



BIATHLON SASKATCHEWAN

Spring Newsletter

May 2024



TEAM SASK AT NATIONALS 2024
PHOTO COURTESY ADELE GRUNDAHL

Here's what has happened in 2023-24 and what's to come!

Welcome to our end-of-season newsletter! It's hard to believe another season is in the books, and we're really looking forward to building on the good work done this year as we look ahead to 2024-25.

Firstly, we would like to express our gratitude to all the volunteers who have helped bring biathlon to life in their communities. The good work of coaches, groomers, officials, board members, and event organizers does not go unnoticed. Generously sharing your time and talent helps keep biathlon programs and events running smoothly and effectively.

We are also extremely thankful for the equipment loans and grants from Biathlon Canada designed to bring biathlon to urban areas and underserved communities. The versatility of the EcoAims optical rifles will allow us to maximize our reach and grow our sport.

A healthy and vibrant grassroots movement provides the springboard to high performance. We were fortunate that the highest level of our sport, the World Cup, made its way to Canada for the last events of the season. The competitions were fast, the weather was fantastic, and the inspiration Team Canada and the other nations provided to our young athletes was invaluable.

Finally, we want to remind everyone that biathletes are made in the summer! As we look forward to 2024-25, we encourage you to hike, bike, swim, paddle, run, or rollerski. Happy exploring!

Enjoy this month's newsletter!

*Biathlon
Saskatchewan*

In this newsletter
you can expect:

Co-Presidents
Message'

Provincial
Coach's
Message

Nationals Re-
cap

Try Biathlon

Getting ready
for 2024-25

Season
Snapshots



PHOTO COURTESY AMELIA MCDONALD



PHOTO COURTESY WENDY PLETZ

Co-Presidents' Message

by Jaret MacDonald and Wendy Pletz

The Biathlon Saskatchewan Board would like to thank the Biathlon community for making this season so successful! As highlighted throughout this newsletter athlete performances and club initiatives have been exceptional this year. Kudos go to Biathlon Saskatchewan coaches, Doug Sylvester, Sheri Selinger and Darwin Bonk for providing opportunities for athletes of all ages to set and reach their goals in this sport and to obtain life skills that will serve them well beyond their years in biathlon. We also welcome new coaches and officials into biathlon and congratulations to those that have pursued higher levels of certification. You make the community stronger and more resilient! Thank-you!

We would also like to acknowledge James Froh for leading the development the new Biathlon Saskatchewan Strategic Blueprint (1) that will guide our organization over the next 5 years. James condensed the results of many focus groups, surveys and independent research to distill goals and objectives in the areas of reconciliation, equality, accessibility, safety, governance and leadership. We look forward to implementing new actions to continue to grow and develop Biathlon within Saskatchewan as we work towards our vision:

Biathlon Saskatchewan will grow the sport of biathlon provincially by increasing sport awareness, enhancing athletes', coaches', and officials' skill and personal development while building safe, resilient and sustainable clubs.

SaskSport recently rolled out a new Safe Sport Policy Manual (2) for incorporation across all sports within Saskatchewan and it has been adopted by Biathlon Saskatchewan as of March 31, 2024. The manual updates existing policies to align them with a safe sport focus and presents new policies and commitments such as adherence to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport and new Athlete Protection, Social Media, Screening and Investigations Policies. Stay tuned for additional communication and information on the requirements and responsibilities for Directors, Employees, Athletes, Coaches, Parents and Volunteers.

We wish everyone a great summer holiday season and look forward to another exciting year!

