

## Important guest win

By Igor Grishin

### Belarusian tennis team keeps its place in Davis Cup Euro/Africa Group II

In the ultimate match, against Tunisia, the debutant of the Belarusian team, Yegor Gerasimov, seeded 450th, defeated 804th seed Mohamed Abid (6:7 (5:7), 6:4, 6:1, 5:7, 6:4). This made the overall score 3:2 in favour of Belarus. In the first match on the third day, Belarusian Vladimir Ignatik, seeded 148th, lost to 158th seeded Malek Jaziri (4:6, 1:6, 1:6).

Belarusian tennis team keeps its place in 2nd Euro-African Group in Davis Cup

At the beginning of the event on the outdoor clay courts of the Tennis Club de Tunis, Vladimir Ignatik defeated Mohamed Abid (6:3, 6:3, 7:5), while Yegor Gerasimov lost to Malek Jaziri (5:7, 6:3, 0:6, 3:6). Doubles partners Max Mirny and Alexander Bury beat Tunisia's Jaziri/Abid (6:3, 6:1, 7:5).

Belarus now occupies 50th place in the team rankings of the Davis Cup, while the Tunisian players are 78th. Belarus lost to Monaco (1:3) while the Tunisian team lost to Latvia (0:3).

## Athletes finish biathlon season

By Igor Grishin

### Belarusian Darya Domracheva wins third place in mass start of traditional Champions Race, held in Olimpiysky Sports Complex in Moscow, completing biathlon season

With 2 (1+0+0+1) misses across four shooting ranges, Ms. Domracheva finished the race in 19 minutes and 14.4 seconds: 2.2 seconds behind the winner, Anastasiya Kuzmina of Slovakia, who missed only one target. Kaisa Mäkäräinen of Finland finished second (1 miss and +1.8 seconds). Ten top world biathletes took part; Big Crystal Globe winner Norwegian Tora Berger took 7th place, with 3 misses (+ 46.8 seconds).

The Moscow Champions Race is based on the famous Christmas start in Gelsenkirchen, which has been held since 2002, at the Auf Schalke Arena in Germany, attracting more than 60 million viewers. For the past three years, the Champions Race has been independent and popular among the world biathlon elite.

# Handball team takes step towards Championships

The Belarusian national handball team has twice beaten Romania in the qualifying round for the 2014 European Championships



Belarusian player Alexander Titov on the attack

By Dmitry Baranovsky

After defeat by Iceland at the start of the tournament and a draw against

Slovenia, Yury Shevtsov's team required a win to keep any chance of second place in the group, and a place in the finals.

Maksim Babichev's absence caused some concern but the away match in Piatra Neamt was controlled by the Belarusian squad, who

only allowed the opponent to lead once in the second half. Our team's three goal lead put them well ahead for the return home

## Two matches with victorious outcomes

Belarusian hockey team defeats Germany in two home matches of European Ice Hockey Challenge



Match against German team in Soligorsk

By Igor Leshin

After the first match against the Germans, held on April 5th at Minsk Arena, which ended in victory for the Belarusian squad (4:3 in shootouts), coach Andrey Skabelka changed the lineup, as he had promised. Vitaly Belinsky took the place of goalkeeper Stepan Gory-

achevskikh while defenders Vladimir Denisov and Oleg Misyul were replaced by Pavel Kazakevich and Ilya Kaznadei; Yevgeny Dado-nov was replaced by Artem Kisly, in attack.

The new lineup, or fatigue, or lack of training on the part of the German squad, who gathered together only a couple of days be-

fore leaving for Belarus, led to Belarus scoring two goals in the second segment. They widened the gap to 4:1 in the third segment but penalties in the end of the meeting (disciplinary 20-minute penalty till the end of the match was applied to one of Alexander Andrievsky's team coaches) left Belarus 3 down to 5; the Germans then closed the gap to 2:4.

Leading up to the World Championships, Belarus will play another four matches in the European Ice Hockey Challenge. From April 12th-13th, in Bobruisk and Zhlobin, Andrey Skabelka's squad will face Slovakia and, from April 19th-20th, they'll play Latvia, in Riga. The Belarusian team will also perform in the International Slovakia Cup Tournament (April 25th-26th, in Bratislava). On May 1st, the team will then go to the World Championship in Sweden.

## Overwhelming pressure and high professionalism



By Yegor Glebov

### Sergey Rabchenko of Belarus defends European Championship title and WBC Silver belt (EBU version) for third time in a row, beating Italian champion Adriano Nicchi in second round with a knock-out

This junior middle-weight title (under 69.9kg) is the 23rd in his professional career, which has seen 23 victories across 23 fights (with 17 knock-outs). Rabchenko, 27, first claimed the European Championship title on June 16th, 2012, after knocking-out in the seventh round five-time UK champion and twice European champion Ryan Rhodes.

On the eve of Rabchenko's title fight, on March 30th,

match, led by Spanish Barcelona mid-forward Sergey Rutenko. The match was one of the most exciting for the national team, with 14 goals scored by Sergey and almost the same number lined up for his teammates, with a resounding victory of 31:25.

This success alone does not guarantee a place in the finals for the team, since more matches are yet to be played. Iceland is clearly in the lead, while Belarus needs to play well against Slovenia and Iceland. However, after their firm victory over the Romanians (who have participated five times in the finals of the World and European Championships in recent years) fans will be feeling confident that our team is in with a real chance of success. Head coach Yury Shevtsov notes that the squad has weaknesses but believes these can be overcome and is certain that neither Slovenia nor Iceland will be sure of a win against the Belarusian team.

a rating fight took place in the light welterweight division (under 63.5kg) in which Italian Paolo Gassani was knocked-out by Kirill Relikh, 23, in the first round.

The Chairman of the Belarusian Federation of Professional Boxing, Gennady Narkevich, congratulated Sergey Rabchenko on his success in Monte Carlo and noted that it reflects the hard work of famous Belarusian coach Sergey Pytalev, combined with the English school of boxing as represented by twice world professional champion Ricky Hatton.

Speaking about his defeat of Italian Adriano Nicchi, Mr. Narkevich emphasises his admiration for athlete. "Rabchenko's overwhelming pressure and high professional mastery ensured his success. I'd also like to congratulate Kirill Relikh on his convincing entrance to the international arena. I see huge potential in Sergey Rabchenko, who is benefitting from the great experience of those guiding him, and other Belarusian boxers, to the peak of world professional boxing," added Mr. Narkevich.