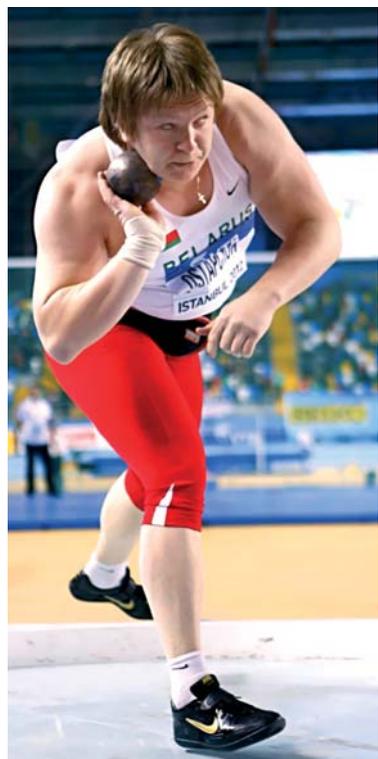
This decision was made by the UEFA, at a sitting in Istanbul. The first tournament for 17 year old girls was hosted in 2007-2008 by Nyon, Switzerland, triggering great popularity. From 2013-2014, the format is to be revised, with the top eight European squads struggling for medals. In 2013, the championship will be hosted by England and, in 2015, Iceland will take the baton, passing it to Belarus in 2016.

In 2009, the final tournament for 19 year old girls was held in Belarus — won by the English squad.

# Belarusian track and field athletes twice win medals

**Nadezhda Ostapchuk and Alina Talay capture medals at World Indoor Championship, in Istanbul**

By Dmitry Kramarenko

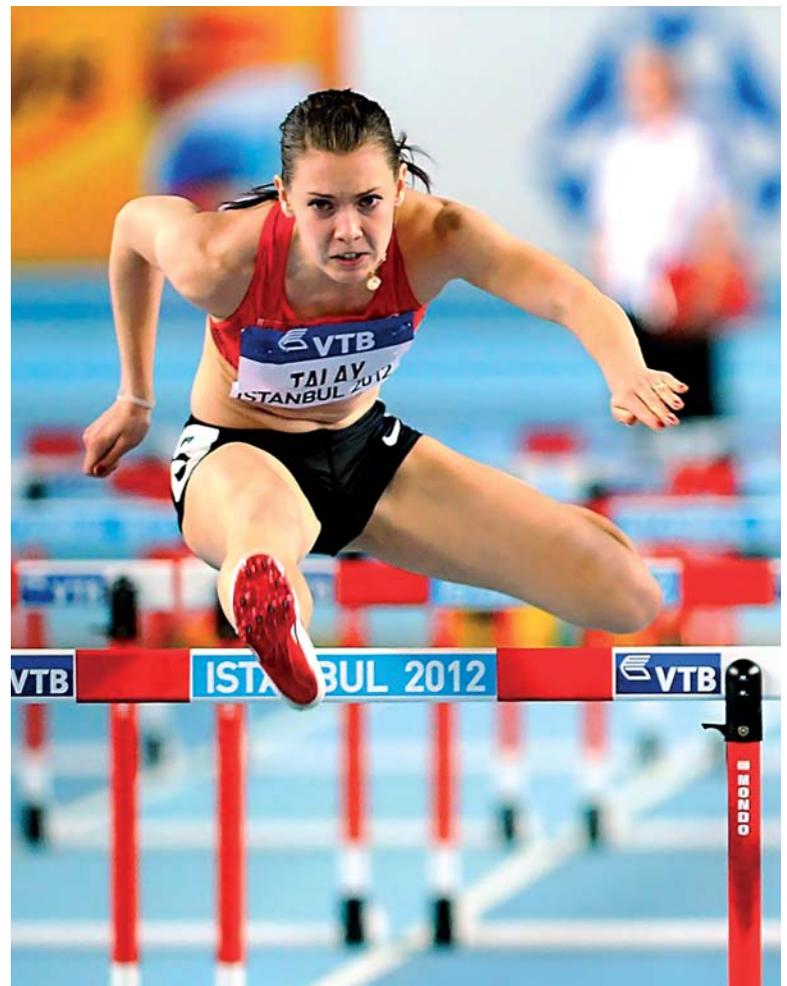


Ostapchuk before the throw

Ostapchuk's award came as little surprise, as the Belarusian shot putter arrived in the Turkish capital as the world season leader; her performance in the Brilliant League rounds was sure to bring a medal. However, she did have to settle for silver, with gold captured by her main rival: Valerie Adams of New Zealand. Until now, Adams' best achievement of the season had been 3cm behind that of Ostapchuk — a situation which reversed in Istanbul.

