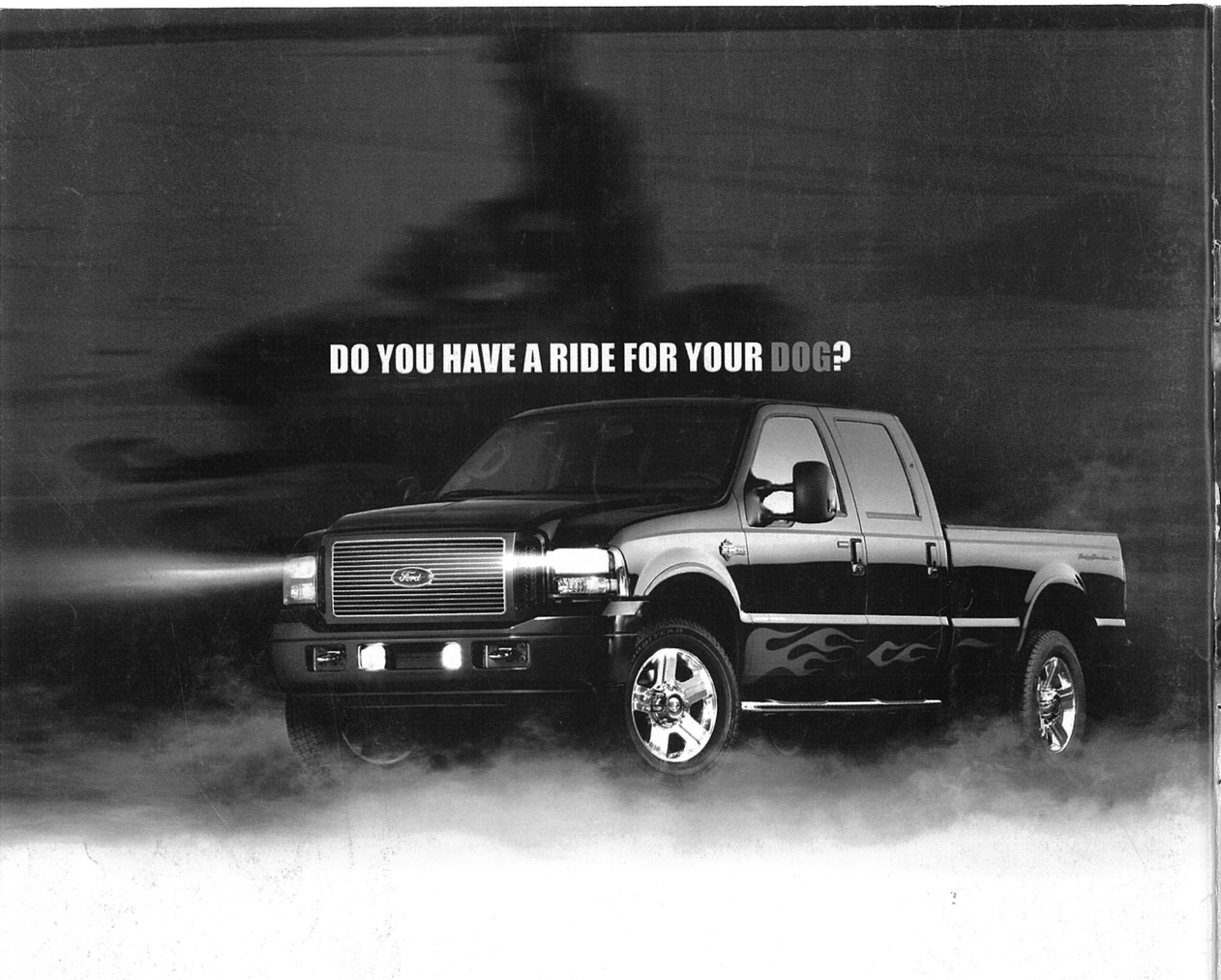


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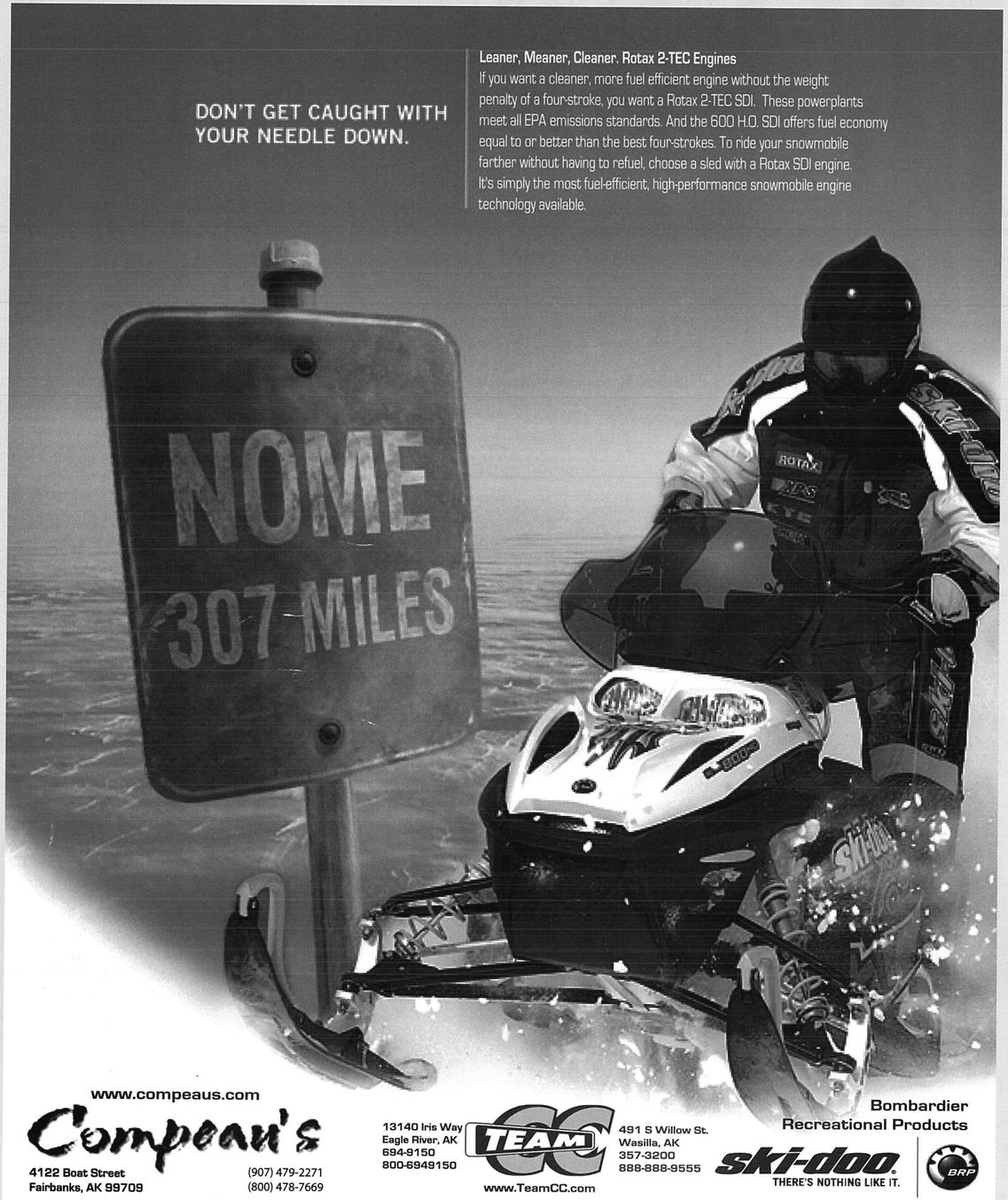
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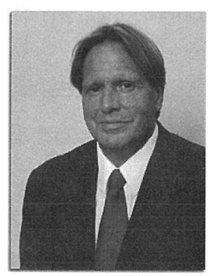
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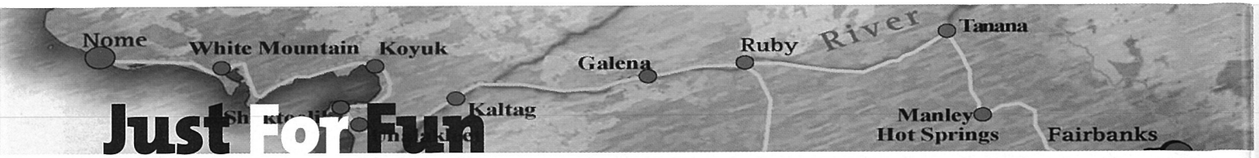
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DOUGLAS *continued from page 48*

from opening his home to strangers.

"Me and dad were real popular volunteering on Iron Dog and Iditarod," said J.R. "When they layover, the school is open to them, but they would stay over here instead. One time we had 12 racers in our house." J.R., 27, is one of eight surviving children. With most of them coming and going during the races, the Douglas home was surely packed to the brim.

"It was quite nice to have [the racers] at the house, they would be thanking for the hospitality and great food," said Raymond.

Raymond is described by racers as a quiet man who intently listened to their racing stories, but to his family he had a great sense of humor, was very talkative and enjoyed spinning tales of his youth: going to boarding school in White Mountain and walking over the hills to the river to go fishing. Raymond had a love for the outdoors and living off the land.

"He taught me a lot of tradition, fishing hunting, skinning and putting away Eskimo food," said J.R.

Born Aug. 1, 1934 on the Tractor Trail between Bear Creek Mining and Haycock, Raymond managed to fill his years eventfully. He finished school in the eighth grade, became a father at 17, served two years in the National Coast Guard, the Koyuk IRA, and the Koyuk Native Corp., and contributed many years to the mayor and council members to the city of Koyuk. Raymond also worked as postmaster, village health aide, firefighter crew boss and in the 1970s was a spectator in the Alaska Pipeline.

On Dec. 1, 2006 from a tumor on the stem of his brain, Raymond passed away in the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage with his family and loved ones by his side. During his stay in the hospital, he openly said to his family, "I love you."

"I hope that we don't miss these opportunities to recognize people along the trail that have given their time and effort," said Davis. "I am saddened that I never let him know how much I appreciated people like him."

Raymond is survived by his wife, Clara; sons and daughters-in-law, Darin and Margaret, James, Brian, Gary, J.R. and Nora; daughters and son-in-law, Patricia and Terry, C.J., and Michelle; brothers and sisters-in-law, A. Einar and Dora Douglas, Dan and Anna Douglas, Langford and Vera Adams, Richard and Ellen Adams; sisters and brothers-in-law, Matilda and Ron Davena, Elvina and Tom Naranjo, Delores Napayonak; 15 grandchildren; and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

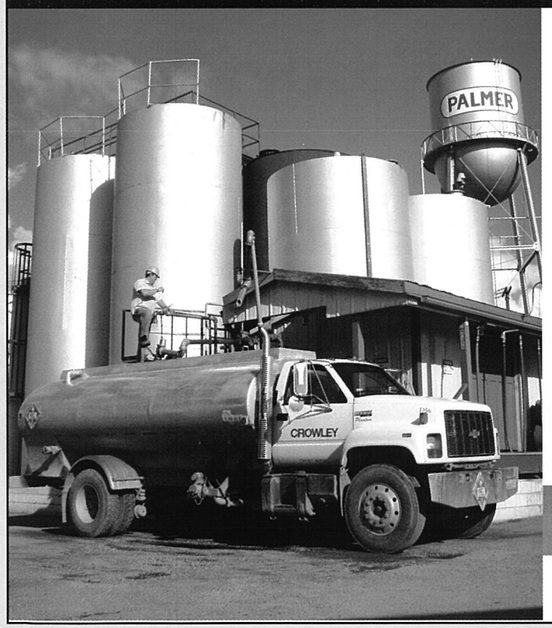
STRICK *continued from page 48*

shared were the most wonderful years of my life. I will forever be grateful for those times. He was the absolute best partner for me and he will remain 'The Love of My Life' forever. Besides me, our daughters, Veronica, Tamara and Richelle, he also leaves his parents, Sharon Gurtler Strick and Richard Strick, Sr., his sister Sharon Diane and brothers, Frederick and Steffen, as well as nieces and nephews, our grandchildren and many, many friends throughout Alaska and beyond.

Richard is greatly missed, but will live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved him - forever!"

Richard will live in the hearts of Iron Dog fans that will never forget this extraordinary and special man, so passionate in his generosity and singular in his pursuit of this wondrous place we live and enjoy. Richard, we trust you found your Beyondo.

