



**Aiming for Excellence**

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## **President's Report**

Another exciting year of biathlon will soon be upon us and as I'm sure you are all aware, work is progressing on the range and facility upgrades at the Canmore Nordic Center (CNC). This is of course exciting because Canmore will be host to the final World Cup biathlon event of the season next March 11-17, 2024.

The work in Canmore has been ongoing all summer and has caused some disruption to range access there and has forced the Bow Valley based clubs and the National Team to do their shooting training at the Ruedi Setz biathlon range up at Mount Shark.

Likewise, we are still unsure how this project might affect our ability to host races at the CNC this season. Currently, Calforex Cup #1 – Nov 25-26 and Calforex Cup #2 – Dec 2-3 are scheduled to take place in Canmore. I know Elmar has been in touch with other zone clubs to have alternate venues potentially available if we need to shuffle the calendar on short notice and we ask for your patience and understanding as we navigate this challenge.

As for program development – Biathlon Alberta has identified three key initiatives for the 2023/24 season:

1. Develop or advance programs aimed at growing participation in biathlon
2. Development of the Shooting Stars Program
3. Minority inclusion programs - continue with the Indigenous outreach program in cooperation with Spirit North
4. Progress para biathlon participation in the provincial race series
5. FIS points eligibility for para biathlon competitions
6. Work toward obtaining FIS point eligibility in para biathlon categories for provincial race series
7. Top performances at the Canadian Biathlon National Championships.



## **Develop Programs to Grow Participation in Biathlon**

At the beginning of the 2022-23 season Biathlon Alberta introduced the nomination criteria for a new provincial team targeting athletes born between 2005 and 2008 (ages 14 - 17). [Announcement HERE.](#)

The goal is to grow this program over the upcoming years and provide the athletes with camp and race opportunities. For the 2023-24 season the Shooting Stars Team athletes will have access to three training camps of which two will be during the summer and one on snow. The intent is to grow the program and athlete support moving forward as well as to strengthen the support network that Alberta's performance biathletes can utilize throughout their athletic career.

In addition, Biathlon Alberta has been working with Spirit North since 2021 to establish a regular biathlon program within their existing cross country ski programs. For the 2023-24 season, we will focus on the schools that are located in the greater Bow Valley area and have a successful history of collaboration with Spirit North to advance this initiative. Our goal is to use the experiences gained to grow this program and operate more efficiently to serve a broader group of Indigenous communities in the future.

## **Obtaining FIS Point Eligibility in Para Biathlon for Provincial Race Series**

Work has begun to qualify the Calforex Cup race in Canmore to obtain status as an FIS para biathlon event. This would permit eligible athletes to collect valuable FIS points for their world cup ranking. This also represents an opportunity to inspire more local participation in the para categories given the expected higher level of participation from the country's top para-athletes. We see this as an important step to showcase and introduce biathlon to more potential para-athletes.

## **Top performances at the Canadian Biathlon National Championships**

The 2023-24 National Championships will be held in Hinton Alberta and the goal will be to welcome all Canadian biathletes to Alberta. With home field advantage, we aim to hold our overall position as the top province in the sport of biathlon and continue to grow the sport and success that our athletes have demonstrated on a national and international level.



## **Safe Sport Policy**

Not included in the three key initiatives but of critical importance is the launching of Biathlon Alberta's Safe Sport Policy. If you don't hear from us before the AGM on this, you will very soon. We are in the final stages of launching our Safe Sport Policy and communication around this important initiative. We will of course be using Biathlon Canada's policies as our guide but may expand on certain aspects of the program given our involvement with younger aged athletes.

Thank you for your support, time, and feedback. It's going to be a great year and I look forward to seeing everyone out on snow! In the meantime, be kind to others and let's have fun! I am always keen to hear from you, especially if you have any ideas about how we might improve and grow the sport of biathlon in Alberta!

Sincerely,  
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