

The Canadian Season Report by Cameron Morton

Our small team of junior Biathletes from NSW who have been intensively training cross country skiing and biathlon in Silverstar, Canada over the last 5 weeks had a successful conclusion to racing this weekend with participation in the BC Cup 3 & 4 in Quesnel, northern BC.

The team consisting of Damon Morton, Hamish Roberts, Lachlan Porter and Darcie Morton arrived on the Friday 15th for official training to find practically all the snow washed away and the rain continuing to fall. They familiarised themselves with the one race track as the rain briefly turned to snow and had a go at shooting. The thin snow and wet weather made everyone feel at home. On the positive side it was better than the extreme cold temperatures which is normal for this time of year in northern BC.

On Saturday the boys competed in the sprint competition over 4.5km. Unfortunately Lachlan had the flu and was unable to start on either of the days. Damon had his best race for the season shooting 0 2, recording 40 second range times, and skiing the icy track in a quick time of just over 14 minutes. This was an incredible 2.04 minutes quicker than the next competitor. Hamish came in a commendable 4th/12, however, would have been in 2nd or 3rd if he hadn't missed the finish turn losing a good 30 seconds.

Darcie had a go in the Midgets 8 - 10 year old category and shot prone with a rest on standing targets and only missed her last target. She really enjoyed the event and listened hard to all the instructions and nearly had a perfect race. Beginners luck! She was the 1st of three girls and 4th/10 and just 10seconds outside the medals. She showed that she has heaps of potential as a marksperson. I couldn't believe it when one of her sight in groups shot the middle out of the ten. She will just have to wait a couple of years to do the sport in Australia. In the mean time she is enjoying tagging along with the bigger kids and is learning to ski fast.

The next day the wind blew up for the distance event and the boys had a bad shooting day along with everyone else. However, their performance was made worse with Hamish not doing up his bedding screws properly and Damon having problems with his sights. None the less, they both skied brilliantly clocking the fastest two times. Damon skied himself into 2nd position and Hamish 4th. Darcie also didn't fare as well shooting and finished 6th. It showed that there is always something to learn and improve in biathlon.

BC biathlon was really appreciative that the boys made the effort to attend the event and several reporters interviewed the team and took pictures of them for the local papers. It was a really enjoyable experience.

Over the last 5 weeks the team has trained extremely well and everyone has improved tremendously both their skiing technique, fitness and shooting. It has been an excellent opportunity to train lots, have lots of fun and race each weekend against other juniors. All the athletes have shown that they are very competitive with the best in Canada. Lucy

Glanville is continuing her training and racing in Europe in preparation for World Juniors in Torsby Sweden and we wish her all the best. Jackson Bursill from NSW XC tried the sport for the first time and is now ordering a rifle to take up the sport. The more X C athletes we can attract to our sport the stronger it will be. Jackson is sure to add some good competition to the under 18 age group as he showed a natural flare for shooting and has an excellent attitude to training. While our three Junior Boys in Damon, Hamish and Lachlan showed they have huge potential in the sport with some top results against the Canadians in their age group. Well done all.

We are now looking forward to the arrival of the Russian, Norwegian and Swiss biathlon Olympic teams and the Australian X C Olympic Team to Silverstar this Wednesday. It will be a real highlight to watch these best in the world athletes train. We might even be lucky enough to get a couple of autographs.

Cam Morton
NSWIS Cross Country and Biathlon Coach
NSW Junior Biathlon/XC ski Coach