



## **Club Questionnaire: Team Soldier Hollow**

**Q: Share some Club highlights from this past season.... for example: Best or most well attended events; fun practice sessions/drills; social events/club building activities, etc).**

A: Team SOHO Highlights from the past season:

Summer Nationals - we had our first national champion that I know of with Emily Campbell taking the win in the pursuit race despite starting in 10th place!

We had our largest programs in history with roughly 270 skiers and half being exposed to biathlon.

We did a meet and greet with Johannes Klaebo, Maja Dahlquist, and Kevin Bolger inspiring our athletes.

We have a fall kick off event with guest speaker Dr. Travis Dorsch sharing his research and personal experience on how to keep youth engaged in sport for the long hall.

**Q: Highlight a story (or two) of club participants who improved the most, and/or were able to participate in high level competition this past season.**

A: It seems like every year Team SOHO is making big jumps in performance. This year we saw Alumni Vincent Bonacci get a world cup start and he almost won the mass start at summer nationals. We had Emily Cambell make the Youth Junior World Championships Team last winter. We also have athletes who are completely under the radar right now who are making major improvements this year like Silvester Williams, Thomas Vandekamp, Sarah Hottle, Gabri Harris, and the Radu brothers. Keep an eye out for these athletes at trials this year and at our Intermountain division junior national qualifiers.

**Q: Share one secret to your success as a club, or something you consider to be Best Practice.**

A: We celebrate everyone's improvements, not just who gets the best results. It's no secret there is a genetic component in our sport (something athletes can't control) but there are a lot of things athletes are in charge of like how they react to failure/defeat, the weather, how they interact with their teammates or strangers. With our mission of creating champions in sport and

life we try to focus on the controllables and reward behaviors that will help our athletes be successful in life.

Our club does this with our athlete trajectory system where athletes are placed in a level on a 1-10 scale based on their competencies and then we encourage the athletes to work on themselves to reach the level they want to achieve in our sport. Every season we have a graduation ceremony where we share with the athletes and their families what each athlete has learned the past season. This is a really new program for us so it's mostly being implemented in our younger age groups right now but it will be cool to see how it evolves after our first athletes make it through the whole system. One thing we also try and do is expose any athlete in our programs that is 10 or older to try out biathlon in the hopes that they sign up for it next season.

**Q: Share either some history related to your club, or some plans or excitement for where your club is headed.**

A: I think the biggest piece of history is that in the last 6 years our club under the leadership of Zach Hall has grown from 30-40 total athletes to 270 total athletes. Thanks Zach! Now the focus is shifting to improving the quality of our programs without increasing the costs, and investing in athlete retention. We also have big plans in the next 3-5 years to develop a pro/elite team as we have seen that model work great at places like Stratton, Sun Valley, APU, Craftbury etc... When young athletes can train next to the best in the country it's so motivational to that next generation of skiers and biathletes.

**Q: How does your club attract new members/XC skiers?**

A: A few different ways. Our focus is on gathering big numbers in our Kickers and Gliders Program (6-11 year olds) and retaining them through quality programming. We do this by providing transportation to Soldier Hollow after school and working with local school leadership to promote our programs. We also have other ways to get into our programs. We have a cool program with the local charter school to ski for gym class twice a week in the winter and this brings a lot of kids into our programs. We also try to work with the local latinx community to have that large part of our local community (nearly 20% of our population) be represented in our ski community. We do this with help from the Wasatch Community Foundation and our Healthy Communities Fund. A program that has really helped us in getting more high schoolers out skiing is starting a mountain bike club team that starts with 8 weeks of cross country skiing where they get exposed to some free ski races and biathlon. Last year this brought nearly 20 athletes who had never skied before into our programs and they are reporting their best ever results in bike races ever!

**Q: Has your club had success finding grant funding? If yes, what grants?**

A: We have gotten some local grants in the past but our team is a part of the much larger Utah Olympic Legacy Foundation and the foundation has one person specifically looking to find grants for our team and other venues teams. Due to this we unfortunately can't help other clubs with great locations to find grants but in our limited experience local community foundations are a great place to start.

**Q: Share if your club has done any fundraising or community-related events. If so, how did it go and what did it take to organize?**

A: Every year we do one big fundraising event called Soup and SOHO, it's a combination of an online and live auction and raises between 10-20k on average. It's a pretty massive lift for our staff because it involves organizing all of our athletes to get donations from local businesses and it involves our staff finding food donors of Soup, bread, dessert, etc for our in-person event. Luckily this event is rather established now and local businesses know what kids are asking about. We are so lucky to have a strong ski community in our area with a lot of ski brands having their HQ nearby so we get a lot of support from Rossignol, Salomon, and Atomic. Our event is this November 4th if you would like to support our team while purchasing some sweet swag you can check it out through this link, <https://www.teamsoho.org/soup.html>

**Q: How/where does your club purchase ammunition? Any good connections you can share?**

A: Vista Outdoors, we have a good relationship with them and can usually get ammo at wholesale which helps immensely with keeping expenses down when our club shoots close to 100,000 rounds per year. Any club should be able to apply for their youth sports program.

While this isn't in relation to ammunition it is in regards to another major biathlon expense, rifles. We run something that is called a biathlon experience for both members of the public and corporations and have had a relatively large amount of people get into biathlon from this and donate rifles to our team because they like the sport and what it teaches to our local youth.

**Q: Is there any aspect that you are in need of guidance on, or you feel you could learn from another Club?**

A: At our club with a relatively large amount of rifles available to us it would be great to have more information available on rifle maintenance. Like how to adjust trigger pressure, fix broken magazines, etc.. It would be great if there were video guides for all of these things that are important but don't need to be done very often.