

# And again Berlin ....

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Masters' International SPRINT GAMES, January 22nd - 23rd, 2011

And again Berlin ... Traditionally, we come to the capital of Germany at the Masters Cup. But now another thing - in 2011 Berlin became the capital of Sprint Games. At this competition came a record number of participants. Never before been so widely represented Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine.

Small, familiar yet from the 80s stadium "Sportforum", one of the world's first indoor ice rinks in good order and continues to take the competition of the highest rank, including the stages of World Cup.



And again Berlin ... In this city I come as my home, so many times visited here. As always, stay in home of my relatives, Tamara and Helge Böhme. Their care and hospitality helped overcome a terrible flu. I got sick back in Moscow, on the way to the airport drove to the drugstore and bought an antibiotic and, with a disapproving parting words of my wife, left for Germany.

On approach to Berlin visibility 100%. With envy, looking down on empty streets - Moscow traffic jams kill any desire to move in space. However, because of an illness that desire was gone even in Berlin, and instead of training spending time at home, hoping to be cured in one day.

Positive emotion, expectation of the start and anticipation of the meeting with friends - better drugs and to compete, I almost normal.



A pleasant surprise - at the rink meet Rene van Bernum, I know him since the meetings between national teams USSR and GDR. Has not changed!

In my age group (AG 45) favorites Ivar Njøs and my compatriot, Boris Orlov. Boris is eager to win and even win the first thousand meters, but Ivar, creating a solid margin on both 500m in excellent style

wins the final thousand. Boris and I can only heartily congratulate this great skater. Today - his day!

Games a very special event. There are no random winners, even if in the age group are not so many participants, such as among the AG80 and AG85. Ivan Yuzubkin, which celebrated during competition his 80-year anniversary and 85 year old (!) Ivan Pelipenko - real winners!

Competitions were organized perfectly. The friendly ladies at the start, giving bands, wished «Good luck» before each distance. A great new screen, which is perfectly visible even during the race.

Excellent preparation of high quality ice, which helps to establish many world records. Not without its unpleasant moments. Quite unexpectedly before the start on the distance of the second day of competitions, started races of members of the national team of Germany. I have always been for



the fact that in contests of masters involved active athletes (they need a race as the air!). But it would be better to warn about this participants that within 20 minutes skating on the warming line, not knowing when to start their races. And the second point: at the last day of competitions were a lot of disqualifications. I know that on last ISU

congress were adopted rules that tighten rules for crossing the lines separating the inner and outer tracks. But it seemed to me that at the beginning of the season after a series of scandals, it was agreed to moderate the use of these rules. At least at the European Championship in Collalbo and at the World Cup in Moscow, the judges were more loyal to the intersection of lines and even knocking chips, moreover it brings no benefit at a distance.

But let's not about the sad, especially because already it's time the most interesting event (except the races, of course!), awards ceremony. This is a magical time, a very brief moment when all the skaters feel the members of large families, when the age difference does not



matter, when friends understand each other, even with difficulty speaking a foreign language! The holiday could not fit in one hall of hospitable hotel "Kolumbus" and occupied the neighboring hall. Exchange of experiences, joint photos, exchange addresses - it seemed all of which should last indefinitely. But all good things come to the end. Empty halls, friends parted.

That's it. The holiday is over.

Goodbye, Berlin!



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