



Championship mascot looking for name

By Yury Bolotov

The bison chosen as the mascot for the World Ice Hockey Championship of 2014 two and half years ago is soon to learn its name, thanks to a national competition entitled *Name the Mascot!* Open to all

Belarusian citizens and organised by the Directorate for the World Championship 2014, the top ten entries will finally be presented for online voting.

The promotion manager of the Directorate for the World Ice Hockey Championship in 2014, Piotr Ryabukhin, is de-

lighted by the idea. "The only limitation is that only Belarusians can enter but it's easy to take part: just send in your idea for the name, with a little backstory, and fill in a form with contact information, sending it to 220020, Minsk, Pobeditelei Avenue, 20/3, or email it to tal-

isman@ck.by."

Are any names looking like winners yet?

No decisions yet, but we've had a lot of entries already: electronically and on paper. Suggestions include Brusik, Zubrik and Svetik. One idea is to call the mascot Rasti — of course,

in memory of Ruslan Salei, who tragically died in a plane crash near Yaroslavl.

When and how will the contest results be summed up?

We'll be collecting applications for two more weeks. Then, the jury will choose the top ten

for online voting at minsk2014.com, hockey.by and otpusk.by. You can vote from April 10th to 20th; in early May, the winner will be announced, alongside second and third place. All will receive certificates and tickets to a World Championship 2014 game.

Victorious debut marathon

Belarusian runner Alexandra Duliba wins 28th Asics Los Angeles Marathon



Alexandra Duliba's winning finish

By Igor Grishin

According to the Associated Press Agency, this was Ms. Duliba's first marathon, as she prefers shorter distances. However, the Belarusian cov-

ered the distance within 2 hours 26 minutes and 8 seconds, beating the national record of Belarus by 15 seconds.

Ms. Duliba will receive \$75,000 for her victory:

\$25,000 for her race and \$50,000 as the absolute winner, beating even the male runners. At the post-race press conference, Ms. Duliba admitted that she had spent three and a half months training for the mara-

thon. "By the end, I was confident that I could perform well, being able to produce a quick time," she said, adding that she was able to admire the scenery while running, and found it very beautiful.

Bodyguards for fans

By Valeria Dementevskaya

The militia will be providing security on the streets of Minsk and at sports arenas during the World Ice Hockey Championship in 2014, notes the Deputy Interior Minister, Colonel Yury Karaev

Speaking at a recent briefing, he explained that the number of military patrol units in subdivisions of the internal military forces of the Internal Affairs Ministry under his control will be increased for the Ice Hockey Tournament.

No extra army recruits are to be employed for the occasion, but the number of patrol units is to be increased by optimising and restructuring personnel. Soldiers and

sergeants usually assigned to prison duties will take part in security for the event, with modern means of surveillance and control being used in prisons instead. "Technology can fulfill many of the functions of guards, since sensors and security cameras are very effective. We'll be able to release 300-400 people for the patrol service," notes the commander of the internal troops.

Colonel Karaev stresses that intensive training of patrol units has already begun, including language lessons, to enable them to assist fans at the World Ice Hockey Championship. Everything will be done to ensure the safety of foreign visitors, emphasises the high-ranking Internal Affairs Ministry officer.

Moving three places higher

By Igor Leshin

International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) releases latest rating of national teams

The national team of Belarus has risen three places: from 65th to 62nd, boasting 524 points. Over the last month, Georgy Kondratiev's trainees haven't played any matches and their next games aren't scheduled until the end of the first spring month: against Jordan's national squad in Amman, on March 21st, and against the Canadian team in Qatar's Doha, on March 25th. Jordan was ranked 90th most recently, while the Canadians occupy 68th place.

Belarus' group in the 2014 World Championship selection round includes Spain (ranked 1st, 1,610 points), France (17th, with 921 points), Georgia (69th place, with 494 points) and Finland



(87th, with 423 points).

Among the post-Soviet countries, Russia occupies the highest position, being placed 10th (1,064 points); the remainder are ranked as follows: Ukraine is 48th (598), Uzbekistan 59th (536), Armenia 84th (431), Estonia 89th (408), Latvia 108th (319), Lithuania 115th (287), Azerbaijan 116th (286), Moldova 131st (232), Kazakhstan 139th (212), Turkmenistan 140th (207), Tajikistan 152nd (154) and Kyrgyzstan 201st (19). The rankings will be updated by FIFA on April 11th.

Ensuring place in the final

By Yegor Glebov

HC Meshkov Brest to join SEHA League Final Four

After defeating Bosnian Sloga HC in the final home match of the regional league of the South East Handball Association (SEHA) Meshkov Brest has ensured itself a place in the Final Four, being the ultimate leader of the first round, before the end of the regular season.

Sloga is a tournament outsider and has enjoyed only one victory during the SEHA League tournament. In fact, on their journey to Brest, they managed to



During the game against Nexe

lose their equipment, footwear and uniforms, obliging them to ask their hosts for replacements. Accordingly, both teams played in HC

Meshkov Brest uniforms! The Brest squad won by ten goals (38:28); Russian legionary Yury Tatarin scored eight times, making him the

supreme shooter.

One round before the end of the regular season in the SEHA League, HC Meshkov Brest boasts 37 points; Macedonian Metalurg has 36 points while Croatian Zagreb has 35 points and Macedonian Vardar boasts 33 points. The final match for HC Meshkov in the first round of the tournament will be held in Zagreb on March 23rd. The SENA League Final Four will be hosted by the Macedonian capital of Skopje from April 13th-14th, featuring HC Meshkov Brest, Zagreb, Metalurg and Vardar.