

Junior football silver medals

Belarusian national junior football team placed second at UEFA International Development Tournament

In the final match of the competition, hosted by Minsk's Olimpiyskiy Sports and Recreation Complex, Belarus defeated Ukraine — 5:0. This followed victory over Russia — thanks to penalty shoot-outs (after a main score of 0:0) and defeat by the winning Kazakh squad — 1:2.

Headed by Mikhail Markhel, the young Belarusian team boasted a total of six points (6-2) compared to the Kazakhs' nine (5-3) and Russia's three (5-2). Ukraine failed to earn a single point after losing all three matches (with a total goal difference 1-10). The goalkeeper of the Belarusian national team, Artem Bely, was named as the best player of the tournament.

Our Belarusian female squad (aged 16) also finished second at the Minsk tournament, beating Ukraine with a score of 2:0 and Kazakhstan with a score of 4:1. They lost to the winning team of Russia, 0:3, who boasted a total of nine points (11-0). Belarus ended on six points (6-4) while Ukraine had three points (6-5) and Kazakhstan none (1-15).

Pedestal conquered by best

Minsk HC third at European Champions Field Hockey Cup

Czech Prague recently hosted the Field Hockey European Champions Men's Cup, in the Challenge-1 division, attended by the club champion of Belarus, from Minsk. During the preliminary stage, the Belarusian squad defeated Swiss Servette (7:1) and Slovenian Lipovci (7:0) and drew against Czech Slavia Praha (1:1). In the semi-finals, Belarus lost to Wales' Whitchurch (1:2), finishing third. In the Trophy Division for female squads, hosted by Belgian Antwerp, Smolevichi's Viktoria came 7th after losing to Ukrainian Sumchanka (0:2), Spanish Real Sociedad (0:4) and English Reading HC (0:5). They defeated Azerbaijan's Baku in the match for seventh place (6:1).

Thousand 'horses' under the hood

Minsk hosts second stage of Eastern European Drift Championship

The strongest racers in the region, including the champions of the past two years, Janis Eglite and Dmitry Ilyuk, were joined by Belarusian drivers, whose skills have advanced greatly of late. The Minsk-1 Airport track allowed speeds of up to 150kmh, with cars of 500 to 1,000 horsepower racing. Needless to say, many tyres were burnt through! Drifting involves intentional over-steering to cause loss of traction in the rear wheels, while maintaining control around corners (the rear slip angle is greater than the front). Often, front wheels point in the opposite direction to the turn, creating a spectacular show.

Belarusian chances in European ring

Minsk hosting European Boxing Championship

By Dmitry Baranovsky

For the second time, Europe's strongest boxers will be gathering at Minsk's Sports Palace, with Belarusians among the contenders.

Belarus welcomed the European Boxing Championship 15 years ago, in 1998, when three Belarusian boxers took medals. This opened the path to much boxing success, creating hopes for this year's championship.

The current European Championship is the last before the next World Championship, hosted in autumn by Astana, following new rules regarding the wearing of helmets. Explaining the reason for such radical change, the President of the European Boxing Confederation (EUBC), Franco Falcinelli, notes that, at the next Olympic Games, hosted by Rio de Janeiro, around 70 professional boxers will be taking part. He tells us, "In order to ensure fairness, no helmets will be al-

lowed in amateur boxing." Undoubtedly, this will affect the performance of some boxers, so the October results should prove interesting.

Some (rather significant) innovations are to be tested in Minsk beforehand. Firstly, 'seeding' is to be used at the European Championship for the first time, with the strongest athletes spaced across the tournament schedule, so that they meet only in the finals. Scoring will also change, as Dmitry Tikhomolov, the Chairman of the Belarusian Boxing Federation, explains. The aim is to enhance objectiveness.

Certainly, our Belarusian boxers are in with a good chance, as the head coach, Vladimir Shin, emphasises. He views five among the main contenders, the most experienced of whom is Victor Zuev (super-heavy weight). Over his long career, Victor has collected awards from every tournament: from European championships to Ol-



Belarusian boxers' first European Championship matches

ympic silver in Athens. He is finally ready to take a championship title.