Jaret MacDonald
Jaret MacDonald
Co-President

Wendy Pletz
Wendy Pletz
Co-President

(1) Find a summary of the Strategic Blueprint on page 7 of this newsletter and the complete document at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55ef4972e4b00388d2f6a508/t/653672fbecf1151363d6e4a4/1698067196053/Oct+2+2023+BiSK+Strategic+Framework+2023-2027.pdf>

(2) Find the Safe Sport Policy Manual on our website at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55ef4972e4b00388d2f6a508/t/66047a9afac045468721a079/1711569573694/Biathlon+Sask+Safe+Sport+Policy+Manual+2024+Mar12+FINAL.pdf>



Provincial Coach's Message

Highlights this year were many. Here are a few that stood out. Watching Team Sask shoot clean at National Team Trials. Watching Team Sask on the World Cup - especially in the relays. Watching Team Sask shoot clean 15/15 at a Calforex Cup in a Dev Category. Watching Team Sask podium at Calforex Cups (even the top step - even a podium sweep). Watching Team Sask watching Lisa Vittozzi load and shoot her spare at World Champs and then predicting her two prone misses in the mass start by watching her fail to observe the wind-flags in Canmore. Watching JT Boe shoot his first standing in the mass start at the World Cup in Canmore. Watching Team Sask at the World Cup volunteering and generally being awesome (medal presenters even). Getting positive feedback from the President of the IBU on my Biathlon Song. Watching a team be built for a future "Nashionals". Meeting face-to-face with Bullwinkle the Moose and his buddy Pete the Porcupine out skiing at Finlayson Island. Having hundreds of future Biathletes try out our new Eco Rifles guided by our enthusiastic coaches and athletes. Watching a ton of top performances at Canadian Championships - 8 individual medals, a couple relay bronze medals and a bunch of top 5 performances. Watching Team Sask and Team Manitoba hanging out at Nationals further building relationships established at camps this season. Watching Team Sask shoot 20 for 20 PPSS) in 40 km wind at a SWF Cup and win my car (also known as the Millennium Falcon - it made the Kessel run in under 14 Parsecs). Watching Nadia Moser grooving before the relay handoff at World Champs. Participating in the first ever Canadian National Biathlon Championship's Easter Bunny Hunt. Learning that envy is the enemy of happiness and gratitude is the antidote to envy. Watching Team Sask earn "Top Gun" status at Nationals. Seeing Team Sask be presented with World Cup bibs (even an inaugural WC bib). And of course, owning the dance floor.

And now it's time for a much-needed break.

The mental relief from such a demanding sport is even more important than the physical break and is important for families, coaches and athletes and volunteers.

So, I encourage us all to be mindful of resting, recharging and recovering before we get into next season. To me that includes doing things that are not related to biathlon - doing other sports, nurturing other passions and setting new goals. (Activities that are diverse help to build resilience and resilience is key to prolonged success) Personally, I will be trying to focus on running, biking and swimming as I prepare for my 40th Frank Dunn Triathlon in August and yet try not to overtrain at the same time. I also have a few musical projects on the go and want to be sure that I don't take the fun out of something I love by concentrating on too many outcome-based music goals and failing to be flexible and adaptive in my approach. Ideas for another book also continue to percolate.

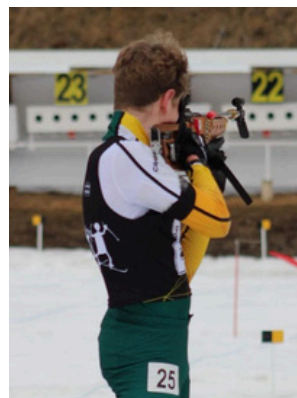
Thanks everyone for an awesome year.

Doug Sylvester
Doug Sylvester
Provincial Coach

Nationals Re-Cap

16 athletes and 3 coaches represented Saskatchewan at Nationals in Hinton, AB from March 25 to 31. The team laid it all out the tracks and in the range for the last competitions of the season. The team's training this season lifted them to personal bests and competitive results. We're grateful for the support of the family and friends who brought their flags and cowbells to cheer the team on!

NATIONALS HIGHLIGHTS
PHOTOS COURTESY AMELIA MCDONALD



Try Biathlon Events

by Sheri Adams-Selinger

Biathlon Canada and Nordiq Canada partnered up in 2023-24 with the aim to bring biathlon and cross-country skiing to communities across the country with their Community Sport for All Initiatives. Biathlon Saskatchewan was the grateful recipient of 4 loaned EcoAims optical rifles and a grant to bring biathlon to equity-deserving populations throughout the province. EcoAims reduce barriers to participation because multiple participants can easily share them and they can be used in urban areas that may not have a range facility.