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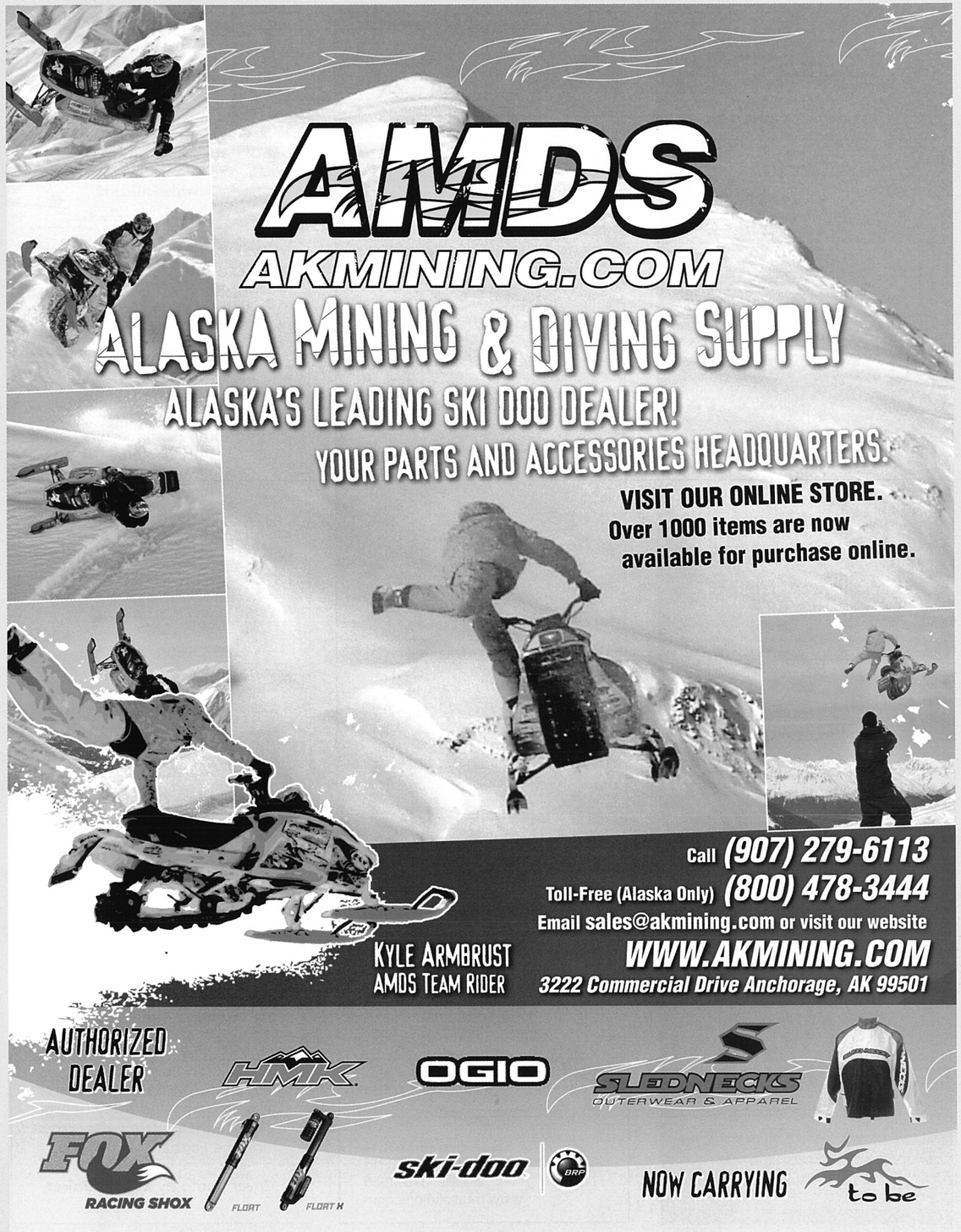
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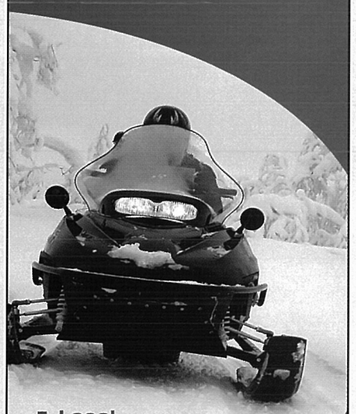
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On the cover:
2006 Tesoro Iron Dog winners Dwayne Drake and Andy George celebrate their victory after crossing the Fairbanks finish line.

Cover photo by **Robert Baker**



In Memory

Raymond Douglas Sr.

A gold-winning heart in Arctic racing

By TEEKA BALLAS

Koyuk, a town of only 5 square miles and 300 inhabitants, does not offer a lot of places for visitors to stay. Racers of both the Tesoro Iron Dog and the Iditarod know all too well that their options are limited there.

Since the inception of the Iditarod in 1973 however, one man has consistently offered his home, a warm place to find shelter from the cold and a good meal, to racers of both events en route to Nome or returning to Fairbanks.

"When we'd make it to Koyuk on the way home and the weather would be bad, everybody's reluctant to go out on the Sound," said Iron Dog racer Scott Davis. "Consequently he got a lot of us there."

Raymond Douglas Sr. volunteered to be checkpoint checker for 34 years to the Iditarod and for the Iron Dog (formerly the Gold Rush Classic). When racers would stop in Koyuk, his wife Clara would serve up sandwiches and soup, Raymond would check them in, make sure they had everything they needed, give them gas and oil and put them up for the night if they were so inclined.



"I remember there was one year, it seemed his house was a revolving door.

Guys were coming and going there," said Davis. "About the time somebody was getting up from a bed, someone was getting into it."

"He was just always willing to give what he had. And a lot of what he gave was his time at all hours of the night. He was just a real great human being," said Davis. "Throughout the years we watched the kids grow up. We'd sit and have coffee in the morning before we went out. He'd offer to cook something… he and his wife. A very generous individual."

Raymond is considered a rare breed by racing standards in the Arctic arena. Every year for 34 years he consistently volunteered. He checked racers in at any hour day or night. Every time race coordinators would get an update from Koyuk, it was Raymond.

"I've been involved in promoting and racing the Iron Dog since the beginning, and it's really hard to find people you can count on," said Davis. "It's just really hard to find those few people that you can call and when they say they're going to do some they actually do it… [Raymond] was just a one-of-a-kind guy and very rare. A real rarity."

"He used to stay up most of the time when the first teams are reaching Unalakleet," said Raymond's youngest son J.R.. "He'd start staying up from there until the very last team passes through going to Nome. When the first team was on its way back to Fairbanks, it was my job to wake him up."

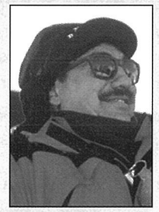
Praised as abundantly generous and good-hearted, Raymond got a sense of joy

continued on next page

Richard Charles 'Rich' Strick Jr.

April 20, 1959 - February 14, 2006

Beyondo' is a place in the woods where no one can find us, it is a place where we are at peace with each other. Beyondo is where we go when life is at its toughest, the safest place in the world, the woods!" — Richard Strick, Jr., blog posting, February 3, 2006.



Richard died in an avalanche just 11 days after writing his definition of Beyondo. Rich was a man who loved his family, his culture, and all things Alaska: fishing, hunting, boating, snowmobiling and camping.

Rich caught the "Iron Dog Fever" when he partnered with Alan "Goomy" Anderson, II and ran the 1997 Iron Dog race. In his rookie year he finished the grueling race and learned for himself that it isn't as easy as it looks. It turned out, easy wasn't what he was looking for after all: when he finished the 2,000 mile Iron Dog race, he immediately turned his skis north and headed back the way he had just come, a ride home through "His Woods" pursuing his joy and happiness.

Rich was generous with his time and knowledge; he volunteered countless hours to Iron Dog for many years, breaking trail north and south of McGrath and manning the Rohn Checkpoint. Breaking trail north meant traveling to Poorman more than 300 miles round-trip. Someone had to scout out the terrain to do a preflight, drop fuel and create a plan… who was going, how were they going and when were they going? At least a week before the race, Rich and a team of volunteers would begin their trek and bushwhack their way to Poorman, two days, maybe four, of hard work, return to McGrath and pack for another week or 10 days in Rohn, go through the checklist again, who, what, when and how. Rich's wholehearted enthusiastic Iron Dog support, always turned into a two-week ordeal, but Rich did it with eagerness, a huge smile, and a private knowledge that his hard work wouldn't go unnoticed by his fellow racers; he had been there too.

Judy Vanderpool, Rich's long time life partner says…"The twenty years that we

continued on next page



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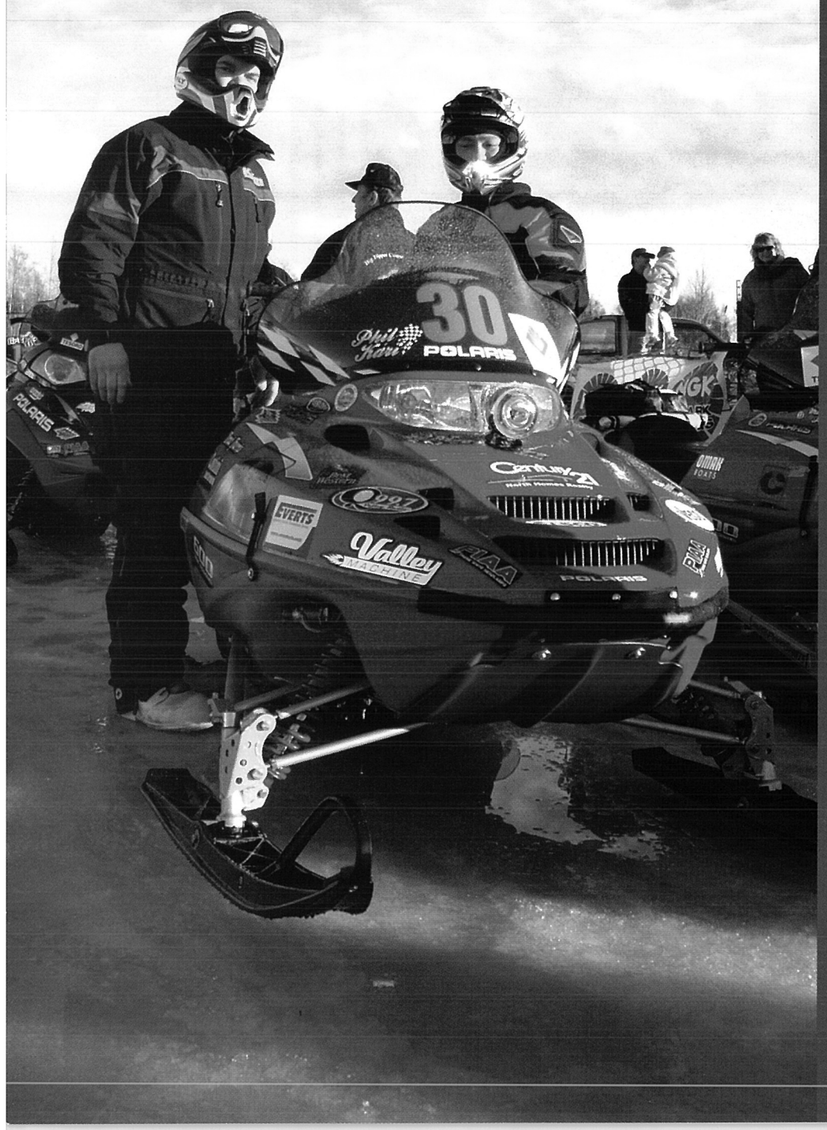
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Trail Class starts at 9 a.m. on February 9

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For live updates from start to finish, tune into Q99.7, Valley Radio, during race week. Get up-to-the-minute reports and live coverage from Community Radio of Alaska member stations KIYU Galena and KSKO McGrath. KIYU also contributes updates to Alaska-wide APRN public radio. Award-winning KNOM Radio, broadcasting to Nome and vicinity, provides live race coverage and racer interviews throughout the race. You can also listen in on your computer at www.KMBQ.com.

TESORO IRON DOG 2007



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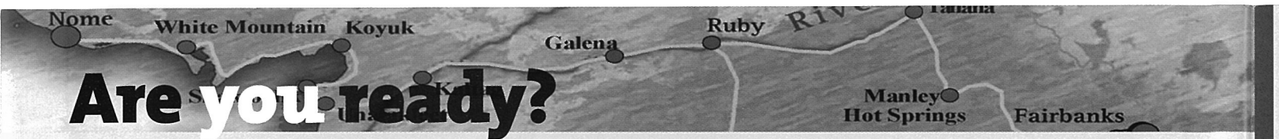
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FILL A 50-GALLON BARREL with sand. Lower it into a hole. Now, lift it out. If you can, add water to the sand and try again. Do this five times a day. This will get your back in shape for picking up the rear end of an Iron Dog sled.

TIE A ROPE to a heavy spring. Pull the rope repeatedly with each arm until the pain in your shoulders meets somewhere in the middle of your back. This will get you in shape for starting your partner's sled; it's best to do this exercise while someone is spraying starting fluid into your nose and eyes.

