

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TEAM BIRKIE ANNOUNCES NEW TEAMS FOR 2024-2025

Sonnesyn, Ketterson, Bolger, headline 8-member, rebranded teams.

(MINNEAPOLIS, MN) – Team Birkie’s U.S. Ski Team athletes Kevin Bolger and Zak Ketterson, welcome six new members to their top-tier, re-branded teams for the 2024-2025.

Former Minnesota State High School skiing phenom and four-time American Birkebeiner winner, Alayna Sonnesyn, returns home to the community where she emerged as a young endurance athlete, and headlines the newly rebranded World Team (formerly Pro Team). 2023 University of Alaska graduates Mariel Pulles and Christopher Kalev, both with World Cup experience, will round out the 2024-25 World Team.

The Continental Team (formerly Elite Team) welcomes former Minnesota state high school champions, Luci Anderson and Henry Snider, who return to their Golden Valley and St. Paul roots, respectively. Anderson graduates in May from the University of New Hampshire where she was an NCAA All-American. Snider graduates from Michigan Tech where he was an NCAA qualifier. Team Birkie also welcomes Colby college graduate and Methow Valley native, Gretta Scholz, to round out the Continental Team positions for Team Birkie. Scholz was the 2020 U20 Junior National Champion in the freestyle sprint, and qualified for NCAA three times for the Mules of Colby.

WORLD TEAM

Athletes competing on the World Cup/World Championship levels

- Alayna Sonnesyn – Plymouth, MN - SMS T2, UVM, Wayzata HS
- Mariel Pulles – Otepää, EST – UAF, Karupesa Ski Team
- Kevin Bolger – Minocqua, WI – USST, Falun-Borlänge SK, SVSEF, U of Utah, Nordicwerks, Lakeland Nordic Ski Team
- Zak Ketterson – Bloomington, MN – USST, NMU, LNR, Jefferson HS
- Christopher Kalev – Tallinn, EST – UAF, Sport Club CSC

CONTINENTAL TEAM

Continental Team: Athletes competing on US SuperTour/Continental Cup level

- Luci Anderson – Golden Valley, MN – UNH, LNR, Armstrong HS
- Gretta Scholtz – Winthrop, WA – Colby, Methow Valley, Liberty Bell HS
- Henry Snider – St. Paul, MN – MTU, EU, Mounds Park Academy HS

“This is an exciting step forward for Team Birkie, from a competitive perspective,” said Team Birkie Head Coach, Chad Salmela. “The size and quality of this group perfectly blends the vision we have of mentoring developing athletes with a robust, high-quality, world-class training group.”

Team Birkie still has spots available for our 2024-25 Regional Team, Marathon Team and College Summer programs [\[All Programs\]](#). Apply by sending an email to teambirkiepro@gmail.com

ABOUT TEAM BIRKIE: Team Birkie is a Midwest-based professional cross country ski team formed through a collaboration between the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation, The Loppet Foundation, and Central Cross Country Skiing (CXC). With athletes competing at the FIS World Cup, U.S. SuperTour, and regional marathon levels, the team is dedicated to advancing skiing in the Central Region. With its home base in Minneapolis, MN, Team Birkie promotes partnership and community engagement, striving to set higher standards in the sport and inspire the next generation of Nordic skiers. Learn more at www.teambirkie.com