

## **Introducing Bay Nordic Biathlon Program 2021-22 Season**

Welcome to Bay Nordic Biathlon! Despite the challenges of COVID-19, our 2020-21 season was a great success with more new athletes joining the returning athletes of the previous year. Bay Nordic biathletes competed locally, within the state, and even at national events. We had growth in both youth and adults – and our biathletes told us they had a great time as part of Bay Nordic Biathlon.

With growth come challenges, including people joining the program throughout the season, which placed some strain on our ability to coach all athletes during practices. We're introducing a few changes for this season to be sure all participants have a great experience. More on this below.

### Program leadership team

With program growth we're expanding leadership support for our athletes:

**Brian Gustin** continues as Program Director and Head Coach for the 2021 season. He is joined again this year by **Gregg Pattison** who will serve as performance coach (and uber-personal competitor). **John Jones**, who joined the program last year, will again serve as Range Director and Head Shooting Instructor. Mark Scheffler joined the program as a competitor last season, and in addition to training to ski faster and shoot straighter this year, he is also taking on the role of Program Coordinator supporting Brian. This committed group of capable volunteer leaders has great support from many others working with the program.

We are introducing several changes relative to program operations. The key drivers of these changes are to improve communications, simplify program administration, and most importantly, to make sure all program participants are fully supported in their biathlon journey and have a great experience in the program.

### Bay Nordic Biathlon communications

As our program continues to mature, we want to simplify how we connect with each other. This season we're piloting the TeamSnap application (web and mobile versions) for our program calendar, communications from the program to biathletes, and to allow biathletes to communicate with program leaders and each other. This app is available to all program participants and parents/guardians of youth participants. To sign up for the app, simply send a request to [arcadahunter28@gmail.com](mailto:arcadahunter28@gmail.com).

### How the 2021-22 season will work

There are three components to the program this year: pre-season training, core season training, and competition. Biathlon program training focuses on range safety, athlete skills transitioning into and departing the range, and shooting skills. Two notes:

- The biathlon program does not focus on general ski technique training; the Bay Nordic Ski Club offers a variety of ski-specific training as do organizations such as CXC and others.
- Unless otherwise indicated, biathlon program training takes place at the Brown County Shooting Range off Brown Road north of the Reforestation Camp.

**Pre-season** runs Jul 1-Sep 30 and has two components:

- Returning athletes can practice Sundays at 9 a.m. and/or Wednesdays at 5:00 pm. Coaching will be provided. Pre-season is already included in the fee you paid in January 2021.
  - Those wanting to try out biathlon can come to Sunday and Wednesday practices and will have access to club rifles, ammunition, targets and other range equipment and supplies, as well as beginner range/shooting instructions. Costs to try out biathlon is \$80 for four sessions, including coaching, supplies, use of a club rifle and ammunition. If you join the program by Sep 30 your \$80 fee will be credited against the annual fee.

**Core season** runs Oct 1 through spring melt. Practices for core season biathletes will again be Sunday mornings and Wed evenings.

Changes for 2021-22:

- This season biathletes must be signed up by Sep 30 to participate in the core program; athletes will not be able to join the program after Oct 1. While we were excited at the interest in biathlon from new folks through the season last year, the downside was coaches often needed to spend significant time with new or try-out athletes throughout December, January and February taking away time from those who were full program participants. We want to make sure all biathletes receive the coaching support, which is part of their program fee.
- As most people are aware, ammunition prices have gone up considerably. Ammo is hard to find, and supply is not forecast to improve. We are taking a new approach to how providing ammo in the program as described below.
- Fees for core season are as follows (note that this season we will have no by-the-practice fee structure):
  - Biathlon program fees of **\$225** provide athletes access to club rifles, all range equipment and includes 1,000 rounds of ammunition. Athletes will receive their ammunition allocation for the season at the first practice after their fees are paid and are responsible for storing their ammunition and bringing the appropriate amount to practices and competitions. If biathletes shoot more than is provided through the program fee, they are responsible for sourcing their own additional ammunition.
  - **To sign up for core season email Mark Scheffler at acadiahunter28.com and he will invoice you the appropriate fee for your status.**
    - Athletes who paid their 2021 calendar year fee will be credited \$45 as we move to a biathlon season fee. You will be invoiced \$180.00.
    - Those who paid the \$80 fee to try the program this pre-season will be credited \$80, so you will be invoiced \$145.

**Competition** sponsored by Bay Nordic Biathlon is open to both core program participants and “try-out” participants. This includes No-Sno and on snow events. Fees for events will be set and published as the calendar is set.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

**Q. I have never shot a rifle before; can I still try biathlon?**

A. Absolutely! We have trained instructors who will help you be safe, comfortable, and competent handling a biathlon rifle.

**Q. Can I use my own rifle?**

A. Rifles used in biathlon must meet the following criteria:

- .22LR caliber
- Bolt action or single shot – no semi-automatic rifles allowed
- Maximum magazine capacity of 5 rounds
- No optical/glass sights

If your rifle meets these specifications and is approved for use by our rangemaster you're welcome to use it on the range.

**Q. I am a beginner skier but am an experienced shooter, can I still try biathlon?**

A. We'd love to have you try biathlon! We have biathletes of all ages and athletic ability in our program. While our instruction focuses on ski technique while entering, on and leaving the range, we can point you to resources to help you improve your skiing itself – Bay Nordic Ski Club is our number one recommendation!

**Q. How old do you need to be to try Biathlon?**

A. At present the age for participation in the Bay Nordic Biathlon program is 12 years of age.

**Q. What are No-Sno events?**

While biathlon started as a winter sport and is governed by the International Biathlon Union as the combination of cross-country skiing and shooting, many biathletes enjoy combining summer sports with shooting. Our club offers events where trail running, or mountain biking are substituted for snow skiing. There are other variations as well. Come and try them out!