

## **Board Chair Report to Biathlon Canada Membership – October 2025**

Dear Members,

It is a privilege to address you once again as Chair of the Biathlon Canada Board of Directors. This past year has been a testament to the resilience and strength of our community, as together we continue to celebrate successes, adapt to challenges, and chart a course for the future of our sport.

### **Celebrating Volunteers, Coaches and Officials**

One of my highlights of the past season was attending the National Biathlon Championships in Valcartier, Quebec. The event was an outstanding success, both in terms of competition and community spirit. I was again reminded of the essential role our volunteers play in making our sport possible. Their energy and commitment were equally on display at the BC Championships at Mount Washington, where I had the opportunity to witness firsthand the dedication that sustains our events across the country. Thank you to all the volunteers, coaches, officials, and organizers who give so freely of their time and passion. Biathlon in Canada thrives because of you.

### **Responding to Environmental Challenges**

As we reflect on the past year, we cannot ignore the continuing impact of climate and environmental changes on our sport. Last month in Whistler, we saw how forest fire smoke disrupted training and summer competitions. This reality is something we must take seriously, as it affects not only athlete health and preparation but also the sustainability of biathlon events nationwide. Biathlon Canada remains committed to adapting where needed and advocating for solutions that protect athlete health while safeguarding the future of our sport.

### **The Future of Sport in Canada**

The recently released recommendations from the Future of Sport Commission have the potential to significantly reshape the structure of Canadian sport. While these recommendations are still being reviewed and discussed at a national level, Biathlon Canada is well positioned. We have invested in strong governance, are in good shape with our safe sport policies and processes and are ready to adapt to structural shifts as

they may occur. This forward-looking approach will help us remain resilient during times of change.

### **Funding Successes and Partnerships**

We were very pleased that Biathlon Canada has secured a four-year funding commitment from Sport Canada. Thanks go to Kerry for her hard work in preparing a first class submission. While there were reductions across the Canadian sport system, we were able to retain almost all of our core funding, leaving us in a stronger position than many of our peer organizations. We are grateful to Sport Canada for their continued support, including the Community Sport for All funding, which is helping us extend the reach of biathlon into more communities across Canada.

We also wish to recognize the National Winter Sport Development Association for its generous donation again this year. This support will enhance our capacity to grow the sport and introduce more Canadians to biathlon at all levels.

### **The IBU and Target 2030**

The International Biathlon Union continues to be a most valued partner, both as a major source of funds and in all the other areas it works with us and its *Target 2030* strategic plan provides a framework that strongly supports our work in Canada. With its focus on sport development, good governance, global growth, climate responsibility, and solidarity among member federations, the plan aligns well with our own priorities. It offers us resources, guidance, and inspiration as we grow participation, strengthen our systems, and ensure biathlon in Canada is well-positioned for the future.

### **Strength in People: Staff and Board**

Under Kerry Dankers' leadership, Biathlon Canada's staff has been solidified into a strong, cohesive, and highly capable team. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated cadre working on behalf of our athletes and community, and I am confident that we are well-positioned for the years ahead.

At the governance level, with the new Board members who joined last year and those proposed for election at this Annual Meeting, Biathlon Canada will continue to have an excellent and well-rounded Board. The range of competencies, perspectives, and

experiences will be crucial as we navigate an uncertain landscape, ensuring that our leadership remains both thoughtful and resilient.

### **Looking Forward**

Despite the challenges we face—whether environmental, financial, or structural—I remain deeply optimistic about the future of biathlon in Canada. With strong partnerships, stable funding, a skilled staff, and a committed Board, we are well-equipped to adapt and grow. Most importantly, with the continued support of our volunteers, athletes, and broader community, biathlon will continue to inspire and thrive across the country.

We will soon be launching a strategic planning exercise to help Biathlon Canada navigate to 2030 and beyond. This will be an important exercise and an opportunity for you, the Members, and other key stakeholders to get involved in the future of the organization and the sport of biathlon in Canada. I encourage you to get involved.

Thank you all for your contributions, your passion, and your belief in this sport. Together, we will carry biathlon forward into a bright and promising future.

Sincerely,

Mike Walker  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Biathlon Canada