

Evident strength and agility

It seemed as if Raubichi and its neighbouring Olympic Sports Complex had seen so many events, large and modest, that no surprises could be left

By Boris Yulianov

However, the 30th World Lumberjack Championship, which gathered those from 28 countries, has seen our team claim ten medals. Competing against squads from Finland, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Germany, Ecuador, Japan, Russia, Latvia, Norway and elsewhere, over three days, they took away two gold, five silver and three bronze medals.



Sarah Candel from Luxembourg is only female-participant

Raubichi and the Logoisk District hosted a range of lumberjacking events which allowed the forestry experts to demonstrate their strength and skill. Naturally, it's a career where muscle power is paramount. Those who rarely lift anything heavier than a pen would be at a loss. Carrying a chainsaw for a couple of hours is easily the equivalent of lifting weights at the gym. The idea of jumping fences while carrying a chainsaw is the stuff of fantasy.

"There's no place for ninies in this profession — as in boxing or wrestling. You need real strength to bring down a tree. Without it, nothing is possible," notes Sergey Shkudrov Senior (on the Belarusian team, with son Sergey). A chainsaw is not a bag of sweets, so forestry

Woodcutters' work may look entertaining but requires immense skill and strength, with the main exercise of 'tree cutting' being especially impressive



has always been considered a male profession. Nevertheless, this year saw a female entrant for the first time, performing with the Luxembourg team. She took part in every exercise and did well.

The work of such loggers is incredibly spectacular, especially the actual felling of trees. However, there were four other events: mounting the saw chain, bucking by combined cuts, precise cutting and abnodation (cutting out knots). Within just a few minutes, a mighty pine can be

felled to land exactly at a certain marked point (the further away the tree lands from there, the fewer points earned). How is it possible? Belarusian Alexander Sugako sees nothing surprising, telling us, "If you had years of training in the woods you'd be able to do the same. We've gathered the best loggers from around the world, so spectators seeing this for the first time are probably in shock. They'll certainly have something to talk about later."

Electronic travel tickets clearly more convenient

By Nadezhda Radionova

Automated fare system to be introduced on Minsk metro by late 2012 and for ground transport in 2013

Passengers on the Minsk metro will soon be able to use electronic travel tickets valid for a set number of journeys, replacing the existing system of tokens or magnetic or non-contact cards. Terminals issuing cards will appear at each station, with the tickets working like a banking card.

A similar project is planned for ground transport in 2013, so that the entire public transport system across the capital uses the same automated ticketing by 2014. Ground transport is currently limited in its payment opportunities compared to the metro. The new system should make public transport easier to pay for.

Partners to join forces

By Yevgeny Pimenov

Belarusian Tourist Information Centre opens in Moscow

An agreement to establish the Centre has been signed by the National Tourist Agency of Belarus and Moscow tour operator Solvex-Travel. The latter is to gain the status of Tourist Information Centre of the Republic of Belarus, tasked with increasing Russian tourist flow into Belarus, raising Belarus' profile and promoting its tourist potential.

The parties will conduct joint events, create a plan to inform the media (and disseminate information online), train staff and distribute promotional materials from the National Tourism Agency of Belarus.

Ecological path for ants

By Alexey Andreevsky

Unusual constructions appear on Lepel Lake's island

Three wooden bridges have been installed along a walking route found near an all-seasons tourist resort, which welcomes guests from Belarus and Russia.

These allow ant colonies to migrate below the bridges, mimicking the idea used near the Belovezhskaya Pushcha for frogs in 2009; three pipes were laid under a road often crossed by the amphibians. A similar tunnel has been laid in the Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve this year, saving up to 1,500 frogs annually (their bodies were previously found on the road).

Underground tunnels and bridges for various species of animals are found worldwide, helping preserve the eco-diversity of the environment. These allow amphibians, hoofed animals and small mammals to more easily cross roads and pedestrian footpaths.

New culture of prehistoric times

By Marina Ivanova

Mogilev State University students under direction of Assistant Professor of Archaeology, Alexander Kolosov, discover group of ancient prehistoric settlements on River Oster

Most of the settlements are Stone Age but one site, near the village of Stary Dedin, in the Klimovich District, has been found to be much older. Excavations began in 2010, covering an area of just 30 square meters. However, the area being searched was

recently expanded five-fold, with surprising results.

Unlike most digs in the east of the country, this one has unearthed arrowheads and whimsical items of pottery. The right-sided sharpening of blades reveals that they were held in the left hand while the house designs are of particular interest; rather than the traditional round 'huts' and 'tents', real 'houses' with corridors have been found, which may have been seasonal homes associated with hunting and fishing.

Nearby, food was prepared



in clay ware. There is no doubt that it is a pre-Indo-European settlement, characterised by the interaction of two cultures: local and foreign — from the Middle

Dnieper. Until now, we had no idea whether these peoples were friends or enemies but it seems that the relationship was peaceful.