DRINK FOUR OUNCES of cod liver oil mixed with a strong laxative. Dress in long underwear, fleece liner, your shell and bunny boots. Walk far into the woods without any paper products and wait for a personal emergency.

GO TO YOUR LOCAL HARDWARE store and buy a package of sandpaper. Duct tape a sheet to your snowmobile seat. In the dark of the night and with no pants, go on a five-mile ride. Do this four times a week. This will prepare your backside for the 2,000-mile trip that your partner promised you would be a good time.

PLACE YOUR HANDS IN A BUCKET of ice water for 20 minutes. Put the carburetor from your sled in the bottom of your deep-freeze. Now climb in the deep-freeze and overhaul the carb while holding a Mag light in your mouth. This gets you prepared to work on your sled in the freezing cold and black of night. NOTE: Advanced riders do this with a Leatherman tool.

DRESS UP IN YOUR NEW $350 snowmobile bibs. Pour two-stroke oil down the right leg, gasoline down the other. Fill your bunny boots with ice cubes. Tie a rag over your face and run around in circles for 10 minutes every four hours. This will prepare you for the remote checkpoints in the Bush.

FIND A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN PAY $5 a gallon for regular gas, $20 per quart of oil and $19 for a hamburger, frozen French fries and a Coke. Pay another $60 to sleep in a cold cabin on a bed with spring sticking through the mattress. Stay for four nights minimum. This will prepare you for the restful nights you can look forward to when you declare a layover.

PRACTICE EXPLAINING TO YOUR BANKER why you need another loan for a $40,000 truck to pull the two $10,000 Iron Dog sleds in your $9,000 trailer that you still owe $4,000 on.

Source: Tesoro Iron Dog

2007 TESORO IRON DOG CALENDAR

February 9
- Recreational Class departure, Islander Lodge, Big Lake
- Racers Calcutta & Drawing Reception (open to the public), Best Western Lake Lucille Inn. The start order is to be decided on the luck of the draw. Place a bet on your favorite race team! Food, fun and ferocious competitiveness . . .see who will go out in first position.

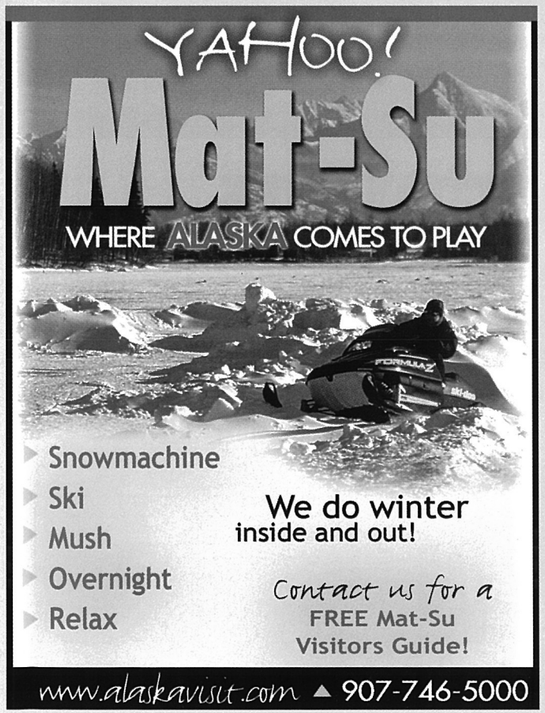
February 10
- Tesoro Iron Dog Safety Inspection and Festival, Wasilla Sports Complex Festival, 1001 South Mack Drive. Outdoor and snowmobile safety and educational seminars. Meet the racers, indoor safety inspection, live radio coverage with KMBQ, Voice of the Valley, DJ music and entertainment, GPS tracking presentation, vendor booths, Iron Dog merchandise, silent auction fundraiser and door prizes.

February 11
- Race day, Big Lake. Start is at 11 a.m. in front of the Islander Lodge. Racers will be unloading machines as early as 8 a.m., final line up is at 10 a.m. Vendor booths and Iron Dog merchandise for sale. NAPA Auto Parts Mini 120 giveaway. Live radio coverage with KMBQ, Voice of the Valley, DJ music and entertainment. Green Flag drops at 11 a.m. in two-minute intervals.

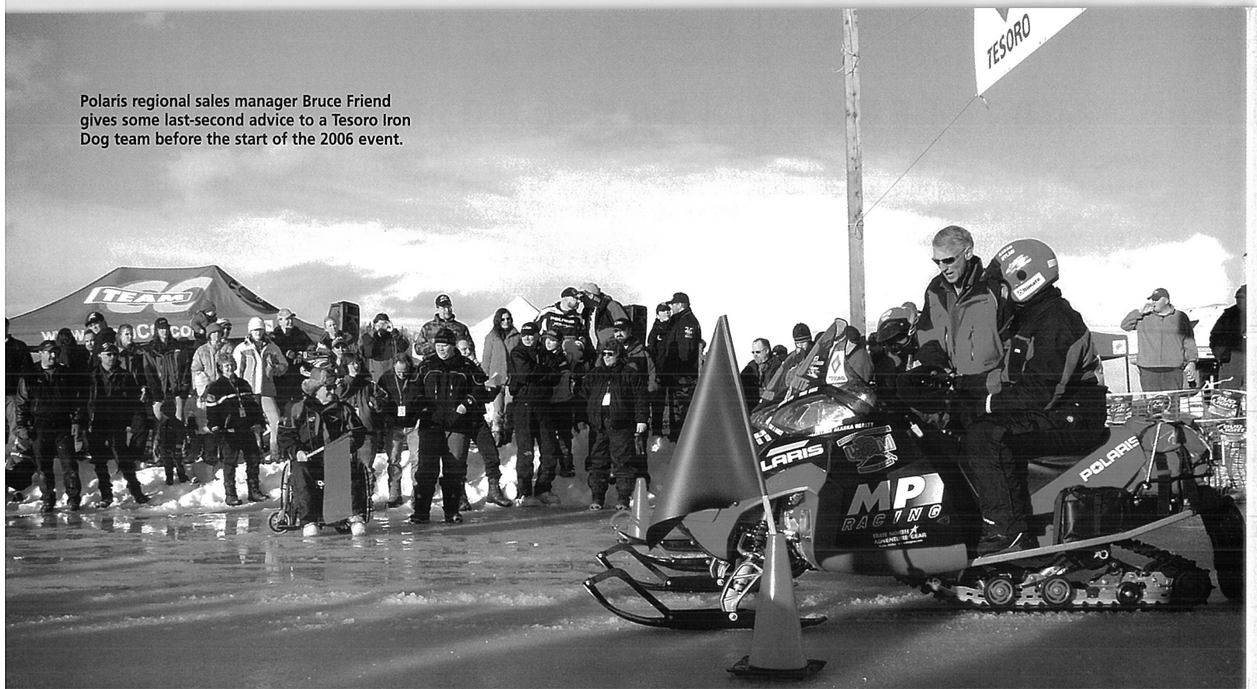
February 14
- Nome Half-Way Banquet. Free food, Tesoro Iron Dog magazines available for autographs, Tesoro Iron Dog apparel available for sale. Slideshow presentation, tales from the trail and halfway and checkpoint contingency prizes awarded at banquet.

February 17
- Race finish, noon-3 p.m. at Pike's Waterfront Lodge and Landing. Racers will be released from Tanana in order to bring all racers across the finish line within approximately two to three hours of each other. Finishing banquet and festival (racers, family and sponsors). Reservations required. Cocktails from 6-7 p.m., banquet to follow.

February 24
- Awards banquet ceremony, to be announced. Check the official Iron Dog website for more details.







Polaris regional sales manager Bruce Friend gives some last-second advice to a Tesoro Iron Dog team before the start of the 2006 event.

Championship racers

2006 (Dwayne Drake, Andy George), Arctic Cats.
2005 (Mark McKenna, Nick Olstad), Arctic Cats, 54:26.
2004 (Mark Carr, Dusty VanMeter), SkiDoos, 39:03.
2003 NO RACE.
2002 (Todd Palin, Dusty Van Meter), Arctic Cats, 38:41.
2001 (Tracey Brassard, Ken Lee), Polaris, 38:44.
2000 (Todd Palin, Dusty Van Meter), Arctic Cats, 41:10.
1999 (Mark Carr, Scott Davis), Arctic Cats, 38:30.
1998 (Mark Carr, Scott Davis), Arctic Cats, 44:47.
1997 (Mark Carr, Scott Davis), Arctic Cats, 61:08.
1996 (John Faeo, Bob Gilman), Polaris, Unknown.
1995 (Todd Palin, Dwayne Drake), Polaris, 58:24.
1994 (Evan Booth, Dan Zipay), Polaris, 71:38.
1993 (Scott Davis, Bill Long), Arctic Cats, 58:36.
1992 (Evan Booth, Dan Zipay), Polaris, 29:58.
1991 (John Faeo, Bob Gilman), Polaris, 30:10.
1990 (John Faeo, Bob Gilman), Yamaha, 40:12.
1989 (Scott Davis, Mark Torkelson), Yamaha, 69:18.
1988 (John Faeo, Dan Zipay), Polaris, Unknown.
1987 (John Faeo, Dan Zipay), Polaris, 51:00.
1986 (John Faeo, Dan Zipay), Polaris, 47:00.
1985 (Scott Davis, Gary Eoff), Yamaha, 38:00.
1984 (John Faeo, Rod Frank), Polaris, 23:50.

John Woodbury

Race Champions

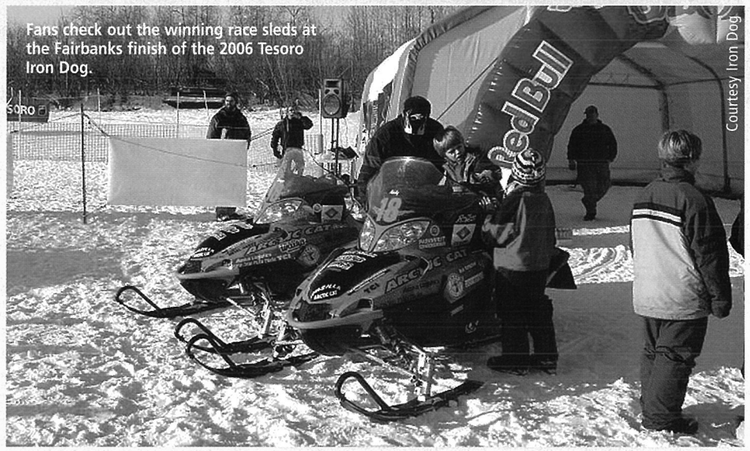
By HANNAH GUILLAUME

In the world's longest, toughest snowmachine race, just getting to the finish line can feel like enough for some racers.

But for a small number of competitors, simply getting it done isn't nearly satisfying enough. Doing it quickly is the real challenge.

When the course was at its shortest, from 1984 until 1992, John Faeo and Rod Frank finished the 1,049-mile course in less than 24 hours.

Today, the course runs nearly 2,000 miles. In 12 years, no team has been able to surpass the race time of 38 hours and 30 minutes held by three-time champions Mark Carr and Scott Davis.



Fans check out the winning race sleds at the Fairbanks finish of the 2006 Tesoro Iron Dog.

Courtesy Iron Dog

exchanged our insane stories with those of the other riders. We learned that the conditions we had been battling were by far the worst ever in the 22 year history of the Iron Dog Race.

It didn't take a genius to figure out that trail conditions were bad, but Jordan and I also figured that this was nowhere near a routine running of the race. As we listened to the tales and opinions of veteran racers we began to realize that we had been initiated, not by fire, but by water.

John Faeo, a 22-year race veteran, said he had never seen the trail in such poor shape. The trail was such a serious safety concern that the race marshal declared that there would be a buddy-type system all the way to safer conditions in Unalakleet, where the race would actually restart.

Many of the pros seemed to be jealous that trail class participants were required to stop in Nome. We would be flying home the next day and our sleds would follow soon after. As you might assume we were glad to be returning home, but we were also somewhat disappointed to be done, as crazy as that may seem. We had come so far and spent an unbelievable amount of time and money to just fly home and never know what might have been. At the same time we felt extremely fortunate to have made it as far as we did.

It took only a few days for Jordan and I to decide that we would in fact run the Iron Dog again next year, in Pro Class this time.

It was quite a far cry from what we were thinking on Norton Sound just days earlier. We figured that since the conditions were so lousy in 2006 that surely next year would be a cake walk . . . right?

I guess we'll just have to see. Until then, we will be paying off our bills, healing our bodies, and preparing for the next hellacious trip on the worlds longest, toughest race: THE 2007 TESORO IRON DOG!





