

# Talent to remain goddess

This sportswoman has not visited Belarus since 1998, since settling in Houston, in America. It would be interesting to find out if any of her neighbours realise just what a goddess they have living close to them.

By Dmitry Baranovsky

Svetlana Boginskaya's nickname of Goddess is derived from her family name (Bog is translated as God in English). The lady received it long ago, and it's truly a part of her now. Svetlana was inducted into the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame in 2005, but it seems no one would have been surprised if the name 'Goddess' had been written, instead of her birth name. Everyone who was lucky enough to witness this three times Olympic and five times World Champion can be envied. Many years after her success the sportswoman is still well aware of her significance, and speaks so elegantly that nobody could accuse her of arrogance.

"I always wished to be the best. When I joined a gymnastics sports club, I immediately announced that I planned to become Olympic Champion. I threw away my first bronze medal. My mother spent a lot of effort convincing me to take it back and realise that it's impossible to win all the time,"

Svetlana says.

While attentively watching her three Olympic performances (representing the USSR, CIS and Belarus), Svetlana commented wryly on every little mistake. Recollecting the Ms. Boginskaya of the 1980s, Olympic champion An-



S. Boginskaya performs

tonina Koshel speaks of an insistent girl, with complex character. Svetlana is even more straightforward. "I was a nasty piece of work!" she says. At the same time, the sports star apologises to her coaches, "In America, I would have been thrown out

of the gym for such tricks." However, this combination of Svetlana's maximalism and arrogance made her a true goddess. Moreover, it helped the sportswoman to twice return to the professional sport after 'the maturation period'. "I wanted to have more free time to go to discos back then..." she recollects.

Svetlana's present life in America, where she runs a business, is well planned and 'scheduled'. Some might view her failure to come to Minsk (where her parents and brother live) for fifteen years as hardness, but Ms. Boginskaya initially blames her fear of air flights, which appeared after her daughter was born, for such a situation, but later agrees that a schedule dictates rules, which are vital for those wishing to reach the top. "American gymnastics has little sport but much money. This is the reality. Everyone must pay and everyone must earn money. A month of gym training, with the most advanced sporting equipment, costs



Svetlana Boginskaya with European Championship Cup in 1990

around \$1,000. However, these are the rules. When I was invited to the USA in 1993 to be trained by Nadia Comăneci, I also had to work to pay the \$500-700. This is a business for coaches and, due to the necessity to think mostly about making money, a majority of American sportswomen are 'one-timers'. After their Olympic performances, they 'plunge' into more diverse tournaments and advertising campaigns. However, new sportswomen come to replace them, and the sport continues its efficient development," Svetlana tells us.

It was a true challenge for many Soviet period sportspeople to accept the American system, but Ms.

Boginskaya did this as easily as she had earlier won her first Olympic medal. Her desire to be the best did not vanish and America offered her great possibilities for her dream to come true. Svetlana's summer sports camps are making good profit now. Moreover, she also finds time to consult the American team and thinks of ways to help Belarusian gymnastics progress.

"My family is extremely important for me," Svetlana says. "In my sporting days, I had my head in the clouds and was truly arrogant, which is natural for many sportsmen. However, I'm different now. I even refused to sign a full time contract with the American

team, as I wish to spend as much time with my family as possible. Meanwhile, my present visit to Minsk is not without reason. Of course, nostalgia, shopping and seeing relatives are all important. However, I also plan to discuss the possibility of my helping Belarusian gymnastics. If I succeed in finding a sponsor, I'll arrange a free camp for sportswomen near New York — they'll only need to pay for their flight. Probably, the Belarusian team will manage to participate in an annual tournament (named after me). Some other ideas are also possible, but right now, I know little of the present Belarusian gymnastics situation."

## Partners of 2014 IIHF World Championship confirm their status

By Sergey Krotov

**Nine companies, official partners of the 2014 IIHF World Championship, have signed sponsorship agreements with the Directorate for the 2014 Ice Hockey World Championship and have now received personal certificates confirming their status**

Belgosstrakh, BELAZ, Beltelecom, DKC (Russian Federation), Belaruskali, Coca-Cola Beverages Belarus, Kayson, Kraft Foods and Veka Rus attended the awards ceremony: held in Minsk as part of an international seminar for sponsors and partners. The organising committee of the World Championship in Belarus has 12 sponsorship packages, with three remaining. A number of major companies look set to bid for the opportunity.



The Chairman of the Belarusian Ice Hockey Federation, Yevgeny Vorsin, presented certificates to the nine company representatives and thanked the heads and labour collectives of all the partner companies for their support of the forthcoming international sporting event in Belarus. Mr. Vorsin also praised the partners' considerable sponsorship, which is ensuring high-level organisation and significant reduction in costs. According to Mr. Vorsin, the organisers have been doing their best to ensure that as many Belarusian ice hockey fans as possible are able to attend the exciting tournament.

The 78th IIHF World Championship will take place in Minsk from May 9th-25th, 2014, with Minsk-Arena and Chizhovka-Arena as the main venues.

## Painful knock-out for boxers

Belarusian boxing team fails to win a medal at World Championship

By Dmitry Komashko

Before heading to Astana, Vladimir Shin's boxers anticipated bringing home at least a couple of medals, having claimed four at the European Championship, held in Minsk in May. Sadly, by the end of the first round, only half of the team members remained, with just two athletes reaching the 1/16 finals and all the leaders knocked out.

Third-seeded Sergey Korneev (under 91kg) — a World Championship prize holder — was defeated in the second round by Russia's Yevgeny Tishchenko,



Vitaly Bondarenko reaches the goal

in his first fight. Meanwhile, Vazgen Safaryants — a European Championship silver medallist — failed to win a single round in his second match. Only Sergey Novikov (a European Champion-

ship bronze medallist) and Yan Sudilovsky (a newcomer replacing Victor Zuev in the super-heavyweight category) had a chance to fight for the place in the 1/4 finals and an opportunity to claim

at least bronze awards (these were awarded to all participants of semi-final matches). However, the athletes faced similar disappointment. The team was missing several of its top fighters, who are training for the World Series with various clubs.

The next World Boxing Championship will be hosted by Rio, on the eve of the Olympics, with the winners receiving automatic qualification for the Games, with most other places going to World Series boxers. It seems that the most spectacular and intriguing fights lie ahead for our Belarusian boxers.

## Atlant Baranovichi defeats Constanta

By Igor Khadasevich

**Women's volleyballers from Baranovichi are first Belarusian club to enter European Cup**

Belarus' vice-champion, Atlant Baranovichi, has hammered Romania's Constanta,

playing away, in the first match of the 1/16 finals for the CEV Volleyball Cup, with a score of 3:0 (25:23, 25:12, 25:12); victory was achieved in one hour and six minutes.

Other women's Belarusian volleyball clubs will kick off their European campaigns

later, with Minsk's Minchanka facing Austria's Innsbruck at home, for Challenge Cup 2013/14 qualification in late November.

In the first qualifying round of the men's Challenge Cup, Grodno's Kommunalnik has played two away matches

against Norway's Nyborg from Bergen, while Stroitel Minsk and Shakhtyor Soligorsk are entering from the second round. The Minskians will face Romania's Stiinta Explorari Baia Mare twice, while Soligorsk's squad will meet Foinikas Syros, from Greece.