

Town Hall gives green light

By Igor Grishin

In the Town Hall, a contract has been signed to host the European Boxing Championship in the Belarusian capital's Sports Palace, from May 30th to June 9th, 2013

The President of the European Boxing Confederation (EUBC), Franco Falcinelli, joined the Minister for Sports and Tourism, Alexander Shamko, the Chairman of Minsk City Executive Committee, Nikolai Ladutko, and the Chairman of the Belarusian Boxing Federation, Dmitry Tikhomolov, at the signing ceremony.

Mr. Falcinelli is confident that Minsk will host the tournament at a high level, saying, "Belarus has enjoyed good boxing traditions since Soviet times. It's a popular sport which I'm sure will draw large crowds for the European Championship. The Sports Palace, which has been selected as the main arena for the competition, meets all requirements. In addition, the relevant infrastructure is in evidence — such as nearby hotels."

Belarus won the vote to host the European Boxing Championship last year, as decided by the European Boxing Confederation Executive Committee. Originally, the tournament was to be held in mid-May, but has been postponed to late May-early June. Boxers from every European country will take part, including many world champions and Olympic medalists.

Gift recalls success

Victoria Azarenko donates her 2012 WTA trophy to Museum of Olympic Glory

In 2012, Victoria Azarenko topped the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) singles rankings for the first time in her professional career and for the first time in the history of Belarusian tennis.

In October 2012, the Belarusian tennis player was awarded a special WTA prize at the final tournament in Istanbul, which she recently donated to the Museum of Olympic Glory in Minsk. Her mother, Alla Azarenko, joined Belarusian Tennis Association representatives at the official ceremony.

The trophy will form part of an exhibition at the future headquarters of the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Belarus.

Still time to climb summit

UCI Track Cycling World Championships finish in Minsk. The event was the first in the new Olympic cycle, pitting the top 260 cyclists against one another at Minsk Arena and beginning the path of determining those worthy of attending the next Games.



At Minsk-Arena cycling track during World Championship

Commenting on the results of the successful tournament, the President of the International Cycling Union (ICU), Pat McQuaid, noted that Belarus had managed to organise the championship at the highest level. He believes that the installation of the new track and the hosting of such events should inspire the further development of cycling in Belarus. He noted, "Previously, Belarus lacked such a wonderful track yet managed great results at the

most prestigious competitions. Now, the new generation of cyclists should become one of the best. Vasily Kiriyeenko and Konstantin Sivtsov are perfect models for young Belarusian cyclists."

Vasily Kiriyeenko and Natalia Tsylynskaya, who both previously earned world-class gold medals, have handed the baton to Olga Panarina and Tatiana Sharakova, who have been performing brilliantly at world and European championships.

Sadly, they were absent from Minsk Arena, as Ms. Panarina is undergoing treatment at the Neurosurgery Institute for a head injury received on the eve of the Olympiad in London. Meanwhile, Ms. Sharakova is being investigated by the ICU for a positive drug test at the 2012 European Championship in Lithuanian Panevėžys. There, she took gold in the omnium and bronze in the team pursuit, with Oksana Popko and Yelena Dylko.

Ms. Popko and Ms. Dylko took part in the team pursuit at Minsk Arena, cycling with young Olga Masyukovich, but failed to qualify for the final races. Most of the team are novices at such major events, but we hope to see their talent grow with experience and training.

Olympic champion Oleg Logvin notes that the results of the championship should be assessed on a global scale. "The fact of organising such a large international tournament is an

achievement in itself. European and world competitions for junior and young athletes have been hosted by Belarus many times but this was our first World Championship event."

The British confirmed their status as one of the top cycling states, despite having an almost new line-up and having the Germans and Australians as serious rivals. All emphasised their admiration for the organisation of the sporting contest.

Mexican Sofia Arreola Navarro set a wonderful record for her country, being only the second athlete in the history of Mexico to claim two cycling medals at the same tournament. "These are incredible feelings," she smiled. "I worked hard and found the track very comfortable. I've entered a new level and will now try to enhance it at the next World Championship round."

The current World Championship brings a host of rounds, which will culminate in Rio de Janeiro. Some leave the Belarusian capital joyful while others, like the hosts of the tournament, face months of analysis, to see how they can improve their performance. The senior coach of the national team of Belarus, Stanislav Soloviev, has high hopes for every member of the team. Olga Masyukovich, Roman Tishkov, Anna Gurik and Anton Muzychkin failed to claim victory on this occasion but, undoubtedly, their time will come. Vitally, they should never give up!

Dinamo Minsk handball players lose by just two shots to Barcelona club



During match against Barcelona

Dinamo Minsk's final match in Champions League Group Stage brings ticket to 1/8 finals ahead of time

At Minsk's Sports Palace, whose stands seated 4,000 fans, Belarus' champions welcomed the leader of Group D — Spanish Barcelona. In the first half, the hosts were five goals down,

but made up for lost time after the break, until they were just one shot behind. The Spanish squad proved its supremacy however, finishing two goals in the lead 28:30 (13:18).

In the first round, Minsk lost to Barcelona — 24:25. Barcelona and Berlin have also gained tickets to the 1/8 finals ahead of time.

Victor Goncharenko:

'Match was quite strange'

By Yegor Glebov

Losing 0:1 in away match to Turkish Fenerbahçe (after home draw) BATE finishes performance in Europa League 1/16 finals

The match was held without spectators, following a UEFA decision punishing the Turkish team for its fans' previous misbehaviour. While this could have been to the foreign squad's disadvantage, the match saw a largely equal struggle.

In the 20th minute, BATE half-back Dmitry Baga was sent off for receiving two yellow cards, giving Fenerbahçe the numerical advantage. During the 45th minute, Andrey Gorbunov was given a penalty, with Moussa Sow awarded a kick from 11m by the referee, which was turned into a goal by half-back Cristian Baroni.



Failure in Istanbul

The Borisov players fought hard in the early second half, resulting in Filip Rudik's shot at goal; sadly, this sailed over the net. Turkey then seized the initiative again and almost

scored several times. Baroni's shot from the centre of the penalty area came closest, but hit the bar.

Coach Victor Goncharenko sent most of the team into attack, leaving just two in defence, without results. BATE has now been knocked out of the Europa League, while Fenerbahçe will face Czech Viktoria in the next round.

At the after-match press conference, Mr. Goncharenko noted, "In Grodno, the Turks took an early penalty and we were given the same in Istanbul. This match was decided on a penalty kick, without any fans in attendance. It was such a strange situation that it's hard to know how to give an objective analysis. It's true that we made too many inaccurate passes, which made a mockery of our attacks. I really can't explain it."