

November 4, 2018  
Announcement  
2019 Liatoppen Norway Junior Biathlon Festival Trip

The USA has been invited again to bring a group of athletes to the Liatoppen Biathlon Festival, 4-7 April, 2019.

### **The Event**

The Liatoppen Norway Junior Biathlon Festival is the largest Biathlon event in the world every year. It involves 3 days of racing and events with 1100 to 1200 junior biathletes age 11-16 competing each day. Most of the athletes are from Norway, but the organizers do invite limited numbers from other countries. Since 2016 they have invited a small group from the USA to participate.

The races range in distance from 2.75km to 4.5km, depending on the age of the athlete. There are 3 races at the festival, including a 3-person Relay, a Sprint, and a Mass Start. Rifles are not carried, and all shooting is in prone, with a sling, on prone targets. Age categories are determined by year of birth.

**Athletes born in 2003 would be the oldest eligible for the 2019 event.**

### **The US Contingent**

Following the participation in 2018 of 7 US junior biathletes, the Festival Organizing Committee has offered an invitation for 8-10 U.S. Junior Biathletes to participate in this year's event. Based on the last two years' experiences and the relationships developed with the Liatoppen event organizers, I will be coordinating and leading the trip this year. Glenn Jobe, SJ Sheppard, and Peggy Lynn will complete the coaching and support staff.

Athlete selection for this trip will be done through an application and review process. Due to event logistics and previous experience, **applications for the US contingent will only be accepted from Girls born 2005, 2004, and 2003 and Boys born 2004 and 2003.** It is strongly suggested that applicants have: Biathlon race experiences outside their immediate region; solid race results; and have participated in Regional or USBA Summer Camps. Athletes who wish to apply need to submit the attached Application by 5 December 2019.

Applications will be reviewed in consultation with each athlete's USBA Regional Coordinator and coach. Review and selection is expected to be completed by 12 December 2018. A commitment to the trip is required by 26 December 2018 so that the list of athletes can be sent on to the Liatoppen organizers by 1 January 2019. The eligible U.S. athletes who participated in last year's Liatoppen Race Festival have been invited back by the race organizers and will have the first consideration for this year's trip if they choose to apply.

### **The Trip**

Initial arrangements for the trip have already been made. The focus of the trip is both the Liatoppen Festival and a Biathlon training camp experience in the mountains of Norway. Training and seminar sessions will be arranged with local club teams as well as at the famous NTG Sports School in Geilo. This high school has produced many of the top Biathletes in the world, including Bjorndalen, Svendsen, and others.

The planned itinerary is:

- 1 April – Arrive Oslo, overnight at Holmenkollen
- 2 April – Training at Holmenkollen World Cup venue and travel to Geilo area
- 3-11 April – Training, Competition and Education
- 12 April – Depart Oslo

Lodging on 1 April and 11 April will be in hotels. For the remainder of the trip we have rented a large house in the mountains near Geilo. The cost of the 12-day trip will be approx. \$2,500-2,800. This includes food, lodging, rental car, coaching, wax, ammunition, and miscellaneous expenses for the trip. It does not include air travel to and from Oslo.

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