

# **SPRING 2023**

# **NEWSLETTER**

**June 2023**



**BIATHLON SASKATCHEWAN**

# President's Message

*This coming season is shaping up to be an excellent year with Nationals in Hinton in March 2024, a World Cup in Canmore plenty of Biathlon leading up to those events. We are currently in the process of developing a new strategic plan that will take us into the future. Thank-you to everyone that participated in the strategic plan survey!*

*We'll see you at the range and on the trails*

*Jaret McDonald, Wendy Pletz Co-chairs Biathlon SK*



# Head Coach's Season Wrap Up

## Canada Games

Excellent results with a bronze medal (Rhiann), four top five results, 2 more top 12 results, 6<sup>th</sup> in the mixed relay and overall cumulative points (fourth) in Mens and Womens. Athletes and coaches had an overall positive experience and our biathlon team was looked upon for leadership by other sports. And the mud was indeed very red.



## Key Takeaways

- our process for selections should be revamped at the start of next season to be sure it selects the correct athletes yet still provides for development
- Previous Sask Games experience was helpful for athlete resilience at CWG
- As always, we need to keep developing coaches at Comp Dev level, moving forward to prepare for the next games





## Nationals - Quebec City

Super awesome growth experience due to presence of National Team veterans, Logan and Janice who offered selfless mentorship. Four gold, three silver and two bronze was an unprecedented medal haul with 3 more top-six finishes and 3 top twelves.

From a coaching point of view, Sheri was amazing and has the trust of our athletes who performed up to expectations and above. She is ready to handle any situation... and has my endorsement moving forward.



Half of the podium was from Saskatchewan

(The Top Half by the way, not the bottom half)

## Key Takeaways

- having parents willing to help out was critical to our team's success
- Poutine is ineffective as a pre-race meal
- More waxing help would be suggested for a team this size
- next year's Nationals is in Hinton and we should start our planning now



## Sask Games

I have heard only good things about games and want to reinforce how critical (although challenging) it is to be involved in the games. Kudos to Chris, Derrick, James, Wendy and all the volunteers who made the event work. I recommend we establish a committee to see how biathlon is able to be involved in the next games.





# MAN/SASK CAMP:

In late May, athletes from our two provinces banded together in a collective mission to beat the “juggernaut provinces”.

The Dev Team (mostly athletes 12-13) and the HP Team (mostly athletes 14-18) roller-skied, biked, shot, and were tested most severely in this three day camp. A reciprocal camp is in the planning stages for late September in Manitoba. (It turns out that Coach Sheri is a beast at bowling singlehandedly crushing the sprits of Coach “Scissors”)





# How To Register For Biathlon Saskatchewan

Much like years past, individuals and clubs can register with Biathlon Canada until March 31, 2024. Note that Biathlon Saskatchewan has the lowest membership fees in the country. <https://www.biathloncanada.ca/membership>

- Provides insurance
- Allows you to access Biathlon Sask equipment, programming and expertise
- Required to Race in Sask Cups
- Required to attend training camps
- Required to attend practices
- Know what to do in case of Shark Sighting (see Canada Games Picture Below)



If you have any questions about registering, or are having issues with the registration process, please contact the Biathlon Canada Office at [info@biathloncanada.ca](mailto:info@biathloncanada.ca)

SPORTS FEATURE

# Athlete

## OF THE MONTH

By Gregger Achtemichuk | Photos supplied by Rhiann Arnold



Our "Athlete of the Month" is 17 year old **RHIANN ARNOLD**. She's in Grade 12 at Rosthern Junior College High school and ever since going to Saskatchewan Winter Games in 2018, she knew she wanted to go to the Canada Winter Games. This past month she did, representing Saskatchewan in the Biathlon and won 3rd in the Sprint, 4th in the individual, 5th in the pursuit and 6th in the mixed team relay securing the Bronze medal. We asked her some questions about what it takes to compete at this level.

**WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN YOUR SPORT?**

**RHIANN:** 2 things: the cold and the dedication. It is always very cold and I don't like being cold. The other is the dedication it takes to push yourself to immense

amounts of pain mentally and physically. But that is what separates the athletes, some can push themselves through and farther

**WHAT WAS THE BEST ADVICE YOU WERE EVER GIVEN?**

**RHIANN:** Keep the shooting and skiing separate. If the shooting goes badly and you keep thinking about it, you're skiing is going to suck. My coach also said, "Biathlon is hard it makes you cry." He says it is paralleled to life. It will be hard and you may cry but you got to keep going

**WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR SPORT?**

**RHIANN:** When you cross the finish line and your legs give out you have an amazing feeling of

## the GLAM bar

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accomplishment. You know you gave it your all and you can be proud of yourself. Seeing all the targets go down feels pretty great too!

**DESCRIBE A MISTAKE YOU MADE WHILE COMPETING AND HOW YOU OVERCAME IT.**

**RHIANN:** I once crossfired in a race. Which means that I shot at a target that was in another lane. And that means no matter how many you hit you have to do 5 penalty loops. It was an awful realization. Luckily for me, I had a nice lead and managed to still do my 5 penalty loops and stay in the lead. But like many things in Biathlon, you gotta just keep going. Either you quit the race, or you grit your teeth and get through it ●



greatway

## Equipment Fee (RIFLE FEES DUE NOW!)

<https://zone4.ca/register.asp?id=29030>

(Rifles fees that remain unpaid run the risk of being reassigned to other athletes)



Janice skiing to Gold in Quebec City



# Check Out Our Facebook page and website

For up to date news and pictures...

