

FROM THE BIATHLON CANADA WEBSITE: GUIDELINES FOR ROLLERSKIING/BLADING

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In general Athletes should:

1. Wear appropriately coloured clothing to ensure they are visible and contrast with the background.
2. Wear a certified bicycle or skateboarding helmet.
3. Always proceed on the side of caution - ski defensively at all times and be as predictable as possible.
4. Avoid using personal stereos that could impede communication.

In addition to the above, when using shared roadways Athletes should:

1. Wear reflective clothing.
2. Mark the lowest 10 cm of their poles with high visibility tape.
3. Be mindful that vehicle drivers will have difficulties seeing skiers just beyond the crests of hills and when the sun is low.
4. Double pole when passing non-skiers. Members of the public are often very scared of flying ski poles!

In general coaches should:

1. Preview the course to be skied to ensure it is free from potentially dangerous hazards.
2. Post signs to warn other users of rollerskiers.
3. Avoid training sessions during times of heavy traffic on the chosen route.
4. Drive a support vehicle, signed to warn traffic of rollerskiers ahead and with it's hazard lights turned on, behind the last skier when doing long distance workouts.
5. Increase the use of roller skiing only when athletes have proven themselves capable of performing in ways that don't jeopardize their own safety and the safety of those around them. Even minor terrain variations can become significant hazards when you don't have brakes.
6. Strictly enforce helmet use and ensure that helmets are in proper, as-designed, condition.

Notes about helmets:

In general bicycle helmets are a cheap and effective solution for reducing the effects of severe head trauma during roller skiing. Unfortunately for biathletes the normal shape of bicycle helmets can interfere with a carried rifle. A better solution is a freestyle or BMX helmet. They are generally shaped much closer to the head and are readily available at most shops that sell BMX-style bicycles.

Also of note is that most helmets have straps that can be adjusted to fit such that the straps won't interfere with proper cheek contact on the stock. Always ask about strap adjustment options before buying!