

## BECOMING A BIATHLETE

- Unfortunately the BBU has virtually no resources or facilities to train a potential biathlete from scratch. Ideally you should be fit and be especially keen on running (if you are not already a cross-country skier), and shooting – if not both! We are unable to provide any basic skiing or shooting tuition. **This is probably not the answer you want to hear, but we must be realistic!** Until we receive Core Government funding we can only run development courses for athletes selected for their potential at the annual British Championships. These will be advertised on this web site.
- The Armed Forces provide the backbone of the British teams, but even then many of the athletes will not have skied until they joined the Forces, at around 18 years of age. This puts GBR at an automatic disadvantage compared with many of the “biathlon nations” where skiers as young as 5 or 6 are already being taught the rudiments of shooting. Some 90% of the World’s top biathletes are members of their own Armed Forces / Customs / Border Guards etc.
- There are currently no civilian biathlon clubs in the UK and civilian athletes are encouraged to learn on a cross country skiing holiday or by joining a club affiliated to Snowsport GB - formerly the British Ski and Snowboard Federation (BSSF). Currently GBR is only represented on the international cross country scene at the “Lowlanders” level, which is one step below European Cup. A few TA (Territorial Army) units can offer civilians a way to “have a go” at the sport! Any UK National civilian may compete at the British Biathlon Championships.
- You will obviously need skis, and roller skis if you are serious, as well as laying out some £ 600 for a second hand rifle to up to £ 1500 for a new one. The BBU official kit supplier is RMA Sports – look them up at: [www.biathlonsport.com](http://www.biathlonsport.com)
- To reach the standard required to race on the World Cup circuit an athlete needs to be totally single minded, and must either have a very understanding employer or have private means or a sponsor. Some 7 months per year will be spent training (for several hours a day) and then 4 months racing. The European Cup circuit demands slightly less, but if you want to win, even this will necessitate almost full time training. **It goes without saying that any potential GBR biathlete must be a British Citizen / UK passport holder.** If selected for the National squads you will additionally have to pay team “subs” (currently c £ 1000 pa), and sign standard BBU and anti-doping contracts etc.

## CONTACTS

- BBU Head Office is in Brecon and the Team Office in Camberley, but during the on snow season are largely unmanned. Please Email the Secretary General for further information: [info@britishbiathlon.com](mailto:info@britishbiathlon.com) or fax 01874 730049.
- Snowsport GB can be contacted on 0131 445 7676 ([britski@easynet.co.uk](mailto:britski@easynet.co.uk)) or through the Nordic Director, Tim East on 01539 621082 ([Tim@TimCEast.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:Tim@TimCEast.freeserve.co.uk))

## BIATHLON ON THE WEB

- There is a wealth of current, background and archive information on the web. Obviously there is more action in the winter (when Eurosport feature all World Cup races – usually live), than in the summer. Check out:

[www.britishbiathlon.com](http://www.britishbiathlon.com) (BBU site)  
[www.biathlonworld.com](http://www.biathlonworld.com) (IBU site)  
[www.biathlon.de](http://www.biathlon.de) (An excellent German site)

All these sites contain links to many others, including the Olympic and World Cup sites.