<https://www.facebook.com/BiathlonSaskatchewan>

For a copy of this newsletter and all other info about Biathlon Saskatchewan, check out our website at <http://www.biathlonsask.ca>

## Coaching Tip of The Month – Dryfiring Works

Biathletes must understand that a key component of great shooting success is related to dryfiring. You don't have to do it for long (10-15 minutes per session) but you need to do often (5 days per week)

It is best to do this at a time that makes it easy to do each day. (Same time – same place) so that dryfiring gets to be a habit.

## Announcing the 2023-24 Development Team

Biathlon Saskatchewan is excited to announce its 2023-24 Development Team:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>Club</b>
Eric Baillargeon	Edam	Blue Mountain Bullets
Emily Klym	Lumsden	Qu'Appelle Valley Nordic
Heidi Neifer	Corman Park	Saskatoon Wildlife Biathlon
Milla Neifer	Corman Park	Saskatoon Wildlife Biathlon
Reid Pearson	Saskatoon	Saskatoon Wildlife Biathlon
Astrin Selinger	Regina	Qu'Appelle Valley Nordic
Emma Storey	Saskatoon	Saskatoon Wildlife Biathlon
Danny Strauss	Simpson	Qu'Appelle Valley Nordic
Finn Tallon	Saskatoon	Saskatoon Wildlife Biathlon
Lily van Everdink	Lumsden	Qu'Appelle Valley Nordic

In the first month of the season, the team had a virtual kick-off meeting, begun strength and conditioning sessions at Craven Sports (Saskatoon and area) or Level 10 (Regina and area and virtual), and attended their first camp. As they prepare for the 2023-24 Calforex races in Alberta, they have demonstrated strong growth mindsets, are eager to improve their skills, and are fantastic teammates to one another.

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# Season Kickoff: Dryland Testing Ideas

With some clubs kicking off their seasons soon, athletes and coaches might want to consider how dryland testing might fit into preparing for races. While “testing” might sound like not very much fun at all, changing the language that you use to “challenges” can be incredibly motivating for athletes and help them to push their perceived limits to see what they are capable of. It also gives coaches feedback on whether their training methods are having the desired impact. Here are a few tried and true tests recommended by Biathlon Canada and Nordiq Canada:

## **Shooting Tests:**

1. Precision Shooting: a 20-shot precision shooting test for athletes aged 14 and under(\*) or a 60-shot precision shooting test for athletes age 15 and older. 10 shots per target. For the 60-shot test, 30 shots must be prone and 30 must be standing.
2. National Team Test, comprised of:
  - a. Precision Shooting: 20-shot precision shooting test – 10 shots prone and 10 shots standing, completed in 20 minutes; PLUS
  - b. One-shot Setups Test: Athletes will shoot one-shot setups until all the targets have been hit. This test requires hitting 5 targets in prone and 5 targets in standing; PLUS
  - c. 4x5 Shooting Challenge: Balancing accuracy and speed, athletes try to hit 20 targets (10 prone, 10 standing) as quickly as possible.

## **Fitness Tests:**

1. Running Tests: Both Biathlon Canada and Nordiq Canada recommend a 1 km running time trial for athletes aged 14 and under (\*) or a 3 km running time trial for athletes aged 15 and older.
2. Standing Broad Jump Test: Athletes attempt to jump as far as possible, landing on two feet and not falling backwards.
3. Pull-ups Test: Athletes attempt as many pullups as possible.

(\*) These tests are eligibility criteria for the Biathlon Sask. Development Team.

## **Testing tips:**

- It's important to make your tests repeatable. For example, if you do the running test, go to the same place to do it.
- It's important that athletes understand they get one crack at the challenge in a training session. Part of biathlon is performing under pressure, so give your athletes opportunities in training to perform under pressure.
- While athletes might be looking for a certain performance or outcome, it's important to bring them back to focussing on the process they need to follow to achieve the performance or outcome they want.
- Some athletes don't like the feeling that they are being compared to others, so frame the challenge that they are competing against themselves to set a PB.

More information about testing and other testing ideas can be found in [this video](#) from Biathlon Canada and [this document](#) from Nordiq Canada.

## Biathlon Sask Schedule (Tentative)

Aug	Tentative Camp
Sept	Coaching Clinic (Intro to Competition)
Sept 11	Doug Talk #1 Zoom – Rifle Cleaning Party (6:00-6:45) (Bring party hats, Spam, chips and dip)
Sept 29 to Oct 2	Man/Sask Camp #2 – Winnipeg and Kenora
Sept	HP Biathlon Camp
Sept	Biathlon SK AGM
Oct 16	Doug Talk #2 Zoom – Dryfiring (6:00-6:45)
Nov 1 to 5	Youth Olympic Games/World Cup/IBU Cup/Jr. IBU Cup Trials
Nov	Doug Talk #3 Zoom –
Nov	Frozen Thunder
Nov 13	Doug Talk #3 Zoom – Racing In Canmore (6:00-6:45)
Nov 25 to 26	Calforex #1 Canmore
Dec 2 to 3	Calforex #2 Canmore
Dec	SWF Cup Where there is snow
Dec	Back up date
Jan 3 to 7	World Junior/Youth Championships Trials
Jan 13 to 14	Calforex Cup #3 Camrose
Jan	SWF Cup
Feb	SWF Cup
Feb 24 to 25	Calforex Cup #5 Edmonton
Mar	Provincials
Mar 26 to 31	National Biathlon Championships Hinton