

# Europe folds under strong competition

Belarusian professional boxer Sergey Khomitsky, 39, wins the super-middleweight WBO European champion title, defeating former champion, Frank Buglioni of the UK

By Igor Grishin

The fight was held at London's Cooper Box Arena. 24 year old Frank — who was defending his WBO super-middleweight belt for the third time, was the easy favourite, but his 13th fight turned out to be an unlucky one for him. This defeat to Khomitsky is Buglioni's first professional loss in his career, having won 12 times, including 9 knock-outs.

From the very first minute of the fight, the Belarusian was the stronger fighter, pressing his opponent hard after a series of accurate blows, Sergey continued boxing well throughout. In the sixth round, after the Belarusian badly wobbled the defending champion, the referee was forced to stop the contest. Khomitsky won by technical knock-out, bringing the tough Belarusian the WBO European title.

Sergey, who is trained by the famous Belarusian specialist, Konstantin Makhankov, at the Belarusian State University of Physical Culture and Sports' boxing gym, has had 42 fights in his career. Before meeting Frank, he had won 28 times in the professional arena — including 11 knock-outs, with 10 losses and two draws.

Our Belarusian boxers have celebrated several major victories recently. A national team member, Pavel Kostromin, recently won bronze in the 69kg category at the 31st Amateur Felix Stamm Memorial (dedicated to the Polish boxing school's founder) — in Warsaw, which saw male and female athletes gather from 22 different countries.

The Belarusian defeated Irishman, Stephen Donnelly in the quarter-finals — 3:0, to reach the semis and guarantee himself a medal. Sadly, Pav-

el was unable to fight further as damage from the previous round prevented him from facing the Georgian, Zaal Kvachataдзе. Other Belarusian sportsmen won no medals in Warsaw: Vazgen Safaryants (64kg) lost to Russian boxer, Vitaly Dunaitsev in the 1/8 finals — 1:2, while Andrey Mikhailov (75kg) was defeated by the Ukrainian, Alexey Kasamzade in the quarter-finals — 0:3.



Sergey Khomitsky

## Farm-club for 'bison'

By Yegor Glebov

According to the official site of the Dinamo Minsk HC, from the beginning of next season, a new team will be competing in the Belarus Extraleague Open Ice Hockey Championship — Dinamo-Molodechno

The Internet resource tells us that the new hockey team will officially become a part of the Dinamo Minsk HC, becoming the 11th team of the Belarusian Extraleague which, during the 2013/14 season, comprised of the following hockey clubs: Neman (Grodno), Yunost-Minsk, Gomel, Metallurg (Zhlobin), Khimik-SKA (Novopolotsk), Shakhtyor (Soligorsk), Lida, Brest, Vitebsk and Mogilev.

Currently, there's no information about the team's composition or the specialists in the coach staff. Previously, there was media information that the former coach of Neman, Andrey Kravchenko, may become the head coach of Minsk-Molodechno. Under his guidance, the team earned gold medals in the Belarus Championship during the 2012/13 season.

## Another stage of preparation

The leader of the Belarusian swimming team, Alexandra Gerasimenya, twice ascended the podium during the representative international tournament, held in Eindhoven



Belarus' best swimmer, Alexandra Gerasimenya, came second in the finals at one of her favourite distances — 50m butterfly — and finished third in the 50m backstroke. Gerasimenya wasn't among prize winners on freestyle distances, coming fifth in the 50m and finishing tenth in the 100m distance. Other Belarusian participants were only once among top ten, with Oksana Demidova finishing 9th in the 200m medley, whilst her other race results were a long way from the podium — 19th in the 50m butterfly and only 40th in 100m freestyle.

The Dutch tournament was used as an initial stage of preparation by some leading swimmers for the Belarus Championship, to be held in May. The forthcoming national event will be the final selection meeting for the 2014 European Long Course Championship, scheduled for late August. The Belarusian athletes performed in Eindhoven almost immediately after their mountain training camp finished in Armenia.

## Useful experience is always gained in games

Horizont basketball club from Minsk Region runners-up in the Baltic Basketball League for second time in a row

By Dmitry Baranovsky

This tournament, which has been organised for twentieth time already, brings together the strongest teams of the Baltic region, as well as clubs from Sweden, Belarus and Ukraine. The participants have many world famous female basketball players who will soon take part in the World Championship, so competition in this event is very important. Belarusian squads have been active participants of this tournament since the League's establishment, with Belarusian Horizont became first club from the country which won the tournament's major prize in 1999. Our national teams repeated this last season, when Grodno Olympia celebrated victory. This time, the team from Grodno failed to retain their title, defeated by Kibirkstis-Vici Vilnius in the semi-final and taking the bronze. Meanwhile, the major event unfolded in the Vici-Horizont meeting.

The match was really dramatic. Not long ago, the two teams met as part of the League's regular championship and, at that time, Horizont players celebrated victory at the Vitalyur Sports Complex. The Lithuanian female team had seriously prepared their revenge and piled on the pres-



Natalia Anufrienko is playing

sure from the first moments, enabling them to seize the initiative and build a lead of 17 (!) points. Nevertheless, the Belarusian guests have managed to reduce the deficit. Natalia Anufrienko's persistence and Tatiana Troina's efficiency resulted in the score being reduced to just 4 points, just a few minutes before the final whistle. Unfortunately, the Belarusians failed to make two shots and equalise the game.

Commenting the result of the meeting, Horizont's head coach, Anatoly Buyalsky, noted that the current youth of his team was the reason for their failure. "The new generation of players aren't yet ready to efficiently play at this high level. Kibirkstis-Vici is a EuroLeague team, and playing in Europe's strongest basketball tournament. These athletes have gained priceless experience which we lack."

The Baltic League is aimed at compensating for this 'drawback'. According to Alexander Shimkovyuk, head coach of Grodno Olympia, the major goal of the League is to gain experience. "Such tournaments show our position. Kibirkstis-Vici plays basketball at a level which is played by the whole European elite, and at a level that we're likely to face at European and World Championships," he noted.

The national teams will start the season very soon. The Belarus Championship semi-finals have finished, with Horizont confidently defeating Gomel's Sozh-GGU in one of them. The second semi-final will be the fifth meeting between Olympia and Tsmoki Minsk. The intrigue is likely to continue until the very last matches, testimony to the quality of female basketball in Belarus. We just have to be sure we do not lose it.



## Everyone to get an answer

By Igor Leshin

At a press conference dedicated to the results of biathlon season of 2013-2014, Darya Domracheva promises to answer all letters that she has received from her fans

"I haven't answered a lot of autograph-cards yet, but I promise to do it. I feel that people write from their hearts. They send songs, postcards and embroideries," said the sportswoman. She added, "The giving of news is the extent of communications networking. I share events which have happened in my life with my fans. They aren't sport events. I want people to see the other side of me. I physically have no time to answer messages; there are a lot of them."

Domracheva thinks that even get the 'Golden Globe Award' you shouldn't end your career. "I will do sport for as long as it favours me. Even if I won the Golden Globe Award this season, I wouldn't retire from biathlon. It brings me a lot of emotions. After the Olympics, it was very difficult but I never felt tired from the biathlon," she ended.