Sergey Korneev also dreams of gold, having lost out on a medal at the London Olympiad after judges challenged a decision. The World and European championship silver medalist tends to attack too early, so that may prove his weakness. Vazgen Safaryants has twice claimed European medals and is also expected to stand a fighting chance at the forthcoming event.

There may be some unexpected surprises of course. Belarusian Mikhail Dolgolevets, who boxed at the London Olympic Games (81kg category), has lost out on his place in the national squad after being defeated by young Sergey Novikov.

"I must admit that I don't expect to qualify for the main line-up," noted Sergey beforehand. "However, I will do my best."

Much is also expected from Pavel Kostromin, who Mr. Tikhomolov, believes to be one of the most promising young Belarusian boxers. Naturally, winning medals won't be easy, since around three-dozen titled boxers (from European and world championships and the Olympic Games) are attending. The tournament opens the new Olympic cycle, so is of principal importance. By the time Astana hosts the World Championship, the balance may have changed drastically. Teams from 36 countries are taking part, bringing over 300 boxers.



Belarusian conquers medals podium

Bullet hits gold

Victoria Chaika earns gold at third stage of ISSF Rifle and Pistol World Cup

The Belarusian athlete won the 10m air rifle in Munich, with 199.6 points in the finals (20 shots). She was followed by Cheah Lee Yean from Malaysia and Germany's Munkhbayar Dorjsuren. Victoria finished eighth over all, being the last to qualify for the final round.

Meanwhile, Belarusian Ilya Chergeiko took bronze for his 10m air rifle marksmanship at the event. Péter Sidi of Hungary took the lead in the qualification round, setting a new world record, but was obliged to take second place to Japan's Yang Haoran in the finals, while Chergeiko's 186.2

points (18 shots) earned him third place.

Belarusians Vitaly Bubnovich and Yury Shcherbatsevich also took part, taking sixth and eighth place in the qualification round respectively. In the finals, Bubnovich hit only ten targets, finishing seventh, while Shcherbatsevich closed the final eight.

Our three Belarusian women failed to reach the 10m air rifle finals: Yekaterina Bubnovich came 107th, Svetlana Shcherbatsevich finished 108th and Svetlana Budko came 118th — out of 126 sportswomen.

Grasping opportunities

Dynamo Minsk becomes Belarusian handball champion

The Men's Belarusian Handball Championship saw a convincing victory for Dynamo Minsk, hosted by Minsk-Arena. The squad crushed Minsk's SKA 31:25 (20:9), led by Ukrainian coach Sergey Bebesheko. This is their fifth championship title in a row. SKA, coached by Spartak Mironovich, took second place, while Brest Meshkov HC claimed bronze.

After the match, Spartak Mironovich commented on SKA's failure, saying, "In the first period, we completely failed to push forward: nine balls in 30 minutes is not sufficient. Dynamo punished us for missing our opportunities, really teaching us a lesson. Unfortunately, our

major handball players didn't play well, although we did better in the second period. We probably hadn't recovered properly from playing in Saturday's European Cup finals. We didn't show our true handball today and, of course, our rivals played very well."

Dynamo Minsk head coach Sergey Bebesheko couldn't conceal his joy, admitting, "I think we're on good form physically and mentally, unlike SKA; they relied on their best players for 50-60 minutes, while we tried to involve all of ours. As for employing new strategy, that's almost impossible at this stage of the season, as my Brest colleague Vladimir Savko emphasises. You can change small details but hurried experiments are unlikely to yield fruit."

Elegance of young graces

Belarusians take part in European Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships, hosted by Vienna

Vienna hosted 29th European Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships, with the Belarusian national junior team performing in the group exercise with five hoops. Adult athletes were fighting for medals in team competitions and individual exercises.

Kristina Novikova, Kristina Sheida, Yevgenia Vensko, Yana Chernaya, Vladislava Zyryanova

and Yekaterina Dolinkina performed in junior group exercise with five hoops. They had to start the tournament from qualification. Before this event, our girls have done well in a similar discipline at the *Crystal Rose* International Tournament, hosted by Minsk as part of the World Cup seventh stage, where they came second.

The leader of Belarus' national squad Melitina Stanyuta struggled in team competitions, alongside Arina Sharapa and Yekaterina Galkina.