ROOKIE *continued from page 41*

and forth in an attempt to burn off the seawater that soaked my belt. At this point I began to realize I was going to go down. I was going too slow. I had seen some ice chunks in the distance before I took this leap of faith into the deep ocean water, but had discounted them as anything to factor into my crossing because they were so small. As I started to hit them I realized they were much more substantial than I had first thought. Due to the slipping of my belt, I had very limited momentum in my track and these ice floes were the only thing keeping me afloat. The short ice field got even shorter and most of it was behind me now. I continued to work the throttle.

Slowly, the sled began to respond. I felt myself gaining momentum again and not a moment too soon. I left the ice field at full throttle and was not letting go. My sled bogged a little bit once more as I neared the shore. I started to see debris and rocks underneath me. I had made it! I hit the shore, with Jordan right behind me. We managed to continue on to the fuel pump and checkpoint in Koyuk before nearly collapsing in a heap of relief and nerves.

A crowd had gathered around us, cheering and making a commotion. A young village boy tugged on my coat and said he heard my machine falter and thought I was "a goner." I laughed weakly and told him I thought I was, too. We autographed a couple of Iron Dog programs, and asked about the trail ahead. The kindly villagers told us to hug the tree line as we traversed to the next town because the going was extremely wet. I wanted to take a break, but knew we were right behind team four, Matt Spernak and Chris Olds, and staying with an experienced team was our safest bet to reaching the next checkpoint.

We pushed on. The second we left town we began darting across water from ice patch to ice patch knowing that each crossing could spell disaster. Hugging the shore as best we could, we encountered a sharp rock wall that jutted out into the ocean. The only way around it, it seemed, was to skip across to the nearest ice shelf in the ocean, make a sharp turn, and then skip back across to the shore on the other side of the rock face. This was just too much for me.

I decided to try to find another option. I jumped into the water. It was only knee deep. I walked around the rock face, to reveal that there was a decent sized ledge just under the water, but another sharp rock wall would have to be navigated to reach the shore on the other side. I slowly entered the water getting my belt wet once again. I nestled my skis against the smaller rock wall and Jordan and I lifted the snowmachine over it. We did the same for Jordan's sled and made it!

Putting what we hoped was the worst obstacle behind us, we rode on to skip nearly a dozen more lagoons and rivers until we reached Elim. Shaken and exhausted, I asked a local if the trail was as bad beyond this point. He called someone and reported back that there was an overland trail.

Relieved to hear that a somewhat normal trail was available, one that would keep us out of the ocean, we continued to the overland trail in total darkness.

Finally connecting with the Nome Highway was a great feeling. We were on easy street now and had made it to Nome!

When we entered the Nome garage we

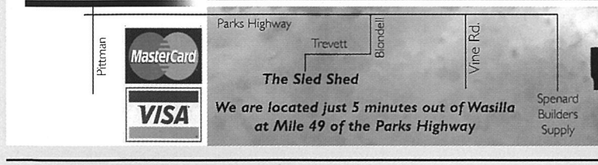
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Wet and wild

Recapping last year's watered-down dog fight

By HANNAH GUILLAUME

When most people look back at the 2006 Tesoro Iron Dog, there are two rare occurrences that come to mind.

"One is the safety hold," said Lahka Peacock, 2006 volunteer of the year who has raced Iron Dog on a Polaris twice since 2000. "It was the first-time ever we put a safety hold up in the middle of the race."

Peacock was in the Fire Hall headquarters in Nome, working communications and tracking the race with officials, when reports started to come in that racers where getting trapped en route because of melting caused by unseasonably high temperatures.

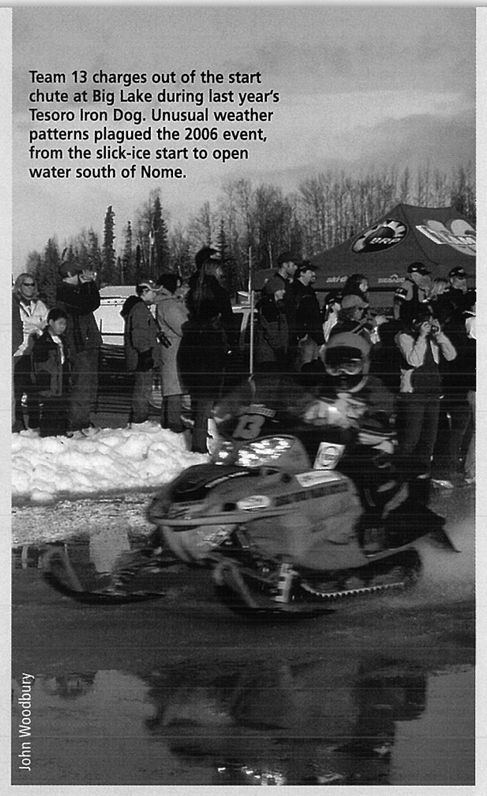
"It was 37 above. Normally it's 20 below," he said. "It was really bad with water – flowing streams and stuff like that."

The 77 miles that normally took an hour to race took five or more. At 1 a.m., Peacock and other race officials went out to look for the bouncing headlights of the racers still trying to make it in from White Mountain.

They could see racers were winding their way up the side of the river and into the mountains to make the final stream crossing into Nome.

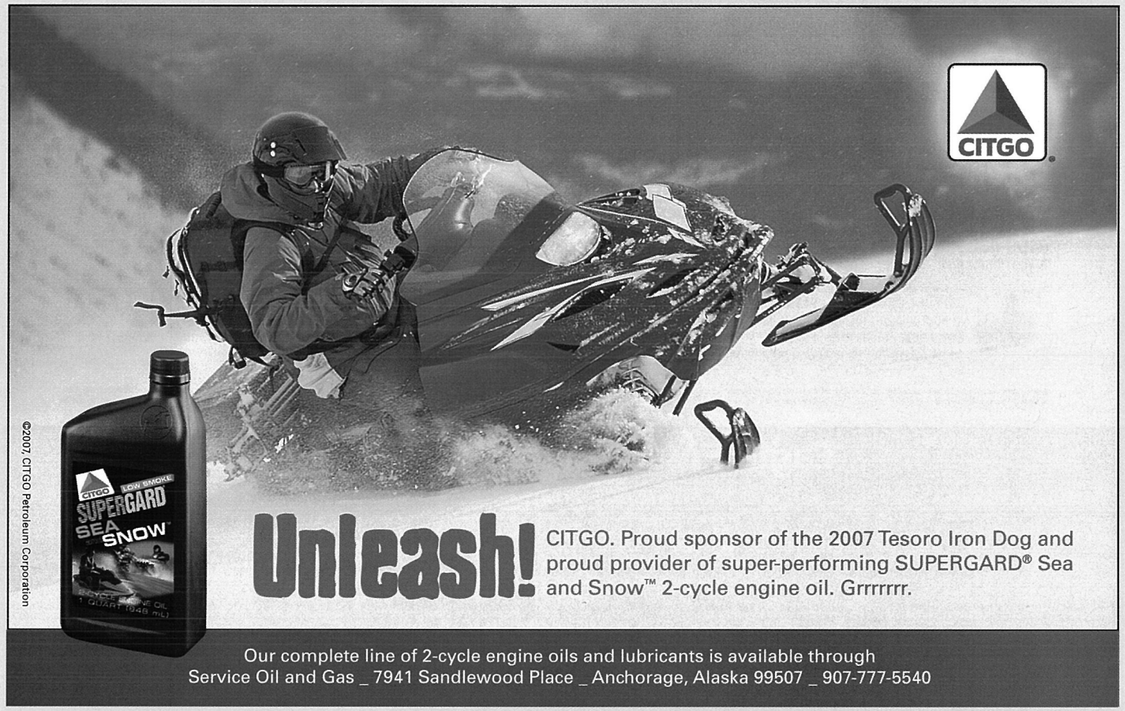
A safety hold was called. By 3 a.m. all but three teams had made it to the checkpoints.

Peacock said computers and a GPS navigation device attached to one of the sleds of the missing teams showed that they were at a shelter cabin and not moving. The three teams were stuck there until daybreak.



Team 13 charges out of the start chute at Big Lake during last year's Tesoro Iron Dog. Unusual weather patterns plagued the 2006 event, from the slick-ice start to open water south of Nome.

John Woodbury



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Shaktoolik we could see the awe-inspiring deep blue ocean. It was a humbling sight. Descending from the hills revealed a bird's eye view of what was ahead of us. It was a sight that made one's stomach churn, especially the stomachs of two rookies with very little water-skipping experience. As far as the eye could see, a multitude of water crossings, both minimal and vast, lay directly in our path.

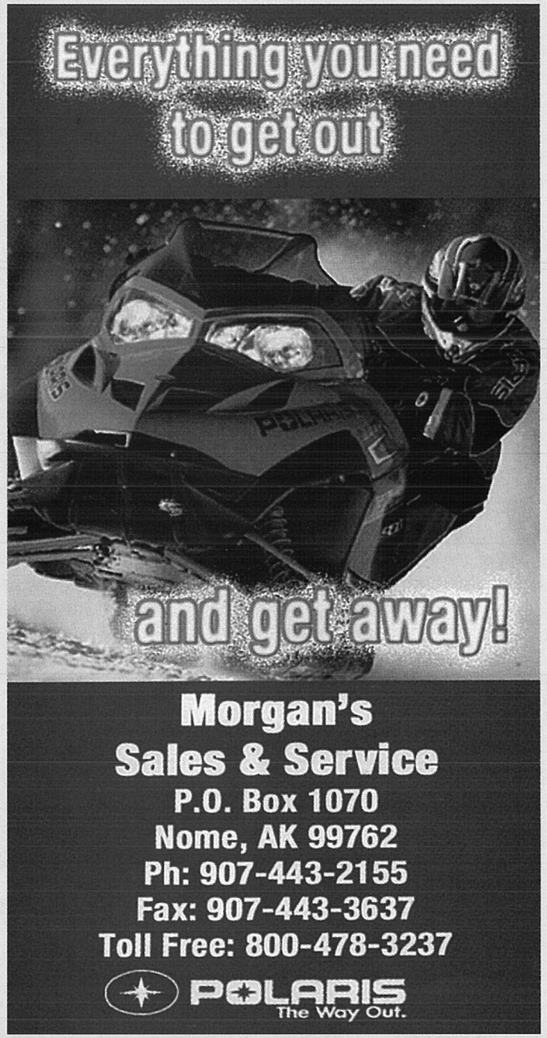
We made it to Shaktoolik without incident, as most of the water was just overflow, but we saw something of grave concern just a few yards from the fueling station. A multitude of water crossings, ranging from one hundred to five hundred feet or more lay directly in the path of the only trail available. As soon as we started our machines all of the children from the village ran to the edge of the bank to watch the adventurous crossings. These were the deepest bodies of water yet and I began to wish I had a life jacket under all of my bulky gear. Amazingly, we had no problems conquering this newest challenge of the trail, either. At this point, I was becoming very nervous and anxious about what we had gotten ourselves into.

We made it across the ocean ice at a blistering pace into Koyuk. Everything was fine until I noticed a Y in the trail. We had to make a choice. Follow the marked trail, or go directly across Norton Sound where the teams in front of us had gone. We decided to follow the professionals. We soon had wished we made a different choice.

The sky began to turn gray as we neared the town of Koyuk. We could see the lights on the shore. We could also see the open ocean of Norton Sound getting closer and closer. We came to the waters edge as had a number teams before us. They circled and followed the water's edge to the west until the narrowest lead of water between the ice and the shore was reached. This lead was about a quarter of a mile wide or more. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. A couple of tracks turned around yet again and headed back where they had come from, but others tracks disappeared into the open ocean. We circled and tried to analyze the situation. I could feel my heart beating hard in my chest. We decided to go for it. Being in the lead, I lined up and held the throttle to the bar. As I entered the water I could feel the ocean spray and taste the bitter, salty water. I remember thinking, in various shades of incredulity, things like, "How in the hell did I get here?" and "What is wrong with me, why am I doing this?" Those sentiments soon turned into a heartfelt prayer as I felt my motor bog, then rev. Not even halfway across the bottomless ocean lead, I knew my belt had gotten wet. I played with the throttle, instinctively rapping it, as my sled began losing speed and began to flounder. My belt was squealing and black smoke started billowing though my side vents.

"This can't really be happening," said a voice in my head. I kept working the throttle back

continued on next page



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ROOKIE *continued from page 38*

that our much faster than anticipated pace was taking its toll on our sleds. It felt great to be in the middle of the pro class ranks, but if we did not make it to Nome, our time and money would be completely wasted, and we would forfeit our chance to achieve our goal, which was to make it across the finish line in Nome. After fixing Jordan's sled we decided to take a break. In fact, we booked a room and had dinner. We also decided that once back on the trail, we would have to slow our pace considerably in order to achieve our goal.