Try Biathlon events were delivered in Hudson Bay, Moose Jaw, Langham (as part of Nordiq Canada's national Ski Playground tour) and Regina.

If your club or community is interested in bringing the EcoAims to a Try Biathlon event or adding biathlon programming to existing youth cross-country ski programming, please contact Sheri Adams-Selinger at sadamsselinger5@gmail.com.



TRY BIATHLON - MOOSE JAW
PHOTO COURTESY MOOSE JAW BIATHLON CLUB

Try Biathlon at SSWA Moose Jaw Gun Show

Volunteers from the Moose Jaw Biathlon Club shared biathlon at the South Saskatchewan Wildlife Association Moose Jaw Gun Show. Roughly 150 youth tried biathlon at the two-day event.



THE KID EXPO - REGINA
PHOTO COURTESY QVN

Try Biathlon at Kid Expo in Regina

QVN Volunteers saw non-stop action at The Kid Expo, where they helped between 250 and 300 youth and adults try out the EcoAims and learn about the club's programs.



SKI PLAYGROUND - RIVER RIDGE
PHOTO COURTESY RIVER RIDGE

Ski Playground and Try Biathlon at River Ridge

River Ridge Ski Club was one of five hosts across the country for Nordiq Canada's Ski Playground. Olympian Jesse Cockney from Nordiq Canada was assisted by volunteers from Saskatoon Wildlife Biathlon Club who helped eager participants learn how to shoot, among other activities designed to introduce Nordic sports as a sport for life option.

Getting Ready for 2024-25



BIATHLON ESTERHAZY
PHOTO COURTESY BIATHLON SASK

Memberships

The 2024-25 membership year started April 1, 2024. Athletes, coaches and volunteers - please purchase your Biathlon Canada and Biathlon Saskatchewan memberships prior to joining any biathlon activity. Similarly, all clubs should complete the club registration before starting any activity.

<https://www.biathloncanada.ca/membership>



DUCK DERBY PARADE
PHOTO COURTESY SARAH KLYM

Rollerski Ready

Pro tips for getting ready for rollerski season:

- Make sure you have a helmet that fits
- Change out your pole tips to carbide tips and sharpen them
- Jog or bike your route before rollerskiing it to check for hazards
- Always wear high visibility clothing
- Stay off busy roads
- Practice stopping a few times before heading out



FROZEN THUNDER CAMP
PHOTO COURTESY SHERI ADAMS-SELINGER

Provincial Teams

Team fees for those selected to 2024-25 provincial teams are due prior to participating in camps, strength training or other provincial team activities.

<https://zone4.ca/register.asp?id=35153>



RIFLES AT SWF CUP
PHOTO COURTESY QVN

Equipment Care

April and May are a great time to:

- Thoroughly clean your rifle - regular cleaning is a requirement of all who rent their rifle from Biathlon Saskatchewan
- Brush-clean your skis one last time and apply storage wax (no need to scrape it off!)



ON SNOW IN SASKATOON
PHOTO COURTESY KERRY HECKER

Camps

Provincial Team camp dates:

- **Spring Camp:** May 9 - 12, Blue Mountain
- **Summer Camp:** July 4 - 7, Canmore
- **Pre-trials camp** (for provincial team members attending November Trials): Oct 29 - Nov 3, Canmore
- **On-snow camp** (for provincial team members not attending November Trials): tentatively scheduled for Nov. 26 - Dec 1, Canmore

