

Tim Burke "Working with Lowell is great."



New exclusive interview on Biathlon Live! For the writing of our #1 Horizon Biathlon report on biathlon in the United States, Tim Burke was kind enough to answer a few questions.

You are from Paul Smith, a small town not far from the Olympic village of Lake Placid. We can say that this has helped you to practice a winter sport, is it the case?

"Yes, growing up in Paul Smiths definitely helped me get involved with winter sports. Paul Smiths is a very small town in the woods and there was not much else to do there besides play outside! This helped me to be very active from a very young age."

In the winter of 2012-2013 you finish 10th in the overall, 3rd in the individual and mass start overall. You were the leader of the World Cup in the 2009-2010 season. You have been on the podium several times, 6 times to be exact. In 2013 you get the silver medal on the individual World Championships. If you were to remember only one memory from your entire career that you are most proud of, which one is it?

"I actually think I am most proud of the 2016 season when our men's team finished 6th in the Nations Cup. This was a huge accomplishment from a very small biathlon Nation and it took the effort from our entire team to get there. Hopefully our team can get back there soon."



Tim Burke vice-champion of the Individual World Championship, Nove Mesto in 2013 © IBU

This year will be your second season as Director of Athlete Development for the American team. How did your professional transition go?

“So far the transition has gone very well. Of course I had many new things to learn from the managing side of things but it was very nice to stay involved with biathlon. I think I learned many good lessons throughout my career and I had the opportunity to work with some amazing people. It's now a lot of fun for me to share that knowledge with others.”

You will be officiating alongside a person you know well and with whom you have spent the best days of American men's biathlon, Lowell Bailey. It must be a real pleasure to continue working as a team with Lowell?

“Yes, working with Lowell is great. We obviously know each other very well and have always worked well together. Now we are working together on the other side of things. Together we bring many years of specific biathlon experience to the team.”



Tim Burke and Lowell Bailey © IBU

After 20 years at USBA, Bernd Eisenbichler decided to return to Germany, with his departure an entire page in the history of American biathlon is being turned. How do you see the transition with Max Cobb?

“Bernd did such an incredible job for our team and we will never be able to replace him. Both Lowell and I feel very lucky to have worked with him for so many years and now we are doing our best to carry on many of the programs/ideas that he started. It has also helped to have Max Cobb stay on with the team. No one has more international biathlon experience than Max and we are lucky to have him.”

Since 2014 you are married, your wife is also well known in the biathlon world, Andrea Henkel (Burke). Winner of the Crystal Big Globe in 2006-2007, World Champion, Olympic Champion. You must be very proud of your wife and what she has accomplished?

“Of course I am proud of everything that Andrea has accomplished. But what I am most proud of is that all of her accomplishments did not change her in anyway. She is still the same person today that she was 20 years ago!”

In about ten years on the world circuit, you have had time to see your sport grow and gradually establish yourself as one of the most popular winter sports, especially in Europe. How did you experience this evolution from the inside?

“Yeah, I could definitely feel the sport growing while I was competing. The entire sport just became way more professional in the past 10-15 years. That was and is a great thing for the sport and it has definitely made it a lot more competitive. It will be interesting to see how this trend continues.”

From our point of view, biathlon is still a sport that is not very well known in your country. How do Americans perceive this sport?

“Biathlon is definitely still a very small sport in the US and most Americans don't know that the sport exists. Hopefully that can change with more success from our team and more of a TV presence here in the US.”



Tim Burke with other Team USA executives Michael Greis, Armin Auchtentaller and Danika Frisbie © IBU

We had the opportunity to talk with some of the girls on your national team and we talked to them about the famous "Girls with Guns" training camps they organize for young girls. Could an equivalent initiative be created with a young boy one day?

“We are always trying to add more programs for kids in the US. The "Girls with Guns" program has been a big success. It's always great to have the athletes involved with these development initiatives.”

At the beginning of this new season, what are the team's objectives? If we look a little further ahead, in 2022 at the Beijing Olympics, is an Olympic champion title an objective to be set or would a medal be enough when we know that your country has never obtained one in biathlon to date?

“I think we would be very happy with an Olympic medal of any color! When you don't have any, you can't be too picky!”