



Club Questionnaire: NYSEF

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: We try to always do an “end-of-summer” session where we do fun relay races and agility courses with the cross country athletes, and the biathletes get to shoot “non-traditional targets”. These can be full or empty soda cans, watermelons, water (or non water) balloons, and more! I always try to put a tarp down under the “shooting area” in the range to make clean up easier. The kids always have a blast and it’s just fun to break out of the normal mundane shooting routine sometimes.

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: This past season was the first time in recent years that we had athletes from NYSEF participate in the Youth/Junior World Trials races. It was a blast to be a part of one of the highest levels of biathlon racing in the US for Youth athletes, and my athletes learned a lot from experiencing it. Unfortunately none of our athletes made the team this season, but nevertheless they were all motivated to learn more and train harder in order to reach their goals next time.

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

A: I think the secret to success is creating a fun and respectful environment for the athletes to learn, not only from their coach, but also through each other. We try to create sessions that are fun and exciting, as well as informative and educational. Young athletes should be able to have fun and enjoy training with their teammates while still getting a lot out of the session!

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

A: When I joined NYSEF in 2021, I quickly became their first ever Head Biathlon Coach. In years past the Head XC Coach had taken the added responsibility of the Biathlon program, regardless if they had any biathlon background. It’s been exciting for the program to have a Head Biathlon Coach dedicated to growing the program and teaching the athletes more

high-level shooting techniques and concepts. With that said, NYSEF Biathlon is continuing to grow and we've been putting a lot of our energy specifically into the developmental age group (U10-U14's) by introducing them to the sport in a fun, non-committal way. I've loved working with this age group with laser rifles and air rifles, and it's always satisfying to see them hit their first targets, beaming with excitement! I think the Adirondacks are the perfect environment for future biathletes to grow out of, and I'm excited to continue working with our future stars of the sport.

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

A: Our biathlon program works cohesively with our cross country program within NYSEF, so all of the cross country skiers that run through our programming are around the sport and able to try it whenever they'd like. We've also spent a fair amount of effort bringing air rifles around the surrounding community at various youth events. Our DEVO XC athletes (U10-U14's) are able to learn more about biathlon through laser and air rifles once a week during their winter programming. No athletes in this age group are required to sign up exclusively for biathlon programming, but all athletes are introduced and asked to at least give it a shot!

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

A: We've had minor success, but our administrative staff handles all grant funding so I don't know exactly which grants we have applied to!

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: NYSEF Snowsports does a lot of fundraising and community events year round. I haven't exclusively set up a fundraiser for NYSEF Biathlon, but I am hoping to create something biathlon-specific this year to help our program purchase more rifles.

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

A: NYSEF has a great relationship with a local sports shop, Woods & Waters, where all of our ammunition is purchased! Big thanks to Sam and Chris for their support; be sure to stop in if you're ever in Saranac Lake, NY.

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

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