**Biathlon Rifle Rental Policy**

**Background:**

Biathlon rifles are relatively expensive and difficult to find and purchase locally. Used rifles are available periodically, however they tend to sell quickly. New rifles can be purchased from eastern Canada, the States, or Europe. Either way significant effort is required to purchase a biathlon rifle; this can be a significant barrier to new athletes entering the program who may be unsure about the sport and lack knowledge to make a wise purchase.

Due to the nature of the sport biathlon rifles are used in extreme conditions and require regular care and maintenance to ensure proper functioning. A poorly functioning rifle can have a significant and negative impact on the experience of a biathlete.

The aforementioned factors have necessitated the need for clearer guidelines on rifle rental including expectations for maintenance.

**Definitions:**

**Entry-level rifle:** typically will not have a sling or harness and will be primarily used with a rifle rest.

**Full function rifle:** A rifle suitable for use without a rest. Includes Anschutz model 64, 1827, Vostok, Savage and Izmash rifles.

**Purpose of this policy:**

1. To establish clear objectives for the club rifle rental program
2. To establish fair and equitable criteria for allocation of club rifles to biathletes
3. To set out clear expectations for renters of club rifles regarding care and maintenance

**Objectives of Club Rental Program:**

* To provide entry level rifles for young biathletes entering the program.
* To reduce the cost barriers for entry to the sport
* To provide new biathletes with an opportunity to try the sport before making significant cash outlays
* To establish a modest fund to be used for purchase of new club rifles, repairs of club rifles and to provide financial support to families purchasing a higher quality rifle. Income from rifle rentals is to be reinvested in new rifles or used to cover maintenance and repair costs of club rifles.

**Guidelines for rifle rental:**

* Criteria for allocation of club rifles through the rental program are:

1. Must be a club member
2. Must be registered with Biathlon BC for insurance purposes
3. Must be a participant of either the BV Bears or BV Masters Biathlon program
4. First priority is given to participants in the Bears programs
5. Second priority is given to participants in the Masters program
6. Priority is given to participants in their first and second years of the program

* Biathletes renting rifles are expected to participate regularly in practices.
* Junior Girls and Junior Boys and older (13 years +) are encouraged to purchase rifles. At this age the shooter changes to a sling and rifle fit becomes more critical to performance.
* Financial support from the club to assist with purchase of a rifle may be explored on a case-by-case basis and subject to available club funding. [Example: purchase of a $2,000 rifle – club pays $1,000, biathlete pays $1,000. In two subsequent years the biathlete pays $500 until full purchase price is recovered.] The club has first right of refusal on rifle sale.
* Renters must have a valid Firearms Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) to travel with or store a rifle. For those families where no member holds a valid PAL special arrangements may be made for another club member to transport and store the rifle.
* The expectation is that within one year of joining the program a family member will acquire their PAL.
* Care and maintenance of the rifle is the responsibility of the renter.
* The club will cover reasonable repair costs that may arise from time-to-time
* Negligence resulting in rifle repair costs will be the responsibility of the renter.

**Rifle Care and Maintenance (minimum expectations):**

* After each practice:

1. the rifle and case is placed in a safe location and allowed to completely dry
2. barrel, chamber and bolt are cleaned
3. bolt and outside of rifle is lightly oiled
4. the rifle is inspected for wear and damage

* Rifle must be stored in a dry and safe location (trigger lock, gun cabinet or bolt removed and stored/locked separately).
* When transporting the rifle it must be carried in a suitable case to protect from damages.

All rented rifles will be returned to the club at the end of the season unless otherwise agreed to.

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