

**Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe**

*Commissioner & Adjutant General*

[www.DMVA.Alaska.Gov](http://www.DMVA.Alaska.Gov)



**Alaska National Guard**

*Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs*

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska

**STATE OF ALASKA**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

020-026

**April 8, 2020**

2nd Lt. Balinda O'Neal Dresel

*Joint Force Headquarters*

## **Alaska National Guard Biathlon Team shines during 2020 season**

**JOINT BASE ELEMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – The Alaska National Guard Biathlon Team kicked off their competition season by receiving gold medals at the 2020 National Guard Bureau Western Regional Biathlon Competition at the Soldier Hollow Nordic Center, in Midway, Utah, Jan. 10-11.

At the competition, the Alaska women's team took first place and the men's team took home an overall second place award for their speed on skis and accuracy with a rifle. Individual winners included Chief Warrant Officer 5 Tracey Dooley, first place in women's master's pursuit race, and Spc. Everett Darrow, first place in men's senior sprint and pursuit races.

Triumph continued at Soldiers Hollow during the 2020 Chief, National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships, Feb. 28-March 5, where the AKNG women's team took home a second-place trophy for the overall women's team and Dooley took third place in the women's master's pursuit race.

"This is only the second year the AKNG has brought a women's team to the National Guard competitions, and they continue to impress me," said Staff Sgt. Jack Androski, the team noncommissioned officer in charge and a mortarman with 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry Regiment. "We are looking to grow both the men and women's teams in the future."

Androski said that he would like to have men's and women's beginner, novice, developmental and master teams with five to 10 people on each team.

"I was talked into joining the team at first, but stayed because I really enjoyed the camaraderie," said 1st Sgt. Angela Horn, a beginner biathlete on the AKNG women's team. "The other teams were awesome at Competition, and it felt so great to have them cheering you on."

In addition to the kind accolades for her teammates and competitors, Horn said that biathlon speaks to the Alaska military readiness model of shoot, move and communicate in the arctic terrain.

"You have to have endurance," said Horn, who added that biathletes seem to be the most fit service members, and it reflects in their high physical fitness scores. "It's also important to provide ways for service members to create unity amongst each other, and I think biathlon offers this."

In February, the Alaska National Guard purchased five new biathlon target systems – allowing for greater training of the AKNG biathletes at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson biathlon range in Arctic Valley.

Androski said that more growth is on the horizon with the National Guard Bureau purchasing new rifles for the AKNG team and the prospect of the Alaska National Guard hosting the 2021 National Guard Bureau Western Regional Biathlon Competition.

Androski credits the success of the biathlon program to Alaska Guard senior leadership for their encouragement of the competitive discipline and understanding that it leads to better arctic warriors within their ranks.

###

## PHOTOS

1. **Flickr link** includes an event album with the complete selection of full-resolution, free downloadable images. (May not be accessible from all military computers.)

<https://flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/albums/72157713783157168>

2. **DVIDS link** includes selected full-resolution photos. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.) <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/366716/alaska-national-guard-biathlon-team-shines-during-2020-season>



The Alaska National Guard women's team, from the left, Staff Sgt. Heather Percy, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Tracy Dooley, Maj. Bonnie Wickham, Capt. Julie Kane, and 1st Sgt. Angela Horn, pose for a photo during the 2020 Chief, National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships, Feb. 28-March 5, at the Soldier Hollow Nordic Center, in Midway, Utah. (Alaska National Guard courtesy photo)



Alaska Air Guard Tech Sgt. Jacob Case, right, and Army Guard Spc. Michael Bertelsen, compete in the Western Regional National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championship at Soldier Hollow Nordic Center, in Midway, Utah, Jan. 10, 2020. Biathlon is a unique race that combines Nordic skiing and precision marksmanship, which translate directly to key battlefield proficiencies like shoot, move and communicate. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Nathaniel Free)

- more -



Alaska Army Guard 1st Lt. Erik Gorman, competes in the Western Regional National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championship at Soldier Hollow Nordic Center, in Midway, Utah, Jan. 10, 2020. Biathlon is a unique race that combines Nordic skiing and precision marksmanship, which translate directly to key battlefield proficiencies like shoot, move and communicate. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Nathaniel Free)



Members of the Alaska National Guard Biathlon Team pose for a picture at the Western Regional National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championship's award ceremony at Camp W. G. Williams, Utah, Jan. 11, 2020. Biathlon is a unique race that combines Nordic skiing and precision marksmanship, which translate directly to key battlefield proficiencies like shoot, move and communicate. (Alaska National Guard courtesy photo)