

## Acceptance approved unanimously

**Belarusian champion Meshkov Brest HC accepted into South East Handball Association**

Recently, the Serbian capital of Belgrade hosted a session of the Regional League of the South East Handball Association (SEHA), which has unanimously approved Brest handball club to play in the 2012/2013 regional league, alongside other newcomers: Croatian Zagreb and Nexe, Macedonian Metalurg and Vardar, Montenegrin Lovćen, Izvidac (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Slovak Tatran. Polish Vive (Kielce) and Serbian Metaloplastika (Šabac) may also soon join. The organisers of the tournament plan to announce the final schedule before too long.

The Brest club gained approval for its participation in the South East Handball Association tournament at the most recent session of the Belarusian Handball Federation's Executive Committee. The latter also decided that the winners of the recent state championship — Dinamo Minsk, Brest Meshkov HC and Minsk SKA — can go straight through to the second stage of the tournament, joining the top three teams from the preliminary round (where six lesser rated clubs will play).

## Mastery leading to super final

**Junior Brest Zubrs baseball and softball club takes silver at European Golden Super Cup 2012, held in Prague**



The Golden Super Cup is one of Europe's largest baseball tournaments. This year, 20 teams of young players (born in 2002 and afterwards) took part: about 300 boys battling for the title.

On the first day, the squad demolished Czech Wolfs Domazlice (20-03), Tempo Titans Praha (22-08) and Rytiri Trutnov (16-9). The following day, they smashed Central Bohemia (20-09) and Slovenia (20-05), but lost to last year's winner, Draci Brno (6-19).

On the third day of the tournament, Brest Zubrs beat the Czech Central Bohemia again (16-0) and Slovenia (18-7). They went through to the super final, where they faced Czech Draci Brno once more, ending the first half with a score of 0-4. However, in the second half, their rivals led (5-4) and, finally, took first place (18-11), leaving Brest Zubrs with silver.

Pleasingly, the junior team's Kirill Lapchenko was named best striker while Ilya Sladinsky was awarded a prize for best runner and was named the best player of the MVP tournament.



BATE footballers defeat Macedonian Vardar in first match of Champions League

# There's wish to play well, but not everyone is able to do this

Belarusian clubs begin Euro journeys, enjoying various results in their first play-off matches — for the Champions League and UEFA Cup

By Dmitry Baranovsky

Belarusian club BATE was the first to kick off. Belarus' champion, once again trying to get through to the Champions' League Group Stage, faced modest Macedonian Vardar. In previous years, the Borisov players could have easily defeated the squad. However, this time, several major BATE footballers, including Renan Bressan, were absent, having been called onto the Belarusian Olympic team to play in London. It was no easy task for the Belarusians to make their first step in the Group Stage, even at home, without their major force.

By the 62nd minute, the guests had scored twice, with no sign that BATE would manage even a draw. However, Vitaly Rodionov saved the day, sending two goals into the net (using extra-time). Our squad remains in with a chance of reaching the next stage, although it won't be easy for them to repeat the situation in Macedonia, where the return game will be hosted.

Novopolotsk Naftan and Soligorsk Shakhtyor were playing their matches in the Europa League at almost the same time, but faced different classes of rival. Shakhtyor had little opposition from Austrian Rid (managing a 1:1 draw) while

the Novopolotsk club fought Crvena Zvezda, from Belgrade. By the end of the first half, the Serbs had scored three goals; Naftan seemed doomed but entered the second half positively, closing the gap to 2:3 by the 67th minute. A third goal was scored in the following minute but was, disappointingly, disallowed by the referee. Within another 60 seconds, Kasalica had sent a fourth ball into our net, despite Naftan fighting to the bitter end. They now go to Belgrade with little hope of beating this strong team.

Gomel's start in the Europa League was quite successful, easily defeating Vikingur of the Faroe Is-

lands. Macedonian Renova proved a stronger team but Gomel still managed a 2:0 victory, in their away game; this gives the squad every chance of reaching the third stage, where they will face mighty British Liverpool — the five-time winner of the European Champions Cup and English champion 18 times.

The potential rivals of the other Belarusian clubs have also been announced: Novopolotsk Naftan could play Cyprus' Omonia, while Soligorsk Shakhtyor is set to face the winning team between Metalurgs (from Liepāja, Latvia) and Legia (from Warsaw, Poland)

# Boxer focused on the prize

**In October or November, Belarusian Sergey Rabchenko is to defend his European Professional Boxing Champion title (weight up to 69.9kg)**

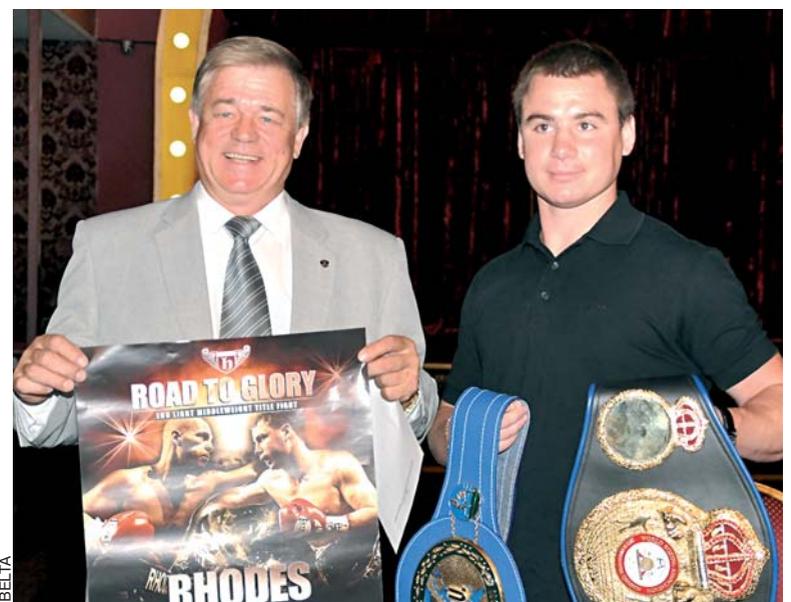
Rabchenko won 21 professional matches (16 by knockout) to gain the title of European Champion on June 16th. He finally defeated Ryan Rhodes (five-time British champion and twice European champion) by knockout in the 7th round.

Coach Sergey Pytalev and Rabchenko, 26, recently gave a press conference. Rabchenko explained, "Before the fight, I did a lot of treadmill training, alongside strengthening my punch, speed and endurance. It is great honour for me to have been trained by

Ricky Hatton for the final match (who beat eminent Kostya Tszyu). Ricky didn't change my training methods radically but focused on my back muscles, increased my strength training and gave me more sparring practise."

Commenting on the championship fight, Mr. Hatton answered simply, "His knockout was made with a master punch to the liver area." British Ricky Hatton, who has been promoting Sergey Rabchenko for the past year, sees true talent and the prospect for further growth in the Belarusian athlete.

Rabchenko does not conceal the fact that his main goal is to become World Champion. He is content to work steadily however, coming ever closer to the title.



Sergey Rabchenko (R) is ready to defend his title