Adams and Ostapchuk took the lead in turns until the sportswoman from New Zealand proved stronger — sending a putt 7cm further than Ostapchuk: 20.48m. Following her performance in Istanbul, Ostapchuk boasts a unique collection of medals from world level indoor events: one gold and four silver.

Unlike Ostapchuk's expected medal, Alina Talay's success was



Alina Talay on distance

a true surprise. The sportswoman from Orsha has won various junior tournaments, and became European champion in 2011 while also winning the Military World Games. However, her best adult event result to date has been 5th place at the European Championship (held in winter), when she ran 60m in under 8 seconds — for the first time. This season, her time has been beaten by six athletes but Talay's 8.04s gave her hope of reaching the finals. However, the situation developed differently.

Among the major pretenders for the gold in the sprint was 2011's top track and field athlete Sally Pearson (Australia), the USA champion — Kristi Castlin (who has outrun Talay several times this season at French tournaments), Vanneisha Ivy (the USA), Tiffany Porter (Great Britain), and Cindy Roleder (Germany). In fact, both Americans and the German runner failed to reach the finals.

In the decisive run, Sally Pearson came first, with a time of 7.73 seconds. Talay began hesitantly but gradually sped up to finish just behind Pearson and Porter. This was a truly brilliant result, especially as the Belarusian is just 22.

An award was also expected from Andrey Kravchenko — the Olympic Games all-round medalholder. Sadly, he was still recovering from last season's injury, failing to show his best. Natalia Koreivo also missed a medal in the finals of the 1,500m (her favoured event). She failed to take the initiative soon enough, allowing her rivals to sprint ahead. Koreivo did reasonably well later, outrunning five rivals to finish fourth.

The Belarusian 4x400m relay team also came fifth. Anna Tapshulatova, Yuliana Yushchenko, Irina Khlyustova and Svetlana Usovich were just five seconds behind the winning British team.

## Football begins in spring

**22nd Belarusian Football Championship launched**

The first stage has already brought a sensation, with the country's champion — BATE Borisov (representing the Republic in recent years at Europe's top club tournament) — being defeated by Minsk — 0:1. In the 76th minute, Andrey Razin 'punished' Borisov players for a penalty which failed to be realised by Renan Bressan at the end of the first half.

The meeting in Gomel could have been a real thriller but poor weather and spring lawn (whose quality left much to be desired) held the teams back from showing their full potential.

The first goal of the championship was scored by Brest's Alexander Matyukhevich, at Lokomotiv Stadium in Zhlobin, in the 4th minute against Bobruisk Belshina.

The championship usually boasts 12 teams but only 11 are taking part this season; financial



Minsk defeated BATE 1:0 in central match

problems have led to Minsk's Partizan dropping out of the Premier League. However, the formula of the championship remains unchanged: teams will enjoy a three round tournament. The team in last place won't leave the Premier

League but will play transitional matches with the second squad from the First League, while the winner will go through immediately to the elite division. The final 33rd round is scheduled for November 25th.

## Tennis players wish to return their success

By Dmitry Baranovsky

**In 2006, Victoria and Veronika Pavlovich almost claimed every bronze medal of the World Table Tennis Championship in Bremen, being beaten only by the acknowledged favourites from China and Hong Kong. The next two championships were less successful but, this year, they are again keen to defeat the world's strongest teams in Dortmund.**

According to their coaches, the men's and women's teams are expected to do well, with young Alexandra Privalova on form. Six years ago, she was only observing the game from the subs' bench in Bremen. However, she has set off to Dortmund as a fully-fledged team member and the current Belarusian champion. The head coach of the national table tennis team, Alexander Petkevich, believes the current line-up if even

stronger than that performing six years ago.

The major hopes of the men's team — Vladimir Samsonov and Yevgeny Shchetin — have already demonstrated superb play. They'll soon be joined by young players of world level. "Today's girls boast a more 'equal' team," asserts Mr. Petkevich. "In the men's squad, we have only young boys — except for Samsonov, Shchetin and Platonov. However, soon, we'll have a competitive team."

The draw, on which much can depend in the preliminary stage, is fairly good for our team. "At the World Championship, two firm favourites are evident among the women," notes Mr. Petkevich. "China and the USA. We can and should fight for the right to reach the play-offs. A similar situation is observed in the men's competition, so we go to Dortmund not only for the sake of participation."