



Roman Petrushenko and Vadim Makhnev

Roman Petrushenko and Vadim Makhnev: silver paddles

Rowers have long shown us that medals are a sure thing at competitions

By Vladimir Dmitriev

In Athens, the team — coached by Vladimir Shantarovich — began to show their potential, rising to the crest of the wave in Beijing. In London, they were up against much younger athletes but their experience and endurance still brought a silver medal.

Following the Bogdanovich brothers and the women's kayak four, Beijing gold champions Roman Petrushenko and Vadim Makhnev have claimed medals at Eton. If the Olympic distance had been longer, they'd have won for sure, but lost to the young Russian team.

"We worked as hard as we could, so feel we deserve our medal," they

admitted, following a barrage of congratulations. "It's a good end to the season. Of course, our feelings on taking the quad 'gold' in Beijing were quite different. As concerns the Russians' victory, it's certainly fair: they've done well all season, so nobody could catch them."

The Belarusian pair has shown their true talent in the world of rowing and, naturally, it's almost impossible to continue indefinitely at the top. However, they won't rest on their oars. They explain, "We'll choose our competitions carefully. For example, if we participate in the World Cup stages, we can check our comparable level with rivals. We may well form a new foursome, with Oleg Yurenya and Artur Litvinchuk."

At the London Olympics, Belarusian athletes win 12 medals in total: 2 gold, 5 silver and 5 bronze.

Power in beauty

Rhythmic gymnastics is a difficult sport, involving unbelievable stretching and head-spinning combinations

By Vladimir Dmitriev

There are lots of secret moves, which can be used to claim victory, so mere talent is not enough. Any girl claiming gold needs to be an actress, a strategist and, even, a politician. Against this background, the success of the Belarusian beauties is hugely impressive. Only they (and coaches Irina Leparskaya and Tatiana Nenasheva) know how much effort is involved. The squad has been winning medals for 16 years, despite this graceful sport being among the most capricious.

The girls brought two medals home from Beijing and repeated their result in London. Lyubov Cherkashina also took an individual bronze. Lacking the phenomenal talent of Yevgenia

Kanaeva, who gained her second Olympic gold in London, the Belarusian nevertheless showed her determination! Performing last, with the ribbon, she began to cry even before leaving the floor.

The group exercise silver followed a dramatic journey, as the girls were only placed fourth after their initial round. On appearing for the second time, they surpassed the Italians, Spaniards and Bulgarians, although it was clear that the Russians would take gold. Laughing through their tears, the girls told us, "When you've been training your whole life and your destiny depends on a few minutes, it can be very difficult to refocus. However, we coped with the pressure and can now congratulate one another from the heart!"



Lyubov Cherkashina



Belarusian team performance worthy of silver

Experience is never wasted

Fifth year in a row sees Belarusian football fans with major football tournament to follow in autumn

By Yuri Keberov

BATE Borisov has ensured itself a place in the Europa League and may also get through to the Champions League Group Stage. To achieve the latter, the Belarusian team needs to defeat its next rival in the play-offs. After a rather smooth away game, blusterous Debrecen FC hoped (not without reason) to achieve the same at home. However, it ended up losing before the eyes of its fans. Putting aside all patriotism, we must admit that the overall result between the

Belarusian and Hungarian champions was fair.

"We lost because we faced a very good team," explains Hungarian head coach Elemér Kondás. Not everything went smoothly for BATE during the first game but, in the return match, the Belarusian club saw everything fall into place. The Hungarian squad were like boy sailors facing Belarusian 'boatswains', hardened by stormy seas. The Hungarian team has determination and ambition and plenty of desire, yet lacks experience. In the decisive moments, this swayed the result, and BATE



Moment from the Debrecen — BATE match

defeated Debrecen.

After receiving a fatal blow in the 25th minute

(with Dmitry Mozolevsky scoring), Debrecen became nervous and its play dete-

riorated in the second half of the game. The second goal in the Hungarian net followed a second yellow card shown to the Hungarian player. Being one man down, they found it difficult to score three times (necessary to bring the score into their favour). This fact was understood by Elemér Kondás, wearing a pink shirt, and by Hungarian fans who were sometimes exasperated by some of the referee's decisions, and, even, the Hungarian footballers.

"We've shown that we've learnt from the experience we've accumulated in recent

years, in matches of a similar level. Despite a less than successful result in the first game, the team didn't feel nervous and were confident. They defended well, while finding holes in their rival's game, scoring as a result," notes the head coach of BATE Borisov, Victor Goncharenko. It's difficult not to agree. BATE's current play significantly differs from that of 7-8 years ago, having enjoyed dynamic games against icons such as Real, Juventus, Barcelona, Milan and PSG. Undoubtedly, this rich experience has proven useful.