

Snatch and clean & jerk at high level

Yelena Chichkan wins bronze at World Youth Weightlifting Championship

The Belarusian weightlifter (56kg) came third in Guatemala, having battled the strongest junior athletes on the planet. Chichkan lifted 199kg (89+110) in the snatch and clean & jerk exercises, losing only to Chinese Wanqiong Zhang (90+113) and Sopotana Tanasan of Thailand (90+111).

Venues have been selected

A decision has been made on the venue for two forthcoming friendly matches for the Belarusian football team. The match against Azerbaijan will take place on June 5th, at Minsk's Dynamo Stadium, while that against Lithuania will be hosted by Zhodino's Torpedo Stadium on June 8th.

Menkova best in Europe

Belarusian hammer thrower named best sportswoman of April, according to European Athletics poll

At the end of each month, experts from the European Athletic Association release a list of outstanding athletes, reflecting their performance results over the previous four weeks. The online poll allows voting by the media, a group of statistical experts and the public — each taken into account separately. The winner of each poll receives 10 points, while second place has 9 and so on, with the athlete boasting the greatest number of points over the three groups being announced as the winner.

In April 2012, representatives of 12 countries were listed — including Belarusian hammer throwers Oksana Menkova and Pavel Krivitsky. At competitions in Brest, hosted in late April, Menkova set a national record (78.19m) and gave the best result worldwide. The national achievement of the Olympic champion in Beijing has become third to date in the history of world athletics.

Prominent French biathlete takes on a new role of coach

Raphaël Poirée appointed head coach of Belarusian national men's biathlon team

By Denis Kemerov

The day after the famous French athlete signed his contract (in the hall of the hotel at Raubichi Sports Complex) he held his first training session in his new role. He is due to head the squad until the end of the Sochi Winter Games in 2014. The second coach is Alexander Syman — a famous Belarusian biathlete from recent times.

Despite a rich collection of awards and titles, the Frenchman doesn't boast a rich coaching career as yet. He retired from sport in 2007, to coach in Norway — where his wife was born (former biathlete Liv Grete Skjelbreid). Poirée worked with Norwegian juniors and has liaised with Norwegian national team leader Tarjei Bø for the last two seasons, assisting him in marksmanship.

"I must admit that I knew little about Belarus before visiting," he notes, sharing his first impressions. "I'd heard mostly negative views from acquaintances and friends,



Raphaël Poirée has already started to train Belarus' national biathlon team

who warned me against coming. However, on arrival in Belarus in April — for negotiations with the Belarusian Biathlon Federation — I saw everything with my own

eyes and changed my ideas about Belarus for the better. I love being here, although it's been difficult to persuade my wife (I asked for time to think everything over). She

isn't pleased that we'll be often separated, although we had to endure similar times when I was working with Norwegian biathletes."

The Belarusian squad al-

ready has one Frenchman on the squad: Olivier Gonon (in the service group, selecting the lubricant for skis). He has worked with Raphaël Poirée previously.

Sergey Martynov prepares for Olympiad

Belarusian athlete wins World Cup round in Milan

Occupying third place in the qualification round, Martynov has shown his worth in the finals, earning 701.1 points in the 50m rifle prone shooting (six series), beating

French Cyril Graff and Italian Marco de Nicolò. Another Belarusian marksman — Konstantin Lukashik — came 15th in the 50m pistol event, while Yuri Dolgoplov was ranked 16th and Andrey Kazak was placed 25th.



During match against Norwegian team

Without medals and World Games ticket

By Ivan Rafalsky

Belarusian footballers fail to reach UEFA European Futsal Championship semi-finals

This year, the tournament was hosted by Brest, giving the hosts a chance to prove themselves on home ground. Taking part in the European Championships since 1993, the team has twice won prizes: first in 2004 and third in 2008 (plus fourth in 2010). Unfortunately, the team was less successful this year, losing

2:1 to favourites Russia in the quarter-finals after a tough match. "We're disappointed but this was a game of equals," notes Sergey Safonov, the head coach of the Belarusian national team, summing up the results of the key match. "Sadly, we made inexcusable mistakes, preventing us from gaining victory."

Mr. Safonov's trainees came fifth in the consolation match, which knocks them out of the World Games — being hosted by Columbia in 2013.

Time for good play yet to come

By Yuri Bokushev

Belarusian national hockey team ranked 14th at 2011 IIHF World Championship and this year demonstrates same result

The Belarusian national squad has suffered defeats from Finland, Switzerland, the USA, Slovakia, France and Canada and has celebrated only one victory — over Kazakhstan. Our team has preserved its place for next year in the elite division but, of course, fans expected more from their favourite team.

The Belarusian national team head coach, Finnish Kari Heikkilä, has brought together almost all the strongest players from the CHL (excepting Sergey Demagin, who didn't attend the tournament because of injury) and our players from the National Hockey League: Mikhail Grabovski, and Sergey and Andrey Kostitsyn.

Before the start of the Finnish-Swedish World Championship, the team had been long training at Minsk-



Playing against Canadian team

Arena, organising many friendly matches. However, this failed to bring a successful performance.

The failure is unpleasant itself but also extremely disappointing, since those ranked 1-9th by the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) automatically gain a place at the Olympic Games in Sochi. Belarus is thus obliged to fight for a place (having fallen from 11th to 13th place) next February, at the Olympic qualification tournament hosted by Denmark.

The World Championship results hold no joy for us but Mr. Heikkilä is eager to be optimistic, asserting,

"Nevertheless, I've thanked our players and am pleased with the progress of defenders Pavel Chernook, Nikolay Stasenko and Roman Graborenko. Konstantin Koltsov has done well among the forwards, having got his hands dirty and scored important goals. Alexander Kitarov, Andrey Stas and Andrey Kozlov have also done well. Of course, the result is negative for us but success doesn't come immediately. I've only been working with the team for around two months while the national teams of France, Switzerland, Norway and Finland have had their coaches for several seasons now. We must be patient."