



Australian Biathlon Partners and Supporters



Pathway to Paralympics

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) has defined classes of impairment and an adjusted time formula is used to determine the overall place of each competitor relative to other racers. The formula assigns a percentage to each competitor based on the individual's particular class, with his actual time multiplied by this percentage to determine the adjusted finishing time.



Resources

Classification

www.paralympic.org/classification

www.paralympic.org/nordic-skiing/rules-and-regulations/classification

IPC Para-Biathlon Race Calendar

www.paralympic.org/nordic-skiing/calendar-results

James Millar's Paralympian Bio

www.paralympic.org/nordic-skiing/athletes/bios

About Biathlon for Athletes with Impairment

www.paralympic.org/nordic-skiing/about

Australian Biathlon Association

www.biathlon.asn.au

HOTHAM



**fast
cool
extreme**



**AUSTRALIAN
PARA BIATHLON**

About Australian Para-Biathlon

Welcome to biathlon in Australia! Biathlon is a sport that combines the skills of endurance in skiing with the cool, calm demeanour required for target shooting. While biathlon is a winter snow sport, in Australia, this is an all year round activity with summer biathlon growing in popularity with the use of a laser biathlon system that does not require a special firing range.

So, what's Biathlon and Para-Biathlon?

Here's a simple explanation of biathlon – athletes ski a loop, come into an on-snow shooting range, where they shoot at an array of five targets. For every missed target, either a penalty lap is skied or there's a minute added to their ski time. They then go off to ski another loop, return into the range to shoot another series. The athlete would ski five loops for long races and three for short races. The winner is the person with the fastest time.

At our summer and autumn biathlon events we use a laser biathlon system which is not restricted to use only at licensed rifle ranges; you can find our laser biathlon events in metropolitan Melbourne, Wodonga in North East Victoria and at Lake Mountain. In NSW, laser biathlon is set up for use close to the Perisher Nordic Centre.

Come and try

This laser biathlon system is ideal for para-biathletes who want to try out the sport without investing in the initial outlays for a high precision air rifle, cross country skis and roller skis.

Para-biathletes would get around as your disability allows, come into the laser range, lie prone on special biathlon mats and shoot at laser targets at a 10 m distance. The tracks at our events are bitumen and are suitable for wheelchairs as well.

Call us on 0409 440 745 to enquire about our summer biathlon laser programs, or visit Australian Biathlon's website: www.biathlon.asn.au At this time, we're unable to assist with electronic rifles with acoustic frequencies for vision impaired biathlon.



The next step

But how do you learn to cross country ski and what about our short winters?

When you're ready to extend yourself for the winter sport, come and try cross country skiing. That's how serious cross country skiers train through out the entire year – when there's snow they're on skis and in the off-season which is the remaining 10 months of the year, they're on roller skis.

Roller skis have long bases with wheels at each end. The poles are the usual cross country skiing poles with the snow-baskets removed and the tips replaced with "road tips" for use on bitumen.

The ski boot is clipped into the binding on the roller ski at the toe only, somewhat like a modern "clap" ice skate. The entire process of roller skiing mimics closely a cross country skate technique. It's an excellent sport for Aussies, as unlike downhill skiing, you don't need snow or steep slopes to practise technique.

Some standing para-cross country skiers, such as above ankle amputees, screw the prosthesis into the base of a ski boot which then clips on to the ski or roller ski. We're able to help you locate a cross country ski instructor at most major metropolitan centres. They instruct on-snow in winter, and in the off-season may be available for roller ski instruction.

For those in wheelchairs, you'd use a sit-ski when on-snow. This sport is ideal for those with strong upper-bodies such as rowers. In fact, Ms Oksana Masters, the US para-biathlete and bronze medalist at the 2014 Sochi Paralympics for sit-ski cross country skiing, only started skiing in 2012! Oksana was a bronze medalist at the 2012 London Paralympics in rowing.

Para-biathlon

The races are incredibly exciting to watch as lead positions can change within seconds depending on shooting accuracy.

Here are two para-biathlon race formats:

Short race: 7.5km (3 loops / 2 mags). Each loop is 2.5 km and ski three loops visiting the range twice, and you ski a penalty loop for each target missed. The average loop is 80 to 120 metres.

Long race: 12.5km (5 loops / 4 mags). The courses vary between 7.5 to 12.5km with each loop at 2.5 km. For long races 1 minute is added to time for each missed target.

When the terrain allows for varying disabilities, the course Technical Director may set different 2.5km loops for sit and standing competitors, as standing competitors can climb steeper hills that the sit category can't.

Practice

Practice makes perfect and biathletes no matter able bodied or disabled, practise dry-firing at home. We do our dry-firing in our lounge room with targets placed on the wall at the end of the room. It's important to practise to get the feel of the firearm, get



into the same position as quickly as possible and to aim quickly and accurately. The athlete would practise shooting at his local range twice weekly and dry firing at least three times weekly. Break up the target practice with core exercises, run, or do star jumps to get the heart rate up. Find a local park with walking or cycling paths to practise roller skiing.

Besides endurance training, be sure to work on your core. Core strength prevents the body swinging to compensate for the disability.

Development camps

When you're ready for a step up, come along to one of our development camps and visit us at the on-snow range, Whiskey Flat and try cross country skiing with laser shooting. Athletes from all over the country attend our annual development camp in July each year and para-biathletes are most welcome to join in.

Winter races

There are usually 4 weekends of races where you can put together your skills of skiing and target shooting. Our Whiskey Flat range caters for both .22 calibre firearms and the laser biathlon system.

Some athletes head off to Europe to train and compete during the Northern Hemisphere winter and you don't need to be on the National Team to enjoy biathlon overseas.