It took hours for most of the teams behind us to appear in McGrath. A couple of teams had major problems due to events that happened in the Farewell Burn and another section referred to as the "Buffalo Tunnels." These problems consisted mainly of damaged front ends from hitting stumps and trees at high speeds. We found ourselves getting stir crazy watching them come and go. We slowly began to realize that we had made a huge strategic error. We should've pressed on. In haste, we threw our gear on and left the checkpoint almost six hours after we had arrived. We were sick about the time lost in McGrath and pushed hard, while trying to be as careful as possible to our damaged machines.

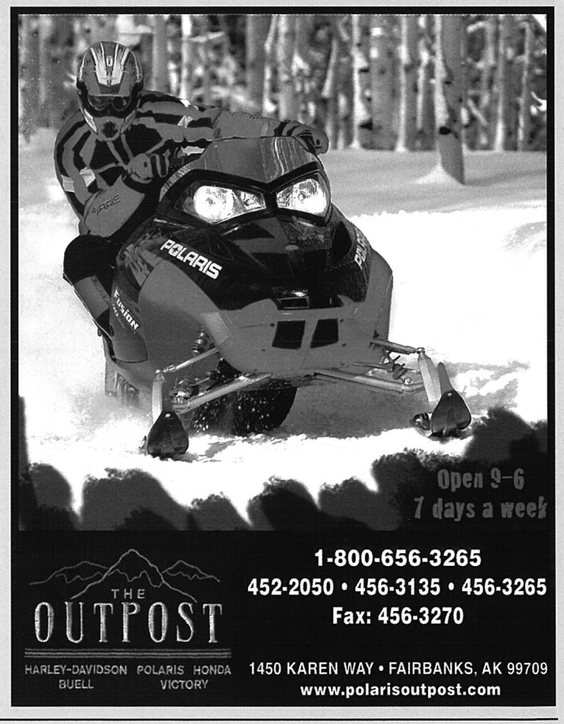
We encountered our first little taste of the water that was to be the bane of this year's race later that night. There were little creeks flowing with sharp banks on either side. Once such creek found me jammed on the opposite side of the bank, my sled and myself half submerged and my partner on the other side. Jordan had to wade across the creek to help me to the topside of the bank. We hit every crossing after that with much more conviction.

Several miles before Ruby, in the middle of nowhere, we found ourselves on a road much like ones back home with guardrails, state signs, and more modern bridges. We screamed down the road with me struggling to control my sled as it darted back and forth due to my unaligned front end. Upon leaving Ruby, my partner and I jumped down onto the Yukon River. It was snowing and blowing once again and the trail disappeared and re-appeared. Following my instinct we pushed through the storm and found ourselves in Galena. I was going over eighty miles an hour slamming over ice chunks and obstacles, but found myself literally falling asleep at the wheel. We decided, for our safety, to stop here in Galena.

Ray Debenham was in charge in Galena, and it was good to see a warm familiar face from back home. Ray and his partner fueled us up and found us a host for the night. Once at Erika's place (our host) we talked for a while, ate, and went to bed. I fell into what amounted to a five-hour coma. It was only later that we realized that we had driven for four hundred and eighty-seven miles in almost twenty-four straight hours of toil and hard riding. Little did we know what the trail ahead held in store.

Once past Kaltag, the trail became narrow and bumpy for a good period of time. It then opened up into open tundra, complete with tussocks and rocks. It was tricky and rough riding. Just before arriving in Unalakleet we ran a river that was mostly overflow and thin ice. Each mile we went seemed to bring less snow, and more water. After Unakaleet we encountered more overflow as we headed for the hills. While in the hills between Unakaleet and





The safety hold was lifted at 9 a.m. and the racers left Nome together. Peacock said this helped give the race its closest finish ever.

"Last year was way different from other years," Peacock said. "It was spectacular. It made all those trying times seem worth it."

The second rare occurrence took place when Dwayne Drake, Andy George, Scott Davis and Todd Palin all came full-throttle toward the finish line in Fairbanks.

Drake and George won by one second.

Drake said in past years, the leading team normally would have a 30-minute advantage at the finish.

"It was nice to do it again, besides the thing at the very end," Drake said. "It was a fun, great ride and the weather was pretty much cooperating."

Scott Davis and Todd Palin, who were also racing on Arctic Cats, were last year's often-favored veteran team.

Davis has missed only two of Iron Dog's 23 races. He said the weather and lacking coastal trails would be last year's biggest highlight — aside from the most thrilling finish in the race's history.

"The contact with the team would probably be the rarest event," Davis said. "I could kind of feel it and kind of see a little snow dust in the air, and I hoped we were catching them."

At one point in the race, Davis said he got hit from an opponent on the left and ended up crashing through ice chunks on the river.

He said he blames the lacking trail markers on the way into Nenana for slowing the approach into Manly. He said the racers' snowmachines aren't good for breaking trail for the most part.

"It isn't just a race against the competition. It's against the terrain and Mother Nature," Davis said.

On top of their navigation problems, keeping the sleds together got tough toward the end. Palin's fuel pump failed, requiring one of the Iron Dog's infamous on-trail repairs.

He estimates that problem put them 15 minutes behind Drake and George.

"It came down to a drag race in the last few miles," he said. "I don't think I'd put it in the books as the toughest Iron Dog I've ever done."

Andy George said the competition at Iron Dog is always friendly, even if it does get a little heated sometimes.

"We're all friends. Everybody's been racing together for a long time," George said. "One team's going to win and one team's going to be in second place. It was a great race. That's what it was."

Drake and George stopped in Manly when they saw that Davis and Palin were stopped on the side of the trail with fuel pump problems. George said he and Drake took off after helping for 10 minutes though, because they saw the Davis-Palin Bush plane coming in to help.

In Nenana, Drake and George ended up having fuel problems, too.

"We didn't know if they were ahead of us or behind us," George said. "It came down to a dogfight the last 20 miles… You couldn't have asked for better race conditions in the end."

George said that Palin was a little bummed out because he got beat, but that Palin saw the race the way they all did — the best dogfight they'd ever been in.

"That'll never happen again," he said. "Scott Davis will be in the snowmachine hall of fame someday. It's pretty cool."



Iron Dog starting from scratch, stays alive

By HANNAH GUILLAUME

Despite a notable decline of cross-country snowmobile races, the Tesoro Iron Dog has helped the world's longest, toughest snowmobile race to thrive for 23 years.

"Iron Dog reflects a history that developed in the early 1900s," said Laura Bedard, executive director of Iron Dog. "I truly believe Iron Dog represents these cross-country races that have come and gone."

She said the history of the race helps explain the survival.

John Faeo and Rod Frank earned the first win in the 1,049 mile race from Big Lake to Nome in 1984 on Polaris snowmobiles. They hold the record for quickest finish with 23 hours and 50 minutes.

In 1992, the race course grew to 2,000 miles from Wasilla to Nome and back.

Bedard said racer participation didn't really start growing until 1998. That year, Arctic Cat racers Mark Carr and Scott Davis took the win on the 2,000-mile course from Wasilla to Nome then Fairbanks in less than 45 hours. It was their second win in three consecutive years.

Today, racers rip through 1,971 miles of snow-packed trails in freezing temperatures from Big Lake to Nome to Fairbanks on Feb. 11-17.

Race festivities, rider education and snowmobile-safety demonstrations happen all over the state. One of the biggest and most lively celebrations is at the halfway point in Nome on Valentines Day.

Bedard said year-round events have helped Iron Dog keep going when so many cross-country snowmobile races haven't been able to survive.

Fred Grubb, a rollercoaster builder from Hayden, Idaho, will race in Iron Dog for the first time this year.

"We used to race the cross-country races down here in the States," Grubb said. "About three months ago, we decided, 'well, we better get going to do this thing.'"

His Arctic Cat teammate, Darrick Johnson, is an Iron Dog rookie, too. This will be their first race together.

Grubb raced in the Rocky Mountain Circuit in the Wyoming and Idaho day races; they were 50 to 100 miles in the 1970s and 1980s. He said he grew up in a family of snowmobile racers and had to watch cross-country races dwindle in the U.S.

"Racing snowmobiles and stuff for people is really hard to do. It's really hard unless you have the time or business where you can afford it," Grubb said. "It's hard to do it anymore, because it's just like checkbook racing."

Grubb and Johnson had to buy four snowmachines for special use in Iron Dog.

Grubb said hillclimbing has survived better than cross-country racing events because snowmachines for hillclimbs can be used for other types of riding.

He noted that laws for public land use also make it harder to keep cross-country racing alive in the upper-continental U.S.

Johnson, an Arctic Cat dealer from Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, is an experienced drag racer. He said it is the complete opposite of cross-country snowmobile races.

Johnson said the lack of cross-country races in the continental U.S. has a lot to do with land owners not wanting to get sued.

"My personal feeling is just the logistics of it. It's the liability these days," he said. "Down here in the Lower 48, you couldn't get land owners to agree to run a race of



Tesoro Iron Dog executive director Laura Bedard.

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SUBWAY
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2006 Iron Dog, a rookie's story

By COLE SULLIVAN

It's five o'clock Sunday morning, starting day of the longest, toughest snowmachine race in the world. I awoke with an all too familiar sensation in my stomach, a feeling I've been living with for months now on a much smaller scale. It was the feeling of excitement, anxiety, fear, and anticipation. I commenced with my normal morning ritual, trying to put my mind at ease, to no avail. Once fully awake, showered, and fed, I headed out to the shop, where the two objects that had been consuming my time and energy for months lay in wait. The bright yellow Ski-Doo MXZ and the gleaming Arctic Cat Crossfire sat where we had left them the night before after finishing last minute adaptations and double-checking adjustments. My partner Jordan Hartman drove into the yard exhibiting symptoms of the same controlled panic that I suffered with. we found a multitude of last-minute projects to tackle before loading our sleds and heading for the starting line on Big Lake.

In a frenzy, Jordan and I threw our bulky gear on and headed to the spot designated for Team 42, which was second to last in the line up. We were one of three trail class teams, all of which started behind the pro class.

Finally, after waiting what seemed like an eternity, it was our turn. My partner and I started off at a moderate pace, which quickly turned into something different as the people cheered us on. We shot out of the spectator area, spraying water in every direction.



Courtesy Cole Sullivan

Cole Sullivan and teammate Jordan Hartman pose near Nome during the 2006 Tesoro Iron Dog.

The first checkpoint in Skwentna found anxious onlookers clapping and shouting amidst a mixture of rain showers and sunshine. I imagine we both seemed like tourists lost in a foreign city when we pulled into the fueling area. People were shouting "How much?" "Top off your oil?" "Reserve tank?" "I need a signature!" while handing us water and Tang. I was so confused and fatigued at this point, one of the fastest legs of the race, that I didn't know what I wanted. I just said yes to everything.

We left the Skwentna Checkpoint a little more educated about the race. We also left knowing that the next few hours of narrow, rutted, bumpy trail would be hell.

The trail only got rougher and more trenched out. We battled on . . . up, down and around, forever it seemed, with huge flakes now drifted down to cover us and the trail. The trees alongside the narrow trail bent in toward the trail, causing us to break branches and plow into them when trying to maintain speed up and down the bobsled-like trail. Every time I would push through a snow laden alder patch or tree blockade, the foliage would snap back upright, happy to be relieved of its snowy burden which was now piled on my hood and covering my headlights. I was constantly wiping away the snow.

The wind began to howl. The trail began to fade. The trail disappeared. It reappeared through each wooded area. Our hopes of passing teams began to fade. As we finally popped out on Puntilla Lake we noticed what looked like fifty parked snowmachines. Every single team had to declare a mandatory layover due to extreme snow conditions and a non-existent trail. We were still running with the Big Dogs!

Entering Farewell Burn we slowed down even more, knowing that this area makes teams scratch more than any place on the 1,971-mile race. This section is barely wide enough for a snowmachine in most parts, and when it is wider, it is home to many obstacles covered over with snow. It is a place where racers need to use extreme caution.

Even though our pace was moderate, we both managed to collide with a couple trees.

After racing out of Nikolai we dropped onto a river and then through swampy forest. I looked back to see that Jordan was not behind me. He eventually came around the corner with some bad news. He had broken his rear track shock. We decided to limp into McGrath to make repairs.

Once in McGrath we started to realize

continued on page 40



this scope."

Grubb's father Bob, an 83-year-old from Dubois, Wyo. who was an Arctic Cat dealer, raced his first cross-country snowmobile race during the 1966-67 season.

He didn't stop racing until he was nearly 60 years old.

