



US Biathlon Association STANDARDIZED WAXING PROTOCOL

BACKGROUND & GOALS

Since 2001, we have adopted a standardized ski preparation policy, referred to as the “Waxing Protocol,” at our team selection trials, and more recently at our National Championships. We have found that this policy benefits athletes and coaches in three ways:

1. Coaches focus on coaching, rather than wax testing and ski preparation.
2. Athletes succeed because of their performance, not because of their access to expensive waxes and teams with service assistants.
3. Clubs and their members incur less cost because they can bring fewer expensive waxes and support staff solely dedicated to ski preparation.

After consultation with many teams, coaches, and athletes the past few weeks, and after reviewing our experiences with this policy in previous competitions, we have decided to implement it as a standard policy for all on-snow trials and National Championship events in the youth, junior, and senior classes. Henceforth, all athletes in these classes must abide by the policy in order to compete in these events.

The goal of the policy is that all skis are prepared in a standardized way by the same group with the same wax so that the competitions are as fair as possible.

SUMMARY OF POLICY UPDATES (2021):

In 2021, USBA implemented several changes to its standardized waxing protocol in order to create a more effective waxing workflow that accommodates larger competition fields while maintaining a fair, quality focus on performance for athletes and coaches.

The 2021 updates to the policy include:

- Application of same-wax protocol for all USBA trials & national competitions in youth, junior, and senior categories. This includes:
 - Youth/Junior World Team Trials
 - IBU Cup Trials
 - Any other on-snow selection or trials race listed in annual team selection criteria
 - U.S. Winter Biathlon Nationals
- A USBA staff person will be responsible for leading same-wax procedures at each of the above-mentioned competitions
- Athletes may submit only one pair of skis per competition day
- USBA determines the non-fluoro wax combination and, if necessary, hand structures, to be applied to **all** skis submitted for the competition

PROCEDURES:

With your cooperation and assistance, we will carry out this policy in the following manner:

Before race day:

- *Procedures for standardized waxing will be clearly communicated at the Team Captains meeting at each qualifying competition, including event-specific details such as necessary scheduling information, designated wax room location, coach volunteer selection, etc.*
- *Athletes will deliver one pair of scraped skis, **with their name clearly marked**, to the designated wax room, no later than one hour after official training the day before the race.*
- *Race skis will be checked in and marked by U.S. Biathlon.*
- *All skis will be cleaned with a liquid fluoro cleaner and roto brushed.*
- *All skis will receive the same wax.*
- *U.S. Biathlon will decide if the conditions call for additional hand structure. This will typically only be used for warmer, wet conditions. In the event that hand structure is necessary, **all** skis will receive the same structure.*

Race day:

- *Skis will be delivered to the start of the race 10 minutes before the start. Race skis must stay in the start pen.*
- *If there is a race on the following day, skis should be delivered to the designated wax room no later than two hours after that day's race.*

The success of our policy and the fairness of the competitions depends upon coaches participating in the group ski preparation process. We strongly encourage that at least one coach per multi-athlete team joins in this effort.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is U.S. Biathlon implementing this policy?

We are implementing this policy to promote the greatest level of fairness. Results from these races not only designate continental and national champions but also yield performance indicators for team selection.

Why not also standardize ski structure and other equipment?

We acknowledge that this policy does not completely level the playing field for athletes, but it is one component of competition that we can reasonably introduce and enforce. We welcome feedback and recommendations for improving this policy in the future.

What should I do to my skis before handing them in to the designated wax room?

It is suggested that athletes hand in clean skis to the wax room. Athletes are welcome to "hot scrape" or use other cleaning methods after a race and before handing in their skis. Besides using a fluoro cleaner,

*U.S. Biathlon will make no additional effort to clean skis when they are turned in. **Also, don't forget to have your name clearly marked on your skis.***

How will the policy be enforced?

Once delivered the night before, the pool of skis for all competitors will be monitored both by U.S. Biathlon staff and collectively by participating coaches. Any competitor found tampering with their skis in violation of this policy may be disqualified. The competition jury will rule on alleged infractions and modify the protocol for specific events upon recommendation by US Biathlon staff.

If I have further questions or concerns, whom should I contact?

Contact the Director of Athlete Development, Tim Burke, by email at tburke@usbiathlon.org
U.S. Biathlon staff will be coordinating the protocol at the competitions.

We appreciate the cooperation and understanding of every athlete and coach in helping us implement this policy. We wish all of the athletes good luck and thank the coaches for their work building our sport.