

Sporting round up

The new head coach of Belarus' national hockey team, Glen Hanlon, recently arrived in Minsk from North America, reviving his role from previous years.

Mr. Hanlon headed the Belarusian national squad at the World Championships in 2005, 2006 and 2009, taking the team to its best ever result in 2006, when it was placed 6th at the World Championships.

Former WBO Professional World Boxing Champion Sergey Liakhovich of Belarus, 37, was knocked out in the first round of his match in California, against American super heavyweight Deontay Wilder, 27, following a direct stroke to the temple.

This was the third defeat in a row for Liakhovich, who has lost five of his last seven matches. In total, he boasts 25 victories and 6 defeats in the professional ring. Deontay boasts 29 undefeated fights and is now due to face either the former contender for the world championship title, Chris Arreola, 32, or Seth Mitchell, 31; the pair meet on September 6th, with the victor then to face the American powerhouse.

Belarus' national basketball squad has defeated Hungary in the penultimate match of the first qualifying round for the 2015 European Championship.

Ruslan Boidakov's trainees managed to beat their major rivals in Group D, in Hungarian Kecskemet, 63:61. The win leaves them leading their group while Vitaly Lyutch (boasting 17 points), Artem Parakhovsky (12) and Alexander Kudryavtsev, (11) have shown the most goal scoring on the winning team. Belarus previously defeated Hungary at home, 79:75, but then lost to Slovakia 85:97. The final match of the first qualifying round will see Belarus facing the Slovaks once more, on August 16th, at Minsk's Sports Palace. A win will send our squad into the next stage of the tournament.

Victoria's longed-for victorious return

By Yegor Glebov

Victoria Azarenko's recent injuries have affected her play, even resulting in dropping out of tournaments. In the final, Vika played brilliantly, leading to her 2:6, 6:2, 7:6 (8:6) victory in the 2 hour, 29 minute match.

In the first set, Victoria could not find her game; however, she pulled back well in the following sets and made Serena struggled for every ball. Victoria defeated her experienced opponent in the second set and gave the audience a stunning final set, with both players presenting their very best tennis. Finally, luck was with Vika in the tie-break.

Ms. Azarenko, 24, has only twice defeated Ms. Williams, 31, having suffered 12 defeats. This is the second time she has beaten Serena this season, following the February tournament in Doha.

On the way to the final match, Victoria beat American Vania King (140) — 6:1, 7:6 (8:6), Slovakian Magdalena Rybarikova (33) — 6:3, 6:4, Danish Caroline Wozniacki (10) — 6:3, 7:6 (7:5) and Serbian Jelena Jankovic — 4:6, 6:2, 6:3.

Victoria has now won 17 WTA tournaments, with this year seeing triumph at the competition in Doha and at the Open Championship in Melbourne: one of the 'Grand Slam' tournaments. She remains in second seed position, with 9,505 points, while Serena Williams has 12,260 points.

On August 26th, the world's best tennis players will gather in New York City for the U.S. Open: the last 'Grand Slam' event of the season. We hope that Victoria will continue her winning streak.



Azarenko celebrates after defeating Williams in Cincinnati

Trajectory of the ball

By Igor Leshin

Minsk Dinamo handball squad takes second place at international Champions Cup in Germany

A tough struggle has led to Dinamo losing to Slovenian Gorenje, with a score of 32:34 (17:21). The Minsk team's Damir Doborac scored the most goals (8) followed by Denis Rutenko (6) and Dean Bombac (5).

In the first meeting of the tournament, Dinamo, headed by Slovenian coach Boris Denic, defeated French *Saint-Raphaël* -- 33:28. They went on to smash 2nd German Bundesliga Leipzig 31:24.

Meanwhile, national championship bronze winner Brest Meshkov HC has been knocked out in the match for 3rd place in Macedonian Struga, losing to Macedonia champion Vardar, from Skopje -- with a score of 24:33. Macedonian Metalurg then defeated French Ivry in a close final -- 24:22.