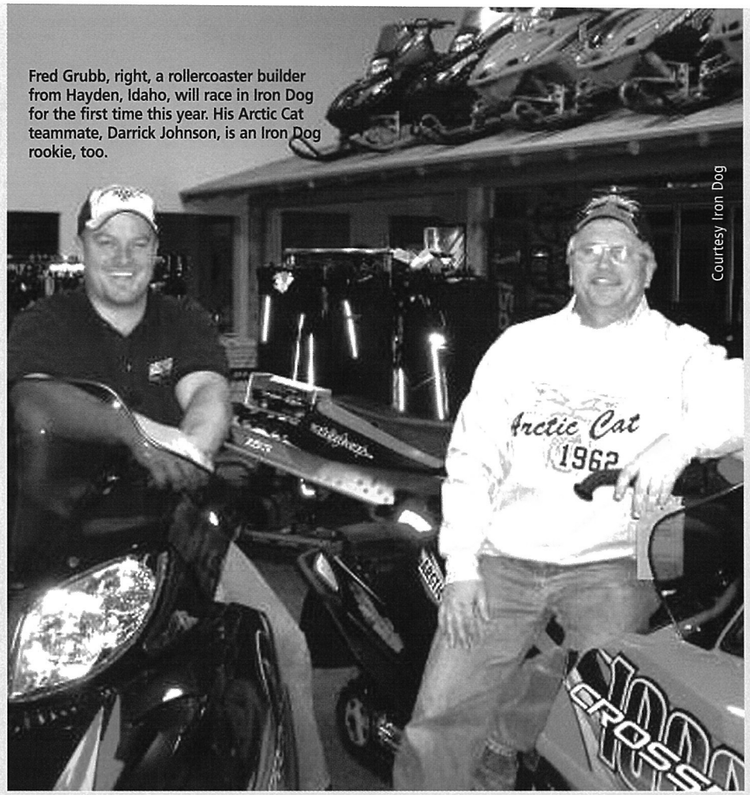
"The first race was by Jackson, Wyo. We was racing eight-horsepower machines at that time. Those were the first to come out," Bob said. "There isn't too many cross-country races anymore. There's just too many people out there going 75 miles to a 100 miles an hour."

During the 1969-70 season, he defeated 305 snowmachines to win a cross-country race.

"We had a five-man team," Bon said. "We raced from St. Anthony, Idaho to West Yellowstone, Montana. They called it the hundred and one — we finished first."

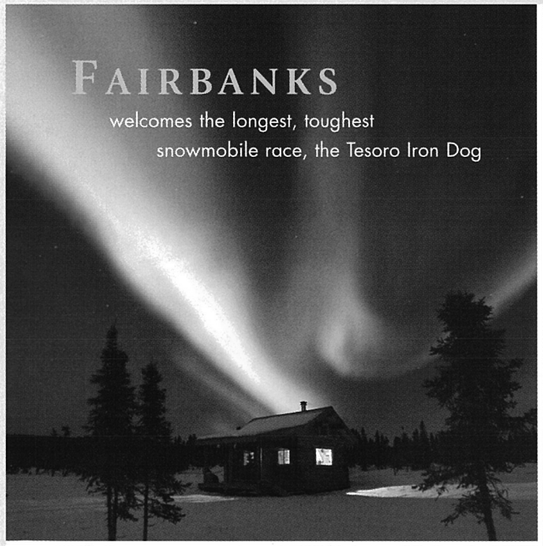
After turning in his helmet nearly 23 years ago, Bob said he sees another reason why cross-country races are hard to come by.

"The factories sponsor all those races, and it kind of leaves the individual out," Bob said. "It's not just cross-country, it's the snowcrosses, too."



Courtesy Iron Dog

Fred Grubb, right, a rollercoaster builder from Hayden, Idaho, will race in Iron Dog for the first time this year. His Arctic Cat teammate, Darrick Johnson, is an Iron Dog rookie, too.





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Iron Dog fans a rare breed

By JOHN KLAPPERICH

John Klapperich
Member: International Broadcasters Idea Bank
Owner/President – KMBQ/KBYR Corporation
2200 East Parks Hwy.
Wasilla, Alaska 99654
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Cell: (907) 355-9970 john@kmbq.com

Iron Dog Fans are a rare breed, but let me expand: fans of the Great Land are a rare breed.

As I write this editorial of my thoughts on Alaska and the 2007 Tesoro Iron Dog, we are in the middle of winter. Yes, we have already been blessed this season with more than two feet of snow and several weeks of below zero weather in the Mat-Su Valley — a great start to the winter recreation season. Swamps and springs have tightened up, a nice base layer is in place and the most gorgeous sunrises and sunsets in clear December days make my heart throb with excitement.

But I am like many of you; our passion sets us apart from most of our Lower 48 counterparts. They announce "bad weather"as snow and cold, we applaud it. Their plans for weekends and time off include items of sunscreen, bathing suits, golf clubs and tennis shoes. Our plans need helmets, gauntlets, two-cycle oil, goggles, avalanche beacons and a GPS. Who's got it right here?

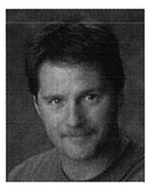
All I can say is, I have never come onto shore on a surfboard on the Big Island, but it can't be any better than cresting a summit between Trapper Creek and the Roadhouse, then reliving it all with friends by the fire, and can't wait to do it all over again in the morning.

So, as former president of the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce, past business person of the year, and owner of the Voice of the Valley Q99.7 — the official radio station of the 2007 Tesoro Iron Dog — I am honored to be associated with a passionate fraternity of fans of Alaska, where we have the opportunity to soar, to accelerate, to conquer, to enjoy one of the eight great wonders of the world: The longest, toughest snowmobile race on earth — the Tesoro Iron Dog.

See you at the start and the finish. I am excited to hear about your trial and tribulations from start to finish on Valley Radio Q99.7 FM and Smart Talk AM 700.

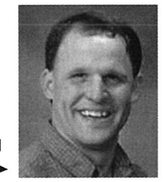
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Tracey Brassard — Anchorage — VETERAN

Tracey has lived in Alaska for 36 years, and loves summer and winter. He works as a foreman for Renegade Equipment.



Ken Lee — Anchorage — VETERAN

Ken is a collections manager for Cal Worthington Ford.

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44 POLARIS



Janaya Lee — Eagle River — ROOKIE

Janaya has lived in Alaska her entire life. She enjoys fishing, camping, hunting and snowmachining with her family and boyfriend of five years. She is attending UAA to become a dental hygienist.

Paul Jensen — Eagle River — ROOKIE

Paul and his family enjoy many weekends on their boat in Prince William Sound, and is excited to see more of Alaska's Interior during the Iron Dog. Hobbies include archery, hunting, multi-engine instrument pilot.

Safe riders' pledge

- I will never drink and drive a snowmobile.
- I will drive within the limits of my machine and my own abilities.
- I will obey the rules and laws of the state or province I am visiting.
- I will be careful when crossing roads, and always cross at a right angle to traffic.
- I will keep my machine in top shape and follow a pre-op check before each ride.
- I will wear appropriate clothing, including gloves, boots and a helmet with a visor.
- I will let my family or friends know my planned route, my destination and my expected arrival time.
- I will treat the outdoors with respect. I will not litter or damage trees or other vegetation.
- I will respect other peoples' property and rights and lend a hand when I see someone in need.
- I will not snowmobile where prohibited.

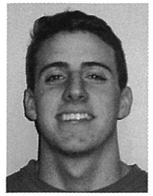
— Courtesy of the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association: ww.snowmobile.org.

2007 Race Contingency Challenge

Hatcher Pass Polaris	First Polaris Team into McGrath	$500
*Tukusko House	First Team into McGrath-Free Lodging & Meals	$300
SBS Poorman Hard-Luck Award	Voted by the Poorman SBS crew, on the team with the worst luck getting to Poorman	$500
Alaska Toy Rental	First Rookies Team into Poorman	$100
Debenham Properties	First Rookies Team into Galena Northbound	$500
Debenham Properties	Last Rookies Team into Galena Northbound	$500
Northwoods Lodge	Fastest SkiDoo Team South Bound Between Unlakleet and Kaltag	$500
Curtis Green State Farm	First Pro Class Team into Kaltag	$500
LEAD-DOG Helmet Lights	First Pro Class Team to Nome with LEAD-DOG Helmet Light On Leaving the Starting Line	$250
Fine Line Interiors	Fastest Pro Class Team between Big Lake and McGrath	$500
Global Fuel Half Way Nome Prize	First Pro Class Race Team into Nome	$2,500
Vortex Group	First Place Rookies Team into Nome	$500
*Woody's Traction Products	First Rookies Team into Nome- product certificate & Woody's Race Apparel	$1,500
CITGO	First Pro Class Race Team into Nome	$500
Morgan's Sales & Service Nome	First Pro Class Team into Nome on Polaris Snowmobiles	$500
Pikes Landing	Fastest Pro Class Team Between Tanana and Fairbanks	$500
Rookies Finish Line Challenge	First Place Pro Class Team, both riders must be Rookies to Qualify	$10,000
Rookies Finish Line Challenge	Second Place Pro Class Team, both riders must be Rookies to Qualify	$5,000
Rookies Finish Line Challenge	Third Place Pro Class Team, both riders must be Rookies to Qualify	$3,000
Wiggy's Alaska*	First Team to cross the Finish Line with Wiggy's Sleeping Bags $400 Gift Certificate	$400
Polaris Industries	First Place Finish on Polaris	$5,000
Arctic Cat	First Place Finish on Arctic Cat	$3,000
Ski-Doo	First Place $5000, Second Place $2500	$7,500
Frontiersman	First Mat-Su Valley Team Across the Finish Line $500 in Gold Coins	$500
Anchorage Suzuki Arctic Cat	First Rookies Team on Arctic Cat across the Finish Line	$500
LEAD-DOG Helmet Lights	First Pro Class Team with LEAD-DOG Helmet Light On Crossing the Finishing Line	$250
*Woody's Traction Products	First Rookies Team across the finish line-product certificate & Woody's Race Apparel	$1,500
Sled Bed Trailers	First Rookies Team across the Finish Line- High Quality 8x10 Aluminum Tilt Snowmobile Trailer	$1,800
Total Contingency Value		**$48,600**

*denotes product or service value / not cash
Full Award Details will be received with Race Participant Packet prior to race event start. Cancellation of Award from Sponsor does not bind Iron Dog, Inc. for award payout. Iron Dog, Inc reserves the right to alter or cancel program at any time.

TESORO IRONDOG 2007



Aaron Cooper

Kodiak

Aaron is a senior at Kodiak High School. Jesus is first in his life, and his family and friends are second. When he has time he likes to ride and hunt.

ROOKIE

41 ARCTIC CAT



Tyler Black

Kodiak

Tyler enjoys backcountry hiking, camping, skiing, snowboarding. He works as a Navy Seal, and enjoys spending time with his daughters and his wife.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Black Diamond, Kodiak Athletic Club, Kodiak Auto Supply, Kodiak Island Support Services, Moon Dance Wild Alaskan Salmon, Mountain Hardwear, Patagonia, Sierra Design, Sixsixone, Slednecks, US Navy, Valley Motor Sports



Autumn Falls

Nome

ROOKIE

Autumn has been in Alaska since 2001, she likes backpacking, four-wheeling and winter sports. She works as a portrait painter and carpenter.

42 SKI-DOO



Ramon Gandia

Nome

VETERAN

Ramon came to Alaska in 1965, and is a retired Bush pilot with 14,000-plus hours, ran in '06 Trail class, and is a checkpoint operator Nome-Golovin Race. Hobbies include sailing, ATV and snowmachining, and he also likes to spend time with his 100-pound German shepherd named Strider.



Ken Shapiro

Nome

VETERAN

Ken loves hunting and fishing. He raced the Nome to Golovin race in 2006, and the Nome Cannonball, in which he placed third. He also enjoys photography.

SPONSORS: AL7X, Kaigloomatic, KL1YJ, KL2CT, Seward Peninsula Amateur Radio Club, shebalyn@gci.net, Wilderness Ski-Doo, Xalaska.com



Larry Weisheim

Anchorage

VETERAN

Larry has lived in Alaska for 41 years. He is retired from Local 867 & AS&G. He enjoys snowmachining, four-wheeling, hunting and fishing. Larry takes pride in his team, riding Ski Doo 440s, and calls his team Mellow Yellow.

43 SKI-DOO



Tim Bruns

Wasilla

ROOKIE

Tim and his wife Leslie both have been born and raised in Alaska. They have one son who proudly serves in the Air Force. Tim is the owner of Bruns Concrete and enjoys snowmobiling, four-wheeling, flying, hunting, trapping, fishing and shooting.



James Mielke

Wasilla

ROOKIE

James was born in Alaska, has been a pilot for 38 years, enjoys snowmachining 3,000 miles a year, downhill skiing, fishing and hunting.



ROOKIE Chugiak

Frank Mielke

Frank was born in Anchorage, and grew up in Chugiak. He has lived in Unalaska, Fairbanks, Juneau, Soldotna and Clear. A former outboard racer, this is his first Iron Dog. He retired from the state in 2004, and lives in a log home in Chugiak he built in 1982.



Anchorage

ROOKIE

Michael Swecker

Mike works as a superintendent/general foreman for Central Environmental.

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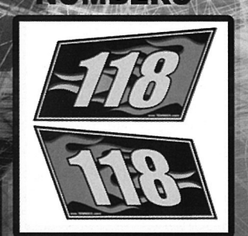


STAND OUT
FROM THE CROWD

TRAILER GRAPHICS



RACING NUMBERS



DECAL KITS





A trio of Trail Class riders head out of the Big Lake start during the 2002 Iron Dog race.

John Woodbury

Getting on top of the Iron Dog

By HANNAH GUILLAUME

Tesoro Iron Dog is moving toward online viewers with GPS-tracking technology strapped to snowmachines in the 1,971-mile race on Feb. 11-17.

"For the race itself, I was able to go on the computer last year, and dial in for the race and be at home," said Evan Booth, a Polaris racer in the 2007 Iron Dog. "It's just another tool to keep track of the race. It's kind of a soap opera — almost."

Booth will be a one of the teams with a GPS tracking device. Arctic Cat and Ski-Doo will also have snowmachine racers riding with the device.

Controversy has risen over how GPS devices could be used by poorly positioned racers to copy the trail strategies of their lead-positioned competitors.

Booth, who has not used the GPS on his snowmachine before, said it would be way too hard for a team on the trail to choose routes based on GPS readouts of their competitors.

He volunteered with Iron Dog to use the GPS because he said it offers his family a way to stay connected and might keep him safer on the trail.

On the Web
Go online to http://www.irondog.org/gps.htm to watch the race via World Communications Center GPS tracking or join the Iron Dog blog at http://irondog.org/blog/index.htm

"I'm probably the perfect example of getting hurt on the trail. You're out in the wilderness. You're out in the wild. It takes a long time to get over the land," Booth said. "If the National Guard needed to know where someone is at because they're hurt on the trail, this will let them know where they're at."

Booth has been medi-vaced twice in Iron Dog — once for a bruised liver and again for a displaced hip.

In Nome, Booth's wife Crystal said she and their four children can't wait to get minute-by-minute updates on how Booth is doing on the trail.

"It's even more exciting for the kids," Crystal said. "They get to feel like they are more a part of the race. It'll be fun to watch and see."

Crystal said during the race, the Booth house resembles Grand Central Station in New York. With the GPS technology this year, it might resemble the Super Bowl.

But watching the race can also be stressful for Crystal, who said she is worried about seeing the dot stop on the computer screen. She won't know if Booth is injured or just relieving himself on the side of the trail.

"When the conditions are bad, it's bad. I always have that in my mind. As soon as he hits Galena, I'm relieved because he's almost home," she said.

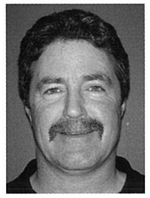
Paul Sindorf, one of three Iron Dog racers who raced with the GPS on his snowmachine in 2006, said village residents were impressed by the technology.

A host for Sindorf in Unalakleet even wrote about it on the Iron Dog blog.

"Everybody thought it was totally

continued on page 20

PRO CLASS



Robbie Muir
Age 48
Anchorage

Robbie was born and raised in Alaska. He owns Wallcovering Plus and commercial fishes in Bristol Bay with his family. This is Robbie's first Iron Dog, although he has raced motocross and snowmobiles before. He enjoys hockey, skiing, boating and camping with his wife and children.

ROOKIE

29 POLARIS

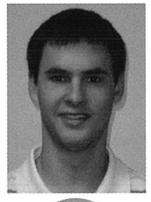


Don Diggins
Age 47
Anchorage

Don was born and raised in Alaska. He races boats all around the state, and has also raced motocross and snowmachines some times. Now he spends most of his recreational time golfing or at Big Lake. He has owned and operated Diggins Concrete since 1979.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Alaska Portable Buildings, Alaska X, Diggins Concrete, GMC Contracting, Miller Marine, Wallcovering Plus



Kane Richardson
Age 19
Fairbanks

Kane has lived in Alaska his entire life. He is a water well driller and operator and owner of his business, R & R Drilling. He enjoys four-wheeling, snowmachining and traveling.

ROOKIE
2006(DNF)

31 ARCTIC CAT



Justin Esmailka
Age 43
Kaltag

Justin is a lifelong Alaskan, who resides with his wife and six children in Kaltag. Justin works for Nanuq as a heavy equipment operator. His hobbies include boating, snowmachining, hunting, trapping and spending time with his family.

YEARS RACED
94(DNF), '98, '99, '00(DNF)

SPONSORS: Alaska Snowmobile Salvage, Arctic Cat, Arctic Circle Air, Arctic Pool & Spa, Esmailka Family, Ferguson, Frontier Flying, Holiday Parks Inc., Klim, Kris & Carm Richardson, Northern Power Sports, R&R Drilling, Renton Coil Springs, Stud Boy, Village of Kaltag

TRAIL CLASS



Travis Bonnett
Age 21
Anchorage

Travis was born and raised in Alaska. He works an apprentice lineman for Northern Powerline Constructors. He enjoys dirt biking, snowboarding, hiking and BMX.

ROOKIE

33 POLARIS



Shawn Cross
Age 20
Anchorage

Shawn (AKA Shawn Rotten) started snowmachining at the age of 10. He likes to race motocross in the summer, and has raced snowcross for the past two years, and cross-country for the past three years. He works for City Electric as a material handler.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Alaska Line Builders, Alaska Powersports, Cal Worthington Ford, City Electric, Genesis Earthworks, Hatcher Pass Polaris, IBEW Local 1547, Klim, Luxury Limousine, Norcon, Northern Powerline Contractors, Potelcom Supply, Scott, Stud Boy, Top Jimmy Performance



Wayne Martin
Palmer

Wayne works for the Frontiersman and loves anything with spark plugs! He is married with four children. This is Wayne's second Iron Dog. He is an avid hunter and snowmachiner.

YEARS RACED
Trail Class 1999

40 SKI-DOO



Rick Fleming
Palmer

Rick currently works for the Alaska Army National Guard as an information technology specialist. He earned a BA from Northwest College in 1990, joined the Army during Operation Desert Storm, serving nine years. He is married with two children, and you can find them fishing and hunting in summer, and snowmachining in winter.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Army National Guard, COAST Magazine, Diversified Tire, Frontiersman, Kevin's Upholstery, Klim, Lazy Mountain Bible Church, Peak Fitness, Richard Fleming, Jr., Super Suppers, Team CC Skidoo, Traffic Jams



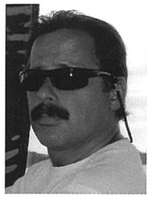
Ken Colton

Age 42
Anchorage

Ken has lived in Alaska for 23 years. This is Ken's second Iron Dog. He works as a senior tech for GCI.

YEARS RACED
2006

24 SKI-DOO



Dennis Martin

Age 48
Anchorage

Dennis has lived in Alaska since 1973. He works as an auto technician for Matt's Auto. He enjoys hunting, fishing and boating.

YEARS RACED
02(DNF), '06

SPONSORS: Alaska Mining & Diving, Arctic Transmission, ATX Inc., Bill & Sharon Burke, Cable Tech, Charles Colton and Son's Ranch, Colton Underground Sprinklers, Consumer Electronic Services, Doug Keli, Eagle Valley Communications, Fat's Automotive, Gary Haynes, GCI, Jackovich, LJ Answering & Alarm Monitoring, Panhandle Snow Mobile Club, Quality Transmission, Shane & Angell Higgins, Smith Cable, Staten Photography, Team CC, TelAlaska, Utility Technologies, Village Deli, West 1 CATV, XP-S High Performance Lubricant, York Creek Ranch



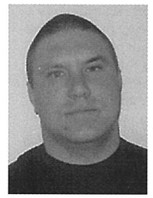
Jamie Bailey

Age 33
Wasilla

Jamie is a lifetime Alaskan, he enjoys being a father, business owner and Texas hold 'em. He is self-employed at Big Country Excavation as a residential and commercial land developer.

ROOKIE

25 POLARIS



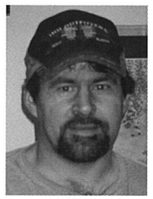
Wade Bailey

Age 25
Wasilla

Wade enjoys snowmachining, four-wheeling, hunting, fish and working. Wade is employed by Bailey's Backhoe, and works as a residential and commercial land development.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Bailey's Backhoe, Bell and Associates, Big Country Excavation, BYLER Contracting, Enderson Concrete, IHOP, Hatcher Pass Polaris



Daniel O'Connor

Age 46
Healy

Dan was born and raised in Alaska. He enjoys hunting and fishing. He is currently employed by Usibelli Coal Mine as an equipment operator.

ROOKIE
02(DNF), '06(DNF)

26 SKI-DOO



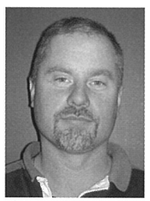
Hawken Van Bebber

Age 24
Fairbanks

Hawken is 24 years old and was born in raised in Cantwell. He is an aluminum welder and assistant hunting guide. In his spare time he likes to trap and hunt.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: IHH Outfitters, Usibelli Coal Mine, XP-S High Performance Lubricant



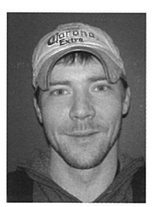
Michael Fuller

Age 41
Anchorage

Michael is racing his first Iron Dog. He is married with three children, and currently works as a shop foreman for American Fast Freight.

ROOKIE

27 POLARIS



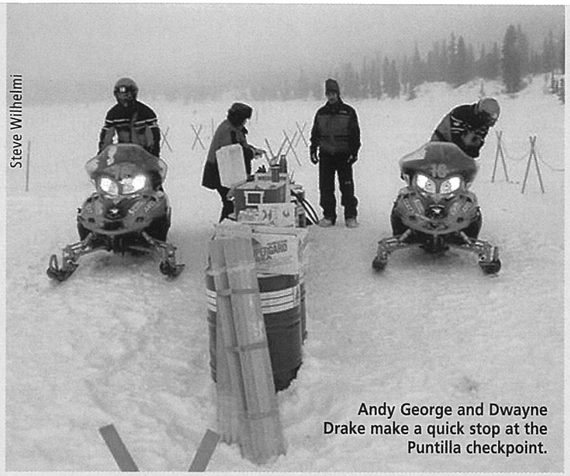
Mike McQuality

Age 28
Fairbanks

Mike is 28 years old and has two children. He works for American Fast Freight as a mechanic. This is his first Iron Dog.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Alaska Tent and Tarp, American Fast Freight, B&J Liftruck, Bandi Sign, General Parts, Grizzly Machine, Inlet Petroleum, Ogre Diesel Service, Snap-On Tools, Stan Marshall, Sterling Western Star of Alaska



Steve Wilhelmi

Andy George and Dwayne Drake make a quick stop at the Puntilla checkpoint.

Staying safe on Iron Dog's trail

By HANNAH GUILLAUME

A couple of friendly old pros are willing to give rookies a quick heads up for the longest race of their lives — the 2,000 mile Tesoro Iron Dog from Wasilla to Nome to Fairbanks on Feb. 11-17.

Jimmer Dick, a Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600 racer from Seward who will be racing for the 14th time this year, said when the starting day is near he begins to prepare mentally.

His racing teammate is rookie Spike Laskey, who is also riding a Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600.

> For racers who can't visualize critical sections on the trail, Dick said village residents are always eager to give advice on where to go and how to do it.

"When you get close to the race, you just think of all the places on the trail," Dick said. "You can see the next day's weather the day before the race. Come 10 or 11 o'clock at night you can go out and look up and see what the sky is doing."

For racers who can't visualize critical sections on the trail, Dick said village residents are always eager to give advice on where to go and how to do it.

"They know their stuff," he said.

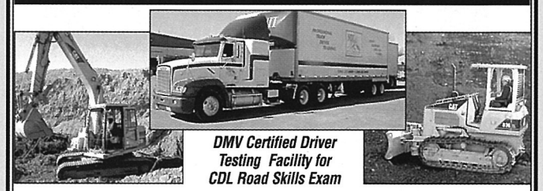
Between race checkpoints, Dick said he uses water and warm Tang to stay hydrated and munches on Nutri-Grain bars to keep his energy levels up.

The snacks and drinks he uses are all extras to the survival food he needs to carry to meet the rules of the race.

When he's not racing across the state on a snowmachine, Dick is driving a fuel truck and dragging fuel hoses. The daily workout from that, along with more than 200 sit ups and pushups a day, is a necessary part of being ready for the race.

continued on page 20

Alaska's Construction Training Academy



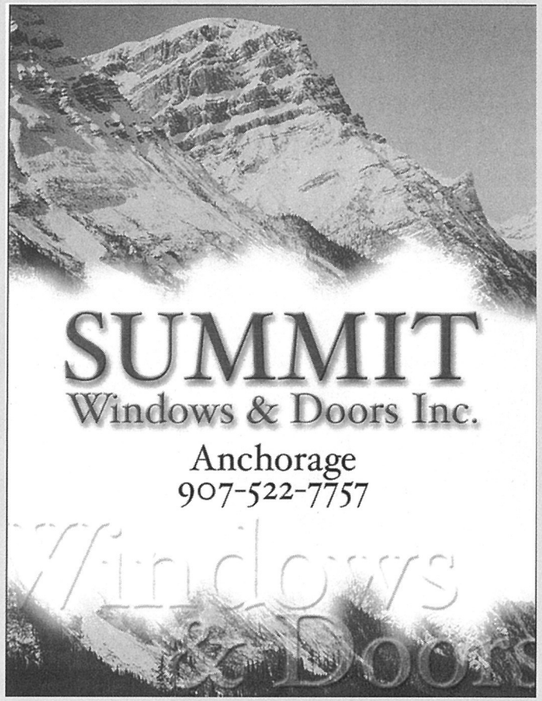
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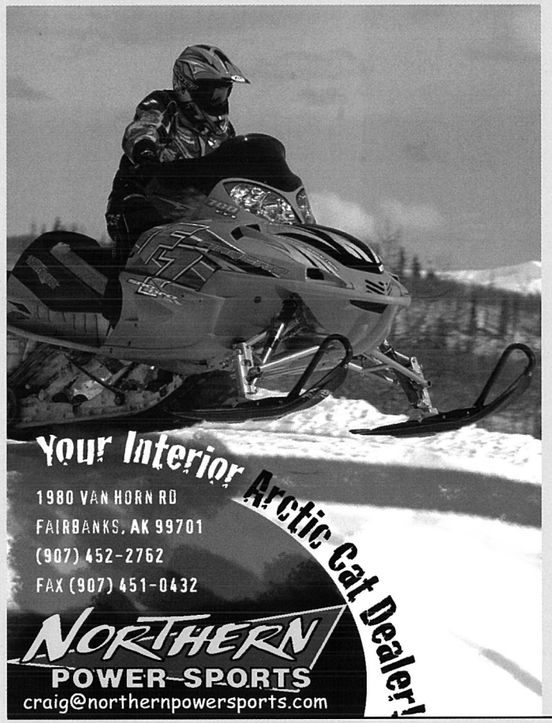
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Big Lake to Nome, Alaska
LEAD-DOG
HELMET LIGHT
POKER RUN
February 9th-14th, 2007



IRON DOG ONLINE *continued from page 18*

impressive — especially the guys — thought it was high-tech," he said.

He said his friends noted that the 2006 unit seemed to update every two minutes or so, which Sindorf said was great for his wife and four children.

"It was pretty cool actually. My family could track me on the trail. Even my kids were checking it out in their classrooms in school," he said. "On the way to Nome it worked awesome, but after the ocean water, it didn't work very well."

Unseasonably high temperatures caused melting on the trails between the White Mountain and Nome checkpoints. It forced the racers to find alternative routes or skip over water on their snowmachines.

Sindorf said despite the effect the harsh climates had on the GPS last year, he'd volunteer to race with the device strapped onto his snowmachine again.

"It's a great safety device," he said.

SAFETY *continued from page 19*

He also preps for the journey by riding his snowmachines around Big Lake 2,000 to 3,000 miles.

Those miles are accumulated by going as fast as he can for 70 to 80 miles at a time — without stopping.

Unlike today's race, where competitors can hire Bush planes to carry in supplies to keep the snowmachines running, in 1994, racers had to bring all of their spare parts with them.

Since then, Dick has whittled down what he carries in his trail-side toolbox to keep his snowmachine in top condition.

"You always try to have at least tie-rod ends," he said about steering components. He added that spare belts, nuts and bolts are all part of having a good race.

"The guy with the least amount of problems wins," he said. "On any given day, in any race, anybody can win. It seems like the harder you try, the worse it gets."

Curtis Cherrier, an Arctic Cat F6 racer from Anchorage who will be racing Iron Dog for the seventh time this year, said race pros and rookies should try to be hitting the gym "before the show hits."

He said he is in the gym doing cardio exercises and lifting weights at least three times a week.

To prepare his body even more for the bruising it will take during the race, Cherrier said he tries to ride 3,000 to 4,000 miles on his snowmachine.

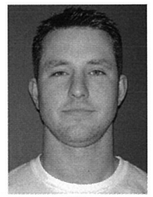
His racing teammate is rookie Trevor Lund, who is also racing on the Arctic Cat F6. Cherrier said he takes the initial lead on the trail to show Lund some of what he's learned.

"The more time an individual spends on preparation and training, the more competitive they're going to be," Cherrier said.

To keep the snowmachines ready for the race, he said there are two main things to watch: one is making sure the chassis doesn't need more reinforcement. Two is having the suspension and shocks set up for individual rider style, weight and trail conditions.

"There's an immense amount of work that goes on in the shop," Cherrier said. "You're not going to have a flawless race. Shit happens out there. I'd say 60 percent of that race is all mental."

PRO CLASS



Todd Minnick
Age 27
Wasilla

Todd has lived in Alaska his entire life. Todd has been racing since 1994, winning the K150, K400 and the Mayors Cup. Todd and his girlfriend Sharilyn have no children. Todd works for Big Dipper Construction as an operator. Todd's bobbies include spending time with family and friends. Hunting, fishing, snowmachining and vacationing.

YEARS RACED
00, '01(DNF), '02, '04(DNF), '05(DNF), '06(DNF)

20 POLARIS

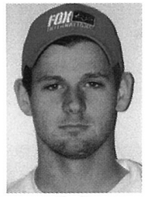
John Faeo
Age 51
Wasilla



John has lived in Alaska his entire life. John is the only racer to compete in every Iron Dog since 1984, and the only racer to have placed first seven times. John and his wife Vickie have two boys. John works for the Alaska Railroad as a machinist, and his hobbies are hunting guide, fishing and trapping.

YEARS RACED
84, '85, '86, '87, '88, '89, '90, '91, '92, '93(DNF), '94(DNF), '95(DNF), '96, '97, '98(DNF), '99, '00, '01(DNF), '02, '04, '05(DNF) '06(DNF) Champion: '84, '86, '87, '88, '90, '91, '96

SPONSORS: Allstate Insurance Co. Cindi Heal Agency, A-1 Pawn, Advanced Powder Coatings, Alaska Power Sports, Alaska Railroad, Anchorage Fracture & Orthopedic Clinic, Arctic Circle Club, Arctic Coast Customs, Big Dipper Construction, BJ Custom Aircraft, Dean's Automotive, Fineline, Great Northern Engineering, Holz Racing Products, Interstate Batteries, Lakeview General Contracting (Ray Kizer), Larsen Chiropractic, MGM Automotive Accessories, Nelson Kogane Accounting, Northern Lights Avionics, Northland Tile (Kurt Rentfro), Nye Ford, Polaris Industries, Prime Mechanical, Schock Electric (Tod & Jayne Tolman), Six Robblees', VFW Post No. 9365, Walker Evans, Weldin Construction, Woody's



David Branholm
Age 24
Big Lake

David works as a pipefitter for Chinook Fire Protection. He enjoys riding four-wheelers, snowmachines, going fishing, and playing hockey. He has lived in Alaska for 24 years, his entire life.

ROOKIE

21 POLARIS

Randy Hunter
Age 24
Big Lake



Randy is racing his second Iron Dog, he works as a service manager for Prism Design and Construction. He enjoys riding snowmobiles, hunting, and camping with family.

YEARS RACED
2004

SPONSORS: Alaska Automated Storage, Choice Alaska Water, D&L Enterprises, Florida Georgia Contractors, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Klim, Lee Mitchell, North West Pump, Our family and friends, Polaris Industries, Prism, Sign Works, Stud Boys, Valley Dental



Scott Davis
Age 47
Soldotna

Scott lives in Soldotna with his wife and children. Has competed in the Iron Dog since the first race, only missing one year 1996. Scott has been a business owner for 30 years of Davis Block Co. Since the early 1970's, Scott has been competitively racing motorcycles and snowmobiles. Scott also is actively involved with his family in "Davis Racing." Scott also enjoys powder riding, traveling with his motorhome, four-wheeling, and watching his kids compete.

YEARS RACED
84, '85, '86, '87, '88, '89, '90, '91, '93, '94, '95, '97, '98, '99, '00, '01, '02, '04, '05, '06 • Champion: '85, '89, '93, '97, '98, '99

22 ARCTIC CAT

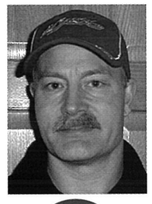
Todd Palin
Age 42
Wasilla



Todd, the "First Dude," is a lifelong Alaskan, who enjoys snowmachining and spending time with his family. He and his wife, Sarah, have four children. He works for BP as a production operator on the North Slope. Todd has raced the Iron Dog since 1993, taking first place in '95, '00, and '02. This is his fourth year partnering with Scott Davis.

YEARS RACED
'93, '94, '95, '96, '97, '98, '99, '00, '01, '02, '04, '05, '06
Champion: '95, '00, '02

SPONSORS: Alaska Army National Guard, Anchorage Suzuki/Arctic Cat, Arctic Cat, Citgo, Davis Block, Debenham Investments, Fine Line Interiors, Ohlin Shocks, Renton Coil Spring, Speedwerx, Spenard Builders Supply, Stud Boy, United Steel Workers Local 4959, Wasilla Arctic Cat, Woody's



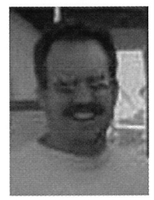
Mark Niver
Age 48
Wasilla

Mark is married with three children, He has worked for BP since 1977, and has commercial fished Bristol Bay since 1980. He enjoys flying, fishing, hunting, and watching his sons play sports.

YEARS RACED
2006

23 YAMAHA

Ron Zugg
Age 46
Palmer



Ron lives in Palmer with his wife and three children. Ron graduated from New Mexico Tech, and now works on the North Slope for BP Exploration as a production operator. Ron enjoys spending time at the family cabin in Petersville, skiing, wrenching, fishing and biking with the family.

YEARS RACED
97, '99, '05, '06

SPONSORS: Alaska Interstate Construction, Alice Clarke Roe, CMPS, Anchorage Yamaha, Blood Bank of Alaska, BP EOA/WOA, Compu Doc, Criterion General, Dee Melton, Enstar, ESS, Holtzman Klim, Larson Chiropractic, Leader Creek Fisheries, Lynden Freight, Niver Family, Ohlins Family, Oppose Pebble Mine, PowerMadd, Renton Coil Spring, Roteq Alaska, TracksUSA, United Steel Workers, US Bank Home Mortgage, Valley Block & Concrete, Woodys, Zugg Family, www.niverzugg.com

PRO CLASS



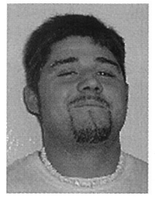
Tim Jahoula

Age 40
Fairbanks

Tim has helped with Iron Dog from the time it first came to Fairbanks, trail marking from Fairbanks to Tanana with friends, and has been a member of Iron Dog Race Marshal Committee for six years, on the Iron Dog Board for five years. Tim has lived in Alaska for 36 years, currently working for Dynamic Painting as a project manager.

ROOKIE

16 SKI-DOO



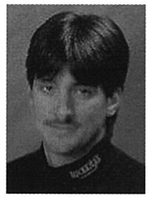
Robbie Masson

Age 27
Fairbanks

Robert has lived in Alaska his entire life, he likes to hunt, fish and race sleds. He has raced Arctic Man for 10 years and snowcross for three. He is currently employed by Dynamic Painting as a foreman.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: American Safety, Bobby Masson, Compeau's Inc., Dynamic Painting, Jill Neff, Tire Distribution Systems, XP-S High Performance Lubricant



Dusty VanMeter

Age 37
Soldotna

Dusty enjoys hunting, fishing, flying, racing, parenting.

YEARS RACED

94, '95(DNF), '96, '97(DNF), '98, '99(DNF), '00, '01, '02, '04, '05, '06(DNF)

Champion: '00, '02, '04

17 SKI-DOO



Korey Cronquist

Age 36
Wasilla

Korey has lived in Alaska his entire life. He enjoys many motorized sports including snowmachine, PWC, boating, flying, motorcycling, four-wheeling, and also hunting and fishing.

YEARS RACED

93(DNF), '94(DNF), '95(DNF), '99(DNF), '00, '01(DNF), '02, '06(DNF)

SPONSORS: Compeau's, Fineline, FLY, FXR