

Hands struck in Poland

Belarus' national arm wrestling team makes good impression at European Championship

The competition in Polish Gdansk gathered over 900 athletes from 26 countries, with teams from Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and Poland among the leaders. Financial restraints prevented the full Belarusian squad attending but the ten athletes present have brought home eight awards — including three gold medals. Oleg Matskevich from Baranovichy won the under 80kg category (left arm wrestling).

Another two gold medals were earned by Victor Bratchenya of Brest — the absolute winner (under 75kg) among the disabled. Alexander Matskevich and Yevgeny Kovalenko claimed silver in the junior events.

Last year, the Belarusian squad's best result at the European Championship was two medals (gold and silver) — claimed by junior Yevgeny Kovalenko. Meanwhile, our national squad was ranked only 10th overall. At present, our Belarusian athletes are sixth in Europe. They now plan to debut at the World Championship, hosted by Brazil in September.

Rimantas Grigas' promising start

Belarusian national women's basketball team continues training for 2013 European Championship and does well in friendly matches

During their recent tour of the Baltic States, the Belarusian squad has been undefeated. On May 19th, they beat the Latvians (74:69) and then twice 'knocked out' the Lithuanians (74:46 and 54:50). Under the coaching of Rimantas Grigas, who took over the national squad in March, they have experienced only success.

The Belarusian team will face Hungary, Portugal, Israel and Ukraine in Group A of the European Championship qualification round, with the two best teams going through to the final stage of EuroBasket — to be held in France.

Ilya Chergeiko hits the bullseye

Belarusian shooting sports school continues to prove its reputation as among best worldwide

Following in the footsteps of top world marksman Sergey Martynov, Ilya Chergeiko has claimed a medal at the World Cup: silver in the 10m pneumatic rifle shooting. The event in Munich saw him earn 702.2 points (597 in the qualification + 105.2 in the finals). Italian Niccolo Campriani earned the same but Chergeiko proved best in the additional shooting. The near perfect result left him just 0.2 points behind winner Wang Tao of China.

Brilliant and rapid swim of Yevgeny Tsurkin

Belarusian swimmer claims first prize at European Championship in 15 years



Bronze medallist Yevgeny Tsurkin of Belarus (R) after competing in the men's 50m butterfly final

By Denis Komarovskiy

Tsurkin's European Swimming Championship bronze has

great significance. In Debrecen, the team lacked its top swimmer, Alexandra Gerasimenya, yet this did not prevent the squad

from performing well. Moreover, Yevgeny — who is known only to a narrow circle of specialists — is just 21.

Over the last few years, Belarusian women's swimming has firmly established itself — led by Yelena Popchenko, Anna Shcherba, Svetlana Khokhlova and Alexandra Gerasimenya. The men's team has always been less successful, although Pavel Sankovich claimed two bronze medals at the last European Championship (hosted by Polish Szczecin in a shorter pool — which some considered 'warming-up'). It has been 15 years since our national swimming teams have won medals at European and World Championships where the pool is Olympic-sized: 50m in length.

The Belarusian reached the 50m butterfly final only at his second attempt. However, each swim (including the additional one), saw Yevgeny set a national record. His time in the finals — 23.37 seconds — would have qualified him for the top three places at last year's World Championship. Geoff Huegill of Australia, a bronze medallist at the tournament in Shanghai, was ahead of Tsurkin by just two hundredths of a second in the virtual competition.

Victorious golden gloves inspire Olympic confidence

By Dmitry Baranovskiy

Four gold, two silver and nine bronze medals won by Belarusian boxers at international tournament dedicated to the memory of Soviet Union Hero Victor Liventsev

Traditional competitions at Minsk's Sports Palace brought together over a hundred wrestlers from Australia, Ukraine, Latvia, Turkmenistan, Russia, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Belarus. Many coaches were using the event as a last rehearsal before the Olympics, which is to begin in London within a month. Accordingly, the ring was full of intrigue and drama.

The first gold medal was earned by Vadim Kirilenko (under 49kg). In his decisive match, he gained an important victory over Kazakh Zhandos Dyusekov before defeating serious Russian opponent Ivan Lokhmotkin. The match began cautiously until he began to press his rival and, by the beginning of the third round, Vadim was in complete control, winning 11:8.

The Belarusian anthem played for the second time after the final under 60kg match, in which Ivan Baranchik battled Konstantin Shokanov of Kazakhstan. The Belarusian's technical precision, aggression and persistence paid off, despite Shokanov's skill, leaving the score at 16:8 in Baranchik's



At international boxing tournament in Minsk

favour.

The under 69kg final saw a duel between Belarusians Yevgeny Romashkevich and Yevgeny Dolgolevets (brother of Mikhail Dolgolevets, who has an Olympic ticket). It was the most spectacular of the day, kicking off sparkling boxing, although Romashkevich took slightly more initiative. Dolgolevets defended while trying to crush his opponent's offensive spirit, hoping for smashing counter-attacks. Romashkevich fought off Dolgolevets' defensive skills and, after creating the necessary gap in the score, took a calmer approach to a deserved victory of 16:12.

Unfortunately, Sergey Kuzmin's illness led to another 'purely Belarusian' final. His rival should have been the 2011 World Championship bronze medallist — a Belarus-born Kazakh — who thus took an automatic win. However, to avoid fans' disappointment, he faced the current World Champion, Zhan Kossobutsky (over 91kg)

The official part of the programme was followed by a friendly match between Sergey Korneev and Arbi Madaev. The Belarusian confidently won, despite fierce opposition, allowing him a place at the London Olympics.

From Moscow with medals

By Yuri Bakerev

European Sambo Championship in Moscow proves a success for Belarusian wrestlers

The team boasts an impressive crop of 17 medals from the event (2 gold, 5 silver and 10 bronze). Moreover, it occupied an honorary second place overall, behind Russia — with 24 medals.

Alexander Koksha (under 68kg) and Andrey Kazusenok (under 90kg) became world champions while Alexey Stepankov, Vasily Kuznetsov, Alexander Vakhovyak, Marina Zharskaya and Anzhela Paim-Kraskovskaya were awarded silver medals. Meanwhile, Dzhambulat Akhmadov, Ivan Aniskevich, Vae Tutkhalyan, Alexey Romanchik, Igor Rassokha, Yulia Steshenko, Anna Zaletskaya, Olga Namazova, Maria Kuznetsova and Yulia Borisik returned home with bronze.

The successes of our Belarusian sambo wrestlers are precious but their importance is even more significant against the background of competing against around 450 athletes from 33 countries — a record for such tournaments.