

Athlete: Alexei ALMOUKOV

Sport: Biathlon



Country of Birth

I was born In Russia, in a small town Called Soloboevo.

Years spent living in home country

I lived in Russia until I was 6 years of age and then moved to Australia. I had not finished my first year of school when I left for Australia.

Years spent living in Australia, and why you came to Australia

I am not really sure why we came to Australia. My father had decided to go to either Canada or Australia and he chose Australia so we came here and started a new life.

My whole family moved to Australia in 1998, so I have lived in Australia for over 12 years. It's been a very interesting journey, from not knowing the language when I first arrived, through primary school and onto high school. I picked up the language fully after 6 months and could speak it fluently. When I am overseas I count my home Australia and nothing feels like home until I am actually back in Australia.

Age I am 19 years of age born in 1990

Your education, what you are studying, where you went to school/university, your future career

I started at Berridale Primary School and then went onto Monaro High School for 5 years. I then decided to try distance education because of the difficulty in keeping up with my school work due to my travels, training and competing. I completed Year 10 doing distance education at Karabar Distance Education Centre. It was hard work but they were very understanding and helped with all my studies. I completed my Higher School Certificate in 2007.

I am not attending a University in Australia but I have been invited to study at a Russian University called The Government University of Tyumen which I am currently considering. I would like to study Sports Management so I can continue in the sports area once I have finished my Biathlon career.

Your family are they in Australia or Overseas

I have one brother Kostya, my father Nick and my mother Irina. They all live in Australia.

Who is your biggest motivator?

My biggest motivator would be Ole Ener Bjorndalen as he is just Mr Perfect. He is committed to the sport of Biathlon and trains very hard. It is difficult to find anything he does wrong.

Do other members of the family do Biathlon, if so who, what level did they get to (e.g. Olympics, world cups), who did they ski for and how long ago my Father competed in Russia in biathlon for 2 years but then stopped because it was too difficult due to the rifle laws. He was close to a national level Cross Country skier competing for Russia, and was a National level coach after his skiing career.

Who coaches you?

My father Nick Almoukov Has been coaching me all my life since I started to first ski on snow in 1999, and since then we have been together.

What you do off season (other recreational activities)

Mostly off season I ski in Australia and do the entire National Cross country race Series which is very competitive and interesting. If there isn't any snow I train dry land. I am in full time training but work part-time in Australia to earn funds to allow me to travel overseas.

What hobbies you have, what your ideal holiday would be

I like playing golf, going to the beach and downhill skiing. My ideal holiday would be to go to Hawaii and just relax for around 3 weeks, with no training, all my friends around and not having to worry about competitions. The aim would be to clean out my mind!

Maybe one day when I earn enough from Biathlon I can do this.

What XC races & Biathlon races you have done in the past, what are your best results

I have had a number of good Cross Country races in the previous seasons and have competed in 3 XC World Junior Championships, coming 47th out of 100 competitors this year.

I haven't had a long biathlon career but my best race has been in the Russian Junior Championships coming 9th out of 101. This was a pursuit race, so you start at the position you came from the previous day. I started 3 minutes behind the leader in 33rd position coming into 9th. My over all time was 3rd; hence if this race had been an individual race I would have been top 3.

How do you rank yourself among the best in the world

The best in the world are incredible, fit and amazing people but they are all around 7 years older than me so I have 7 years to come up to that level and peak. I always wonder if I can get that good but every year I am getting fitter and faster, and I might just make it up there maybe even sooner than 5-7 years.

What will you do this season in Australia?

This Australian Winter I am going to try to buy a rifle because I still don't have my own rifle. And they are very expensive. I will also prepare for the international season, and I will compete in all Cross Country races and Biathlon. I will leave Australia in September to prepare for the international season.

How will you prepare for the Olympic selection, where will you train and compete?

I will leave Australia sometime in late September to go to Russia and prepare for the Olympic season. They have excellent training facilities in Russia as Russia is the No 1 Biathlon nation in the world.

I will compete in all World Cup events from November 2009 prior to the Olympics to gain experience. This will be a hard and an interesting experience for me.

Who sponsors you?

I don't have any formal sponsors who provide me with product and equipment, although there are a number of individuals who continually assist me in my goals. These are Ian Hayson of the Hayson Group, who support and assist me to travel overseas. The Hayson Group especially he supported my first trip to Russia to learn Biathlon.

I am supported by The NSW Institute of Sport (NSWIS) where I am a scholarship holder. Both Rhythm Snow Sports in Cooma and Manuela Berchtold have assisted me with air flights and scholarship grants.

What is your favourite place to ski overseas and why

My favourite place to ski would be Switzerland because of the great snow conditions, but my favourite training camp is in Slovakia at Strebske Pleso. This is because of the great food and the accommodation and tracks.

What made you take up Biathlon?

I guess Biathlon is an interesting sport. Time flies when you are training and you don't have to keep on doing loops and loops with nothing to refresh your mind. When you do biathlon you are always thinking about how you will shoot on the next lap and so on. It can be difficult to concentrate on shooting sometimes, but it takes your mind off doing the same thing in races.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?

I would like to be competing in the red group of the World Cup, having some good results including wins and podiums and effectively being a professional athlete.

Where do you see yourself after your sporting career?

Hopefully having a University degree and working within the sport of XC skiing and biathlon.

