

# Beautiful stadium in expectation of the beautiful game

The Belarusian Cup final opened a new page in sporting history as the participants of the final, and those who came to support their favourite teams, witnessed the official birth of a unique football arena. The President took part in the opening ceremony of the new Borisov-Arena.

By Dmitry Komashko

## Form

At first about the good. It seems to have become a regular tradition to annually open a new, top level sporting complex in Belarus. This time, the event turned into a holiday for many football fans, which are to be congratulated for the new European standard football stadium. It may not be Wembley or Old Trafford, but it is a pitch on which there would be no shame to receive FC Bayern München or FC Real Madrid. It was obvious after seeing the first architectural drafts, that something interesting was being conceived in Borisov. Its location, right in the middle of the forest surrounding the city, only helped to rouse the expectations of the finished construction. And it was not to disappoint. It impressed and pleased with in every aspect, including the admission system which, even taking into account detailed examinations and checks, allowed for the free flow of spectators into the stadium.

The football dedicated stadium has no athletics track or field, enabling the action taking place on the perfect pitch to feel close and personal for the fans in their comfortable seats. A promenade offering souvenirs and fast-food is located on the sheltered second floor, a roof runs over the heads of the spectators and huge screens which may not have yet played the reruns of the most entertaining moments, but certainly hint at such a possibility in the future. Watching football in this environment will be not only interesting, but also rather comfortable. That is why the President, taking part in the formal opening ceremony of the Borisov-Arena was lavish with warm words and high estimations of the work, "Our new sports complex is as good as leading world arenas. It meets UEFA's highest standards and is able to host any European competitions, including the Champions League and the Europa League. It also means that the local team will not have wander across cities searching for places to train. Moreover, besides the basic function, this stadium should also fulfil a social mission, as the health of Belarusians remains one of the major priorities of our policy."

It is necessary to note that any amateur sportsperson can find an activity to try the new arena, and the appearance on the pitch of not only world class football players, but international pop-stars too would become a really big gift for spectators.

## Content

Anticipating the starting whistle the final for the second most important Trophy of Belarusian football, the President noted, "Our teams still need to raise their professional level considerably. I often say that today football, hockey, other sports are not just games, not just a struggle. They are war. If you appear on the field, you should fight. If athletes had such a serious attitude to victory, we will be sure to see the stars of world football at the Borisov-Arena; not only see, but defeat them also."

At this time, however, neither FC



Infrastructure of new stadium



Borisov-Arena is advanced football stadium of Belarus

Shakhtyor's Ukrainian midfielder, Artem Stargorodsky, nor Alexander Sulima, the Neman goalkeeper who somehow allowed the flying ball to slip between his hands, could explain how the goal occurred, 10 minutes before half-time. If, for any reason, people did not see the second half, they did not miss anything in a rather lack-lustre 45 minutes. Even amongst the spectators at the Borisov-Arena, it was only the most loyal fans that remained. However, the enthusiasm and energy of fans, in combination with the good acoustics of the stadium were

was Torpedo-BelAZ, who conceded four goals) and, before the spectators, and in such beautiful stadium the guys would try to make an informal celebration.

BATE will not have such a possibility soon. For example, next Saturday the 'yellow-blue' team will receive the debutants of major league from Slutsk, who unexpectedly appeared in fourth position in the league table. Recently, they have gained their third victory over FC Dinamo Brest. Meanwhile the meeting on 15th May of BATE with Dinamo Minsk is called by the majority of football fans as a real opening of



Pleasure of victory for Cup



Shakhtyor Soligorsk football team become winners of the Belarusian Cup for the second time

Shakhtyor, nor FC Neman, the two finalists of this year's Belarusian Cup pretend to be contenders for European football.

The finalists really made an effort and played as well they could. According to the after-match comments of the coaches and managers, some of the players were 'just happy to be taking part in a match of such a level', while others 'carried out their instructions and tried to preserve the structure of game'.

The result of the game was decided by a single goal, and I am sure that neither the architect of the first goal in the history of the Borisov-Arena,

enough to create an atmosphere for Shakhtyor that, more or less, corresponded to the event.

## Hope

It would be nice to believe that the Borisov residents had not left the arena for ever, but, because events were developing on the pitch without participation of their favourite BATE, whom, for certain, they would have celebrated this house warming more cheerfully. All the same, the fourth match in succession was ended by the champions of the country in defeat (in the past round the previous victim of BATE

the Borisov-Arena. The match will indeed be breath-taking. The Minsk team, looking to the champion's title, support their ambitions with hard work, and the evidence of this is that recently Dinamo has received only their second defeat (4:1 in Bobruisk) and are leading in the championship. The game will be exciting and it looks like it will be hard for the Borisov players to defend their title. Thus, this head-to-head battle of contenders will be interesting for both sets of fans, whilst at the same time demonstrating to all fans how all the areas of a super-arena should be used.

## Long-awaited victory in focus

By Igor Grishin

**Belarusian racing cyclist of AG2R La Mondiale French team, Yevgeny Gutarovich, wins one-day road racing of the first category across roads of France — Grand Prix de la Somme**

Through the finishing spurt Yevgeny Gutarovich managed to outstrip a big group of his rivals (more than 20) and finished with the time: 4 hours 37 minutes 04 seconds. Following the results of one-day cycle race the second place went to Belgian Tom Van Asbroeck, followed by French Yannick Martinez.



Yevgeny Gutarovich has not won at international competitions since August 2012, when he won the first and second stages of Tour ENA. During his career, this Belarusian racing cyclist also won the second stage of the well-known Spanish multi-day cycling race — Vuelta a España (in 2010). Moreover, Gutarovich is the triple champion of Belarus (2008, 2009, and 2012) in group road race.

## Offshore in French Hyeres

By Igor Grishin

**Belarusian yachswoman Tatiana Drozdovskaya finishes second in the final ISAF Sailing World Cup regatta of the Laser Radial Olympic class**

Before the decisive race Tatiana Drozdovskaya held a leading position but yielded to Belgium's Evi Van Acker while bronze went to Marit Bouwmeester from the Netherlands. This season, Tatiana Drozdovskaya won one gold in the World Cup five stages in Melbourne and two silver medals (in Qingdao and Hyeres). In total, 79 yachswomen took part in the Laser Radial competitions, with 1,111 athletes from 59 countries competing in Hyeres.

Tatiana Drozdovskaya is Belarus' leading yachswoman in the Laser Radial Olympic class. She is a many-time world champion, World Cup winner and a finalist of the World and European championships. In 2000, she was awarded the status of the international master of sports. In 2007, she secured the world champion title. Tatiana Drozdovskaya represented Belarus at four Olympics (in 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012). She was 15th at the 2012 London Games.