Biathlon Canada 24-25 Race Schedule

November Trials: Nov. 5-9, Canmore

NorAm: Nov. 29 - Dec. 1, Canmore

NorAm: Dec. 13-15, Sovereign Lake

YJWCH Trials: Jan 7-11, Caledonia Nordic

NorAm: Jan. 31-Feb. 2, TBD

Westerns: Feb. 27-Mar. 2, Whistler

Nationals: Mar. 17-22, Valcartier

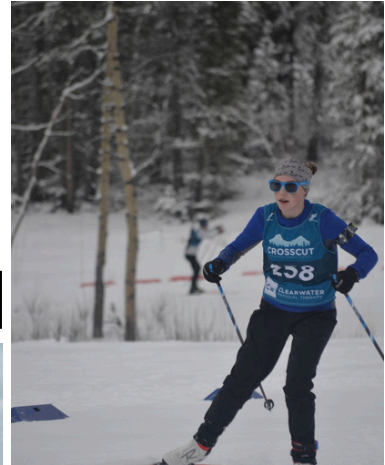
STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT SNAPSHOT

<i>VISION - Biathlon Saskatchewan will grow the sport of biathlon provincially by increasing sport awareness, enhancing athletes', coaches', and officials' skill and personal development while building safe, resilient and sustainable clubs.</i>			
<i>MISSION - Biathlon Saskatchewan's mission is to encourage all stages of the athlete development model by promoting, developing, supporting and supervising ideal conditions for success, in harmony with our clubs and partners.</i>			
<i>SUCCESS FACTORS & GUIDING PRINCIPLES</i>	FOCUS AREAS		
	Athlete Development	Capacity for Sport	Sport in Community
<i>Contribute actively to reconciliation in sport</i>	Engage Indigenous families and athletes in the sport of biathlon.	Implement relevant safe sport practices with volunteers to reduce stigma and increase cultural safety for Indigenous members.	Meaningful and respectful relations to support Indigenous community engagement.
<i>Promote equitable participation and accessibility in sport</i>	Create entry pathways for immigrant and rural families and athletes. Strengthen master athlete participation in biathlon. Strengthen transition supports for youth athletes in biathlon.	Foster club development of facilities and coaches to improve participation of Para Nordic athletes in biathlon.	Strengthen collaboration with other sport and community groups. Increase the quantity and quality of Biathlon Saskatchewan communications with members, partners, sponsors and the public.
<i>Create healthy and safe sport environments</i>	Strengthen cultural safety and safe sport in biathlon.	Frequent review of Biathlon Saskatchewan policies to create, strengthen and maintain cultural safety and safe sport in biathlon.	Increase volunteer access to credible provincial and national safe sport resources.
<i>Foster effective governance and trustworthy leadership in sport</i>	Enhance quality of training and competition opportunities for athletes, coaches and officials. Maintain Team Saskatchewan performance at national and Canada Winter Games competitions.	To grow biathlon, procure and increase new rifles for Saskatchewan's rental rifle program and establish a regular maintenance program for existing inventory.	Establish meaningful First Nations and Metis land acknowledgements that recognize the importance of traditional lands on which biathletes train and compete. Increase memberships to grow biathlon in Saskatchewan. Engage partners to identify a club for development of a second biathlon training center of excellence in central Saskatchewan.

Season Snapshots



SPRING CAMP
PHOTO COURTESY SHERI ADAMS-SELINGER



BANGTAIL BIATHLON IN MONTANA
PHOTO COURTESY SADIE KLYM



PURSUIT - PROVINCIALS
PHOTO COURTESY QVN



MAN/SASK CAMP
PHOTO COURTESY SHERI ADAMS-SELINGER



CALFOREX RACE 1
PHOTO COURTESY DOUG STEPHEN



FROZEN THUNDER
PHOTO COURTESY PETR NEMECEK



BIATHLON FAMILY
PHOTO COURTESY QVN



WORLD CUP FANS
PHOTO COURTESY SARAH KLYM




WORLD CUP FANS
PHOTO COURTESY SARAH KLYM



WORLD CUP FANS
PHOTO COURTESY KERRY HECKER

Thank you for reading!

 <p>BIATHLON SASKATCHEWAN</p>	<p>sask.ski@sasktel.net</p>
<p>biathlonsask.ca</p>	<p>1870 Lorne Street Regina, SK S4P 2L7</p>