

U.S. Biathlon Membership Update

Monday, September 22, 2025

Dear U.S. Biathlon Community,

Late last year we shared with you the findings of the [Vestry Laight report](#), the work that had been done in response to the report, and our action plan for moving forward. At that time, we made a commitment to address the recommendations with honesty, accountability, and urgency. As our 2025 training season wraps up and we prepare for the upcoming season and 2026 Winter Olympic Games, we want to provide an update on the progress we have made over the past nine months and the work that lies ahead.

Since December, we have taken important steps to strengthen the culture of U.S. Biathlon through our Culture of Excellence initiative. Athletes, staff, and coaches came together in workshops in Finland (November 2024) and Lake Placid (June 2025) to create a shared vision for our team and define the values that will guide how we train, compete, and support one another.

The vision we created is clear: U.S. Biathlon should be the best team to be part of for athletes, coaches, and staff who want to pursue excellence. That vision is anchored in belonging, enjoyment, resilience, and integrity—ensuring that every member of our community feels safe, welcomed, valued, challenged and supported to reach their potential. From this vision, together, we established three core values that will get us there —Respect, Grit, and Growth Mindset—and explored the behaviors needed to live them day to day.

Respect: Honor the team, the process, and the person.

We honor each other, the process, and the pursuit of excellence by showing up prepared, being fully present, and treating others with dignity. Respect means listening deeply, communicating clearly, and creating space for everyone to thrive – because how we show up affects how others rise.

Grit: Clear eyes, full hearts, can't lose.

True courage is not the absence of failure – it's the strength to show up again and again. We face adversity with grit, push through discomfort, and commit to the process, even when it's hard. We take pride in effort, reset with purpose, and persevere with integrity and our inner strength.

Growth Mindset: Curious. Courageous. Committed.

We are learners at every level, driven to innovate and improve. We embrace challenges, seek feedback, and step outside our comfort zones. Growth mindset means we value progress over perfection, stay open to change, and are relentless in the pursuit of becoming better – as athletes, teammates, and people.

This summer we took the next step, reviewing our progress and refining our values into practical actions. More than 200 ideas emerged for how to embed these values into daily life at U.S. Biathlon. Some of these are already underway, including weaving values into onboarding and performance reviews, building them into how we communicate with stakeholders, and working to make them visible in team environments. A working group of athletes and staff will select and test additional initiatives during the upcoming season.

Alongside this cultural work, we have advanced several other important initiatives:

Education and Integrity

We are identifying training resources from the [Biathlon Integrity Unit](#) and the [Inclusion Playbook](#) covering safeguarding, diversity, bias, and related topics that we will work into continuing staff development and education. Over the coming months, we will also develop a sport integrity policy with accompanying education materials.

Women's Leadership & Mentorship

Our [Women's Coaching](#) Initiative engaged eight women in meaningful roles this past season, with positive and constructive feedback that is driving further evolution and improvements. We have just begun recruiting for the coming season, Year 2. We have also identified the opportunity to expand athlete support through a mentorship program. This program will connect athletes—starting with female athletes and coaches—with mentors from our Board and trustee community to provide guidance, career advice, and support both during their athletic and sport careers and as they transition into their next chapters. We plan to develop and launch this in the coming season.

Athlete Support

We strengthened athlete support with the addition of Annika Pasch, a Certified Athletic Trainer and Medical Coordinator, significantly improving athlete care and injury prevention on the World Cup and IBU Cup circuits, and across our domestic training program. She has been an incredible addition to the team, not only for her professional skills but for all the other responsibilities she has taken on and her voice and presence with the athletes.

Athlete and Staff Engagement

We have focused on more regular and expanded dialogue with our athlete representatives, who continue to serve as a vital bridge between athletes and staff. Together, we are working in areas including mental health resources, improving transparency around team selection, enhancing support for athletes beyond the national team, and creating clearer feedback channels. These conversations have been candid and constructive, and they are helping us prioritize changes that athletes feel most directly.

These are steps in the right direction, but they are not the end of the journey. We know that lasting change requires persistence, openness, and honesty. We are committed to evaluating our progress, adjusting as needed, and ensuring that respect, grit, and growth mindset are not just words but living parts of our culture.

We are grateful for your continued trust and support as we work to build a stronger, safer, and more inclusive future for U.S. Biathlon. The progress made to date reflects the dedication of our athletes, staff, coaches, trustees, and community—and with your partnership, we will continue to move forward together.

With respect and gratitude,



Jack Gierhart
President and CEO
U.S. Biathlon