

**WESTERN PROVINCE CHAIRMAN ANNUAL REPORT –
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
ZOOM Meeting - 30 JUNE 2020**

WP Biathlon Executive Committee, athletes and other guests

Allow me to present my fifth Annual Report of the Western Province Biathlon Association

The year 2020 will be known in history for the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19. To date more than 10.433m people were infected while more than 509 000 deaths were reported worldwide while in South Africa 144 264 people were tested positive and 2 529 deaths were reported. The 45th Sportsmans Warehouse SA Biathlon Championships in Oudtshoorn was cancelled as all other sport events because of this epidemic.

Despite all of above, the 2019/2020 season can still be seen as a very successful one for the Western Province Biathlon Association and for the following reasons:

- Winning the 29th Highgate Interprovincial Championships 2020 in Oudtshoorn.
- Entered the most athletes in the history of SA Biathlon for the 45th Sportsmans Warehouse SA Biathlon Championships in Oudtshoorn – 112 athletes and 13 only school athletes.
- A first ever major sponsorship for WP Biathlon namely “One Day Only” who will be the title and main sponsor of the association in 2020/2021.

In 2014 the committee of Western Province Biathlon set goals in for the 5 years to follow. That included :

- to be the leading Biathlon province in South Africa from 2015 onwards by winning the SA Championships
 - achieved by winning 2015 / 2016 / 2017 / 2018 / 2019
- To be the leading Biathlon province by building the sport with new ideas and developments
 - achieved with numerous innovations and ideas
- To have full teams to the SA Championships
 - 2018 - one athlete short
 - 2019 – two athletes short
 - 2020 - one athlete short
- Specific focus on 2016 + 2018
 - win SA's in 2016 inland for the first time – Bloemfontein : achieved
 - first to beat Gauteng North in Pretoria since the beginning in 1976 - achieved
- To win first ever schools competition at the SA Championships – not achieved
- More parent involvement at meetings
 - Western Province had more than 50% officials at the 2017 & 2018 SA Championships.

This is an excellent achievement by this competitive and leading Biathlon Province in South Africa. Congratulations to all athletes, team captains, team managers, parents, committee members, sponsors and everyone contributing to the success.

New goals set for the next 5 years:

- Win the SA Championship for the next 5 years.
- Win both the senior and junior team competitions during this period.
- Major title sponsorship of more than R20 000 per season
- Events branding with sponsors
- 100% pre entry for league meetings

- Parents involvement per schedule for league meetings
 - Training and courses
 - Officials
 - Preparation for league meetings
- Total athlete development plan
 - athletes
 - running & swimming clubs identify
- Schools focus and guidance
 - Regular participation of 10 primary schools and 5 high schools in 2021 and an increase of 2 primary schools and 2 high schools per season
 - Acknowledgement of Biathlon as school sport

But back to the report - this report will focus on :

- Highgate Interprovincial
- National Championships
- Growth in athletes numbers
- Challenges 2021 season
- Schools competition
- Committee
- Word of thanks

Highgate Interprovincial – Oudtshoorn: 1 February 2020

A team of 142 athletes represented Western Province at the Highgate Interprovincial in Oudtshoorn. This meeting gives all athletes a chance to compete at a higher level than the normal league meetings because the best athletes are not always available due to other sport early in February. Western Province won 22 medals out of a possible 78 medals with 6 gold, 6 silver, 10 bronze medals as well as 6 fourth placed athletes. Overall Western Province won the Highgate Interprovincial for only the 6th time since 1991 when the trophy was sponsored by Western Province. This was once again a well organised event with the prize giving and braai on the HIGHGATE farm the highlight.

SA Championships – Oudtshoorn: 21 March 2020

A team of 112 athletes and 13 only school athletes were selected for the 45th SA Biathlon Championships in Oudtshoorn. This was the biggest team ever to selected not only by Western Province but by any province to the SA Championships. Three special needs athletes were also selected. Due to COVID-19, the SA Biathlon Championship 2020 was cancelled but the Western Province committee decided to award WP colours to all athletes selected. The SA Championships will be held in Oudtshoorn again in 2021.

- 2021 SA Championships awarded to Oudtshoorn
- 2022 SA Championships awarded to Kimberley

Growth in numbers:

The Western Province geographical area for biathlon is the Cape Peninsula excluding Paarl and Wellington and including Stellenbosch and Strand/Somerset West. League meetings were held at Stellenberg High, Milnerton High, Jan van Riebeeck High, Fairmont High, Parow track, Bernadino Heights, Strand High and De Hoop Primary. A big thank you to all schools and clubs for welcoming us to your venues and also for the preparation at the facilities. Very positive was the inclusion of more athletes from all areas in the Western Province teams to the Interprovincial and National Championships. Also is that more families are doing the sport – nothing new to see a family of 4 or 5 doing Biathlon.

Participants were from 92 to 171 (WP Championships - 153) – this is an average of 142 athletes per league meeting.

- Our Winter Championships on 24 August 2019 was attended by 108 athletes.

