

# Biathlon combines two opposing sports

By Holly Heyser, Sacramento Bee

It's something about the insanity of biathlon that lures people in: First, ski fast and hard. Then, stop, drop and try to shoot five targets while your thumping heart makes the sight on your .22 rifle bounce like hail on a tin roof.

Now, do it all again – but this time, shoot from an even more challenging position: standing.

Crazy, right?

Exactly the point.

“It intrigues people because it's a combination of two completely opposed sports: The cross-country ski racer is going really hard, and the shooter has to be really focused, calm and deliberate,” said Auburn Ski Club biathlon coach Glenn Jobe. “Combining the two sports is one of the most challenging endeavors you can make in athletics.”

Biathlon is a sport most Americans glimpse just once every four years, when the Winter Olympics put it front and center. If you watched biathlon during the 1980 Winter Olympics at Lake Placid, New York, chances are you saw Jobe race in the 20-kilometer event.

Now 61, Jobe still competes in masters races on occasion, but his main focus is introducing people to the sport, which he does through clinics at the Auburn Ski Club's facility next to the Boreal Ridge ski area.

If you want to learn biathlon in California, this is where you go. The next-closest ranges are at the Soldier Hollow Cross-Country Ski Resort in Utah and at West Yellowstone in Montana.

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