

Meet Biathlete and TDXC Professional Instructor

Gyongyver Ridenour

By **CYNTHIA CENDREDA** | Photos by **KATEY HAMILL**

CC: How long have you lived in Truckee, and what do you love most about it?

GR: I have lived in Truckee, on and off, for 15 years. While I was born and raised in Transylvania, Romania, with Hungarian heritage, and spent six to seven years in Austria, I am proud to call Truckee home. Raising a child here has been a meaningful experience, and what I love most is the sense of community, the open-minded mentality and the people who appreciate the offerings of Tahoe: the natural beauty and a wide variety of activities that contribute to our well-being all year long.

CC: What is your background in XC?

GR: My cross country (XC) skiing journey began at the age of 5 when my older sister, Biborka Xantus, would take me to training sessions. Our parents worked long hours, so we spent most of our time in our XC community, sometimes away from our home base for months. I became one of the youngest racers at the time, securing victories regularly and mastering both XC styles: classic and skating.

My primary coach introduced me to biathlon, and with his encouragement, I joined the sport. I developed a deep appreciation for it, especially the excitement of shooting and the focus on consistency in eye coordination and breath control. Over the years, I reached the national level, winning consecutively for many years.

After high school, I learned and taught downhill skiing and snowboarding in several countries, discovered holistic health and healing modalities and transitioned to becoming a holistic healer and yoga teacher. However, following some major life changes, I returned to my original passion, cross country skiing. I have taught XC at various facilities throughout the area and now teach private lessons and assist with the junior biathlon program here at TDXC. I am a PSIA Level 3 certified coach and am working towards becoming a PSIA Level Educator staff member.

CC: What kind of training do you recommend for XC Skiers?

GR: Incorporate a variety of long-distance XC workouts to build endurance. Focus on refining your techniques to improve efficiency and speed. Additionally, prioritize post-session activities that specifically target endurance, strength, flexibility and mobility. Get adequate rest to allow your body to recover and maximize overall performance on the trails. Consider an XC skiing lesson to enhance your skills and help you reach your goals.

CC: What is your favorite trail at TDXC?

GR: My favorite trail is the Euer Valley Exploration, where I enjoy getting lost in the beauty of nature.

CC: What are your go-to essentials for a day at TDXC?

GR: I always carry a trail map, especially in areas with no phone reception. Additionally, I bring a waist pack with water, a protein bar, energy chews and sunscreen. I dress appropriately for the weather and always wear sunscreen and sunglasses to protect me from the elements.

For uninterrupted training, I always display my trail pass and keep a playlist of my favorite songs on my phone to help maintain my tempo.