- 142 athletes represented Western Province at the Highgate Interprovincial on the 1st of February 2020 in Oudtshoorn
- The Western Province Championships was attended by 153 athletes
- 112 Western Province athletes and 13 school athletes were selected to represent our province at the SA Championships in Oudtshoorn

	15 Sep 19	13 Oct 19	2 Nov 19	16 Nov 19	11 Jan 20
	League 1	League 2	League 3	League 4	League 5
Boys / Men	69	91	80	65	86
Girls / Ladies	72	80	67	68	69
Disabled	0	0	1	2	2
Total	141	171	148	135	157
	18 Jan 20	1 Feb 20	15 Feb 20	27 Feb 20	21 Mar 20
	League 6	Interprovincial	League 7	WP Champs	SA Champs
Boys / Men	72	76	56	83	58
Girls / Ladies	66	65	35	68	54
Disabled	1	1	1	2	3
Total	139	142	92	153	115

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	B/M	G/L	B/M	G/L	B/M	G/L	B/M	G/L	B/M	G/L	B/M	G/L	B/M	G/L
u.8	21	9	17	15	16	11	21	18	20	37	27	14	16	14
u.9	12	10	15	6	11	9	25	15	20	12	16	20	22	19
u.11	28	35	39	32	54	32	64	53	53	32	36	29	33	40
u.13	58	34	32	39	33	28	70	31	48	31	37	25	33	29
u.15	34	38	33	27	28	22	30	31	19	17	25	23	15	13
u.17	22	15	48	23	18	16	21	16	17	15	11	18	14	12
u.19	13	7	10	7	11	7	11	8	6	6	7	7	11	7
Open	9	7	11	9	7	3	7	6	7	4	13	6	14	5
Junior vet	7	8	15	6	7	6	11	9	8	8	10	6	6	8
Vet	21	8	18	14	7	7	14	10	17	8	17	11	19	13
Senior vet	10	1	7	3	4	2	6	5	4	5	8	4	5	5
Masters	1	3	6	3	4	1	6	2	3	4	6	3	3	1
Senior masters													2	1
Disabled			1	1	3	1	2	3	2	1	2	3	2	1
Total	236	175	252	185	203	145	288	207	224	180	215	169	193	167

Challenges 2021 season

I think that the 2020/2021 season will be the most challenging ever. The reasons are:

- On what level will Biathlon be allowed to continue ?
- When will schools be allowed to continue with sport – 80% of athletes are still at school ?
- What will be the criteria for any training in groups (running+swimming) or to host an event ?
- What will be the financial impact on the smaller sport codes ?
 - Sponsors
 - Unemployment
- Events without spectators – opportunity to do “live streaming” ?
- Committee meetings & AGM via hangouts / Teams / ZOOM
- Interprovincial results with actual events at same time in regions ?

So many questions and no specific answers.

Schools competition

The schools competition, introduced and launched by Western Province is going from strength to strength. In 2018 the top schools were invited to the Highgate Interprovincial Championships in Oudtshoorn and it was also the first ever schools competition at the SA Biathlon Championships in Pretoria. In 2019 Durbanville and Jan van Riebeeck Primary schools and Stellenberg High represented Western Province at the Highgate Interprovincial in Oudtshoorn and the SA Biathlon Championships in Port Elizabeth. In 2020 Durbanville Primary, Welgemoed Primary and Stellenberg High were the nominations to go to the SA Championships. Sadly the event was cancelled. The last few years the success of involving schools have already been confirmed – just look at the numbers and quality of our provinces who actively embraced this innovation. It was evident with the Highgate Interprovincial (612 athletes) and the SA Championships (790 athletes entered). We MUST now endorse this as an official requirement for provinces to participate and function as a province. This concept also goes hand in hand with league meetings in the provinces – with a success model of some of the active provinces to go to different venues and even towns. Western Province needs to focus to get more schools involved and to give acknowledgement to Biathlon as a school sport.

Committee

A focussed, enthusiastic and task driven committee is needed to run sport these days. Luckily Western Province Biathlon is in the privileged position to have a mix of experience and young committee members with allocated responsibilities. This competent and hardworking committee are:

- Gerhard Louwrens chairman, SA Biathlon, athletes focus
- Marco Prinsloo vice chairman, AGM, chairman of selectors, officials
- Ernst van Schalkwyk treasurer, clothing
- Esrie Looock-Bezuidenhout secretary
- Johan Ferreira web page, programme, entries & results
- Rens Els sponsorships
- Herman Ochse venues
- Christopher van Niekerk development
- Nick Thomatos equipment & sponsors branding material

A big thank you to these men and woman for the hours of hard work spending time on the sport in their free time. The achievements of Western Province Biathlon over the past seasons are the result of hard work by the committees over the years.

Thank you to

Team Managers

- Christopher van Niekerk, Leon Hanekom and Marius Vorster

Officials

- All parents who officiated during league meetings and Highgate Interprovincial

We want to thank The Almighty for giving us the strength, health and the time to participate in a sport we love – by participating, as an official or just as a supporter.

Gerhard Louwrens

Chairman: Western Province Biathlon