The Brest squad will soon have the chance to gain revenge over Vardar, as both teams will take part in the 6th International Belgazprombank Cup. They'll be joined by Russian champion Chekhovskiye Medvedi and Ukrainian HC ZTR Zaporozhye (silver winner of the Ukrainian championship) at Brest's Victoria Sports Centre. HC Meshkov Brest won this tournament in 2008, 2009 and 2010; in 2011, the Cup was claimed by French *Dunkerque* and, last year, victory went to Poland's *Wisla Plock*.

Game results in a draw

Belarus' national football team draws 1:1 in friendly international match against Montenegro

Montenegro got off to a good start at Torpedo Stadium in Zhodino, creating a couple of dangerous moments for Belarus' goalkeeper and captain, Sergey Veremko. No goal resulted but our squad failed to take the initiative themselves until a Belarusian combination near the Montenegro goal ended in Estonian referee Kristo Tohver awarding a penalty shot in the 16th minute. Sergey Kislyak took the kick, hitting Marko Simic in the arm. Belarusian forward Sergey Kornilenko then managed to shoot and score, outwitting goalkeeper Vukašin Poleksić, bringing the score to 1-0. Anton Putilo made an effort to score a second goal for Belarus, but his ball sadly struck the goalpost.

In the second half of the game, the character of the match remained slow, with neither team playing dynamically. In the 62nd minute, Mirko Vučinić managed to equalise the score while, despite a number of substitutions, Georgy Kondratiev's trainees failed to score again.

After their match against the Montenegrins, Belarus will play another friendly game against Kyrgyzstan, on September 6th. The match will take place at the same venue: Torpedo Stadium. This will be a rehearsal before the qualifying matches for the 2014 FIFA World Cup: against France (on September 10th in Gomel) and Spain (on October 11th in Palma de Mallorca). On October 15th, Belarus will play a friendly game against Japan.

Staking all on younger generation

Participation of Belarusian team in World Athletics Championship leaves many questions

By Dmitry Baranovsky

Usain Bolt of Jamaica was present, alongside former champion Yelena Isinbayeva. Hosted by Luzhniki Stadium, most of the medals went to experienced sportsmen. However, there were a few surprises. Polish hammer thrower Pawel Fajdek, who won the Universiade in Kazan this season, saw unexpected success, as did Russians Alexander Menkov and Sergey Shubenkov; the latter came third in the hurdles.

Our Belarusian team performed modestly, despite having done well in previous years. Some of our veteran victors are no longer on the team, bringing some new faces onto the squad. Sadly, the novice athletes failed to clinch any medals, although Olga Sudareva came close, taking fourth place in the long jump. Of course,



Alina Talay (the second to the left) before start of 100m hurdles

Anastasia Mironchik-Ivanova and Veronika Shutkova used to vie for victory in this event, with Ms. Sudareva rather overshadowed. In fact, she produced the same result as bronze winner Ivana Spanovic, but lost out because of the distance of her second attempt. A year ago, Ms. Sudareva claimed silver at the

European Championships, making her today's most titled Belarusian long jumper.

Anna Drabenya and Ivan Trotsky did well in the walking event, despite missing out on medals, while decathlete Andrey Kravchenko, recovering from serious surgery a year ago, earned a

worthy 8,300 points. Commenting on the performance of other athletes, the head coach of the Belarusian national squad, Alexander Troshchilo, has promised 'to take measures' to improve our future performance.

The US team won the competition. The Russians failed to perform as well as they had hoped, perhaps due to the absence of several of their top athletes.

Sadly, the stands were half-empty for most events, even where world stars were competing, leading to some speculation as to whether those organising the tournament were at fault. No doubt, each athlete, official representative and journalist working in Moscow would have their own story to tell. However, with Russia's Sochi hosting the Winter Olympics next February and a future World Football Championship (the second most important and popular tournament), we can only hope that some lessons have been learned.