

Victoria Azarenko's record high

Belarusian tennis prima climbs to third place in latest WTA rankings — her highest to date

Before the US Open Championship, Victoria was ranked fifth worldwide, having risen from fourth place. At this US Open, in New York, she reached the third round before losing to American finalist Serena Williams, who is now ranked 14th — up from 27th. US Open 2011 winner, Australia's Samantha Stosur, has moved from 10th place to 7th while Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark tops the rankings, followed by Russian Maria Sharapova (up from 4th place).

The WTA top five has only ever been occupied by one Belarusian previously: Natalia Zvereva in May 1989. From September 1991, she was seeded first for 124 weeks in the doubles event.

Scatter of European medals

Belarusian track and field squad brings home medals from European arenas

In Swiss Zurich, Anastasia Mironchik-Ivanova came second in the Brilliant League round, with a long jump result of 6.67m. In the shot-putt, Nadezhda Ostapchuk took silver, sending the shot 20.48m, while Natalia Mikhnevich was placed fourth, with a result of 18.95m.

In Rieti, Italy, Mironchik-Ivanova came third for her long jump of 6.57m while Veronika Shutkova was just 9cm behind, finishing fourth.

In Vilnius, our long distance runners did well, with Dmitry Grigoriev winning the 42.195km classical marathon in a time of 2 hours, 34 minutes, 40 seconds. Belarusian Igor Borisenok was placed sixth. About 300 marathon runners took part in the tournament which was hosted by the Lithuanian capital for the eighth time.

Dress rehearsal

In Tashkent, Belarusian Lyubov Cherkashina and Melita Stanyuta capture bronze at Rhythmic Gymnastics World Cup round

In the Uzbek capital, Lyubov Cherkashina took bronze three times — in the all-round, and in her exercises with the hoop and with the ball. Melita Stanyuta also took bronze, for her programme with the clubs.

Russia's Darya Dmitrieva claimed the largest number of medals: gold in the all-round and for her exercises with the hoop, the ball, and the ribbon, alongside silver for her composition with the clubs.

Overall, the event gathered representatives from 17 countries and was the final international round before the 2011 World Championship, being hosted by French Montpellier. Places at the 2012 London are at stake.

Two world 'golds' brought home from Turkish capital

Belarusian Greco-Roman wrestler Alim Selimov wins Senior Wrestling World Championship in under 84kg category, while Alexey Shemarov leads among under 120kg freestyle wrestlers



Alim Selimov defends his World Championship title in Istanbul

By Yuri Karpenko

In Istanbul, the Belarusian defeated Taichi Oka of Japan, Janarbek Kenjeev of Kyrgyzstan, Saman Tahmasebi of Azerbaijan, Neven Zugaj of Croatia and Rami Hietaniemi of Finland before facing Damian Janikowski of Poland in the final. His rival had beaten outstanding athletes such as Turkish Nazmi Avluca and Russian Alan Khugaev but the Belarusian was the favourite. Moreover, Selimov had defeated Janikowski previously.

In the first period, during their stand-up fight, the pair were

equally matched. However, in the mat wrestling, the Polish wrestler began to attack harder. Selimov defended well, earning a point, but succumbed to his opponent's lunge in the second period. The athletes then preserved their strength for the decisive third period, but seemed to play safe, as they had done in the first. When their stand-up time ran out, Janikowski was ahead on points, so was in a position to choose whether to attack or defend.

Janikowski chose defence, which he may have regretted later, although initially everything was



Alexey Shemarov (R) confidently performs in final fight

working well for him. Alim spent much time trying to find a way through his rival's defence and it seemed that the athlete from Śląsk Wrocław might claim victory. However, two seconds before the end of the fight, Selimov altered his approach, sending Janikowski reeling. The attack gave the Belarusian enough points for the World Championship gold medal — the second of his career (six years after his first, in 2005). Back then, sceptics called Selimov's victory in Budapest a fluke but his Istanbul victory proves his mastery. He'll now train hard to worthily represent Belarus

at the Olympics in London.

Selimov's victorious start was continued by Alexey Shemarov (under 120kg), who captured gold for his freestyle wrestling. Additionally, Shemarov — like Selimov — won a place at the 2012 London Olympics (six representatives from each Olympic weight category qualify). Istanbul silver medallist Elbek Tozhiev (55kg) — also won a place, as did Timofey Deinichenko (96kg) — who was placed fifth. Among the women, the only medal and Olympic place for Belarus went to Vasilisa Marzalyuk (under 72kg) — who won bronze.

Draw in Prague's Eden

Seven time Belarusian champion BATE draws 1:1 in first match of Champions League group round, in Prague — against Czech Viktoria

By Yuri Kovalev

The match schedule in the first round of the Champions League's group stage placed BATE in a tough position, with the focus on reaching the finals in February 2012. The draw against Viktoria from Plzeň gives us hope that Victor Goncharenko's trainees could move on further, not limiting to the European Cup group tournament. The Czech squad had won all of its previous six matches, defeating formidable Norwegian Rosenborg and Danish Copenhagen. Accordingly, the draw against 'victorious' Viktoria was a true achievement.

Naturally, the Belarusian team was anticipating a strict battle and their expectations proved accurate. From the very first minutes, Viktoria rushed into the attack. BATE tried hard to strike back without success beyond two or three passes in the centre of the field. In the middle of the first half, BATE began to



Renan Bressan (R) fights for the ball

make more headway but no goals ensued on either side. Alas, during extra time, Belarus lost its concentration, allowing Marek Bakoš to score.

In the second half, BATE Borisov appeared more enthusiastic, turning their aggressive at-

tacks into a goal during the 69th minute. A brilliant pass from Filipp Rudik was skilfully employed by Renan Bressan to equalise, with the score remaining 1:1 until the final whistle. Each team now has one precious point, with Belarus next due to face star-studded Barcelona and Milan.

The draw in the opening Champions League match between Viktoria and BATE was quite predictable, as BATE head coach Victor Goncharenko noted at the after-match press conference. He pointed out that he enjoyed the match and that his squad had performed well at Prague's Eden stadium. He added that the next match against Barcelona, on September 28th, hosted by Minsk, would present a real obstacle to BATE. After a draw of 2:2, in its home match against Milan, Barcelona is sure to come to Minsk determined to smash its Belarusian opponent.

Tradition of victory

By Kirill Pirogov

2011 E&A Cableski Championship ends with another triumph for Belarusian squad

Antalya, Turkey, saw the Belarusian team outstrip nearest rival Poland by 2,000 points — a huge gap in this kind of sport. In the individual events, Belarus earned 17 medals, including six gold. Additionally, Maria Veremchuk broke the world record in figure riding, while Julia Gromyko-Meier came second. The slalom bronze went to Irina Dymont and the trampoline jumping brought success to Irina Turets, who narrowly beat Gromyko-Meier. Julia was named the overall champion of the tournament, followed by Turets (the all-round) and Olga Pavlova (who also won the bronze for her jumping).

Among the men, German Simon Herrman set a fantastic world record in the slalom, ahead of Nikita Papakul. In the figure riding, Belarusians claimed every medal; Papakul took gold, after sharp competition from Ilya Lobkovich and Alexander Isaev. In the jumping, Sergey Bushin claimed first place, followed by Papakul, who also took gold in the all-round, followed by team mate Bushin.