

The Cadet Biathlon Program – what you should know

The cadet biathlon program consists of 4 stages of training and competition: 1 - Local (Corps), 2 - Zone, 3 - Provincial and 4 - National.

Stages 1 & 2 consist of a run and shoot format where cadets run and shoot air rifles at targets placed 10 meters away.

Stages 3 & 4 consist of a cross- country ski and shoot format where cadets ski and shoot 22-gauge biathlon rifles at a distance of 50 meters.

Stage 1 is essentially team selection by the corps – at Undaunted **we base this on the fitness, skills and commitment** that we observe in the cadets during biathlon practices. The fastest runners and best marksmen get selected for the team. **Each Corps can send 8 athletes to the Stage 2 competition – 4 females, 4 males.** At least one member of each gender must be a “junior”. A “junior” is someone who does not turn 15 before the last day of the National Competition each year (08 March 2014).

The Stage 2 competition takes place in early November, and the team names must be submitted in early October. Since we have a very short time in the fall to make the selections, some of the selections will have already been made based on last year’s training. Some were on last year’s competitive team, and others were able to train with the competitors over the winter and hone their skills in hopes of being on the team this year. **Being a member of last year’s team does not guarantee placement on this year’s team.**

The Cadet Program supplies skis and 22-gauge rifles – but only to cadets who qualify at the Stage 2 competition to advance to the Stage 3 (Provincial level).

In 2012-2013 Undaunted was extremely fortunate to have 4 cadets advance to Stage 3 so we received 4 rifles and 4 sets of skis. Some of these cadets had ski equipment of their own which meant that we could share the DND-supplied equipment with other cadets and give them the training and experience to build teams for this year and beyond. Some cadets had their own equipment and were able to attend the ski/shoot training over the winter and take advantage of the coaching being provided to the competitors.

What does this all mean?

This means that we are looking for cadets who are committed to putting the time in to learn the sport and who **recognize that making the competitive team may not happen in their first year, and that having been on the team in the past is not a guarantee they will make the team this year.** Continuing to train with the competitors throughout the year will help hone their skills and improve their chances for selection to the team in future seasons.

We may not always be fortunate to have 4 or more cadets advance to Stage 3 and be able to draw ski equipment and rifles from DND supply. In order to expose cadets to the ski techniques and build better athletes for the future – we are hoping to purchase several sets of skis/boots and poles of average sizes. It goes without saying, that cadets who happen to own their own equipment or are always welcome to join in the training.

Cadets who do make the competitive team can expect to have to put in extra practice time to be ready for competition. Those who advance to Stage 3 can expect to have to spend even more time skiing and shooting – and even travelling to Canmore to do this. DND provides no financial support for the training expenses (ski passes, transportation or meals), and Undaunted’s budget is limited and can’t always cover all of the expenses – **so families may be asked to contribute by purchasing ski access passes and car pooling to ski and range practices as far away as Canmore.**

Bottom line: We want cadets and parents to understand that it takes hard work and dedication to make the team, and making the team may not happen in their first year. Staying committed to the training throughout the season can improve their chances for selection next year and beyond. So please don’t be discouraged if you aren’t selected to be on this year’s competitive team. Work hard and keep training for next year and beyond – Rome wasn’t built in a day – and successful athletes don’t happen overnight.