

Third mixed doubles world title

At the US Open, Max Mirnyi wins his third mixed double title, while Victoria Azarenko is a footstep away from victory

By Yuri Butrimovich

Max Mirnyi, partnering Czech Andrea Hlaváčková, has won the US Open mixed doubles. In the final, Mirnyi and Hlaváčková defeated Santiago González (Mexico) and Abigail Spears (US) with a score of 7:6 (5), 6:3. The duel lasted a brief 1 hour and 26 minutes.

Remarkably, Mirnyi has won the US Open mixed doubles for the third time in his career: in 1998, the Belarusian took the title partnering American Serena Williams and in 2007 with Victoria Azarenko. He has also twice won the US Open men's doubles: partnering Australian Lleyton Hewitt (2000) and Mahesh Bhupathi from India (2002). Max now boasts 10 victories at major tournaments, noting, "After our first joint performance at Wimbledon, I knew it was easier to play with Andrea than with most of my last mixed double partners. She is always searching for the path to victory and is a very positive person. In spite of our being knocked out of Wimbledon



Max Mirnyi and Andrea Hlaváčková win US Open tournament after persistent struggle

in the first round, I wanted to play with her again. She wrote to me, saying: 'Let's try once again?' and I agreed at once." Of course, the decision has been fully justified.

The US Open women's single was eagerly awaited by Belarusian fans, since 8th September saw world No.2 seed Victoria Azarenko battle American Serena Williams,

ranked first seed. Sadly, the Belarusian suffered defeat in three sets — 5:7, 7:6 (8:6), 1:6. The final at Flushing Meadows was a real battle of wills, proving a gripping end to the

Grand Slam season. From the very beginning, both women showed that they were on top form, ready to fight to 'the death'. The first set lasted almost an hour, and could have



Victoria Azarenko

easily gone to a tie-break. However, at 5:5, Serena proved more accurate than Vika and won two games successively. The second set began well for Serena, despite persistent resistance from Victoria, who clung to each ball. Williams led 4:1 and needed to win only two games, against five for Azarenko. It seemed that Ms. Williams, 31, would win easily but her 24-year-old rival would not surrender, rescuing a hopeless situation after gaining a tie-break — 8:6. Unfortunately, the last set saw Victoria lose 1:6, perhaps having had her strength and spirits sapped. With 13 of her matches against Vika giving her victory (against just three losses to Victoria) Serena's experience remains apparent. She now boasts 55 WTA victories, with 17 at Grand Slam tournaments.

This season, Ms. Azarenko won the first Grand Slam tournament, in Australia's Melbourne, followed by victories in Doha and Cincinnati. During her professional career, which began in 2003, Victoria has won 17 WTA tournaments.

Beginning of season brings first points and a new captain

Dinamo Minsk hockey players play two games to launch their participation in Kontinental Hockey League (KHL)

By Igor Leshin

Unfortunately, in the opening game of the season, Alexander Andrievsky's wards lost to local Dinamo Riga in Latvia, with a score of 2:1 in regular time. Fans were also disappointed by the following match, hosted by Minsk-Arena in the presence of 14,800 spectators, against CSKA Moscow. Both teams were eager for victory, after starting defeats, leading to intensive play and many shots at goal.

Experienced Alexey Kalyuzhny joined Dinamo on the eve of the CSKA match, joining Geoff Platt and Canadian Jacob Micflikier in attack, and replacing Geoff as captain. Despite failing to score, the three showed team spirit and kept their rivals on their toes. The Moscow squad defended well, al-



Dinamo Minsk ice hockey players lose two matches of KHL

lowing Minsk to score only within 3 minutes of the end of the second period, when Artur Gavrus slipped past Rastislav Staňa, scoring his own first goal in the Kontinental Hockey League. The

concentration. He is pleased to welcome Kalyuzhny to the team but believes it will take time for Alexey to settle and synchronise with other players, showing his best play.

guests brought the score level at the start of the 3rd period, thanks to Nikolay Prokhorkin outwitting Kevin Lalande. The score of 1:1 remained throughout, leading to extra time, when CSKA's Georgy Misharin managed a goal two minutes before the final whistle. The loss leaves Dinamo with one point in the KHL Championship.

The game saw fans create a unique atmosphere in support of Dinamo, as noted by coach Alexander Andrievsky. He considers that his squad played even better than in Riga but lacked consistency.

Dinamo is again among the strongest



Dinamo will again play Europe's best handball players

By Yegor Glebov

National handball champions of Belarus reach group stage of Champions League for third time

In the decisive match of the qualifying tournament, held in Slovakia's Presov, Dinamo defeated local club Tatran Prešov 29:27 (14:13) after a tough struggle. Tatran were supported by over 3,000 fans and were set on winning, offering the Belarusian champions stubborn resistance.

For a long time, the game was tense, with Dinamo only pulling into the lead 4 minutes before the final whistle, with a score of 28:23. The team are led by Slovenian coach

Boris Denic while the most goals — seven — were scored by Bosnian legionary Damir Doborac; Ukrainian Sergey Shelmenko claimed six goals.

Dinamo now goes through to the first round of the prestigious European club tournament, playing in Group C against Spanish Barcelona, Macedonian Vardar and Metalurg Skopje, as well as French PSG and Swiss Thun. The champions of Belarus will play their first match on 21st September, at PSG.

Last year, our squad, led by Ukrainian coach Sergey Bebesko, reached the final 16 for the first time but lost both their matches to Macedonian Metalurg, whom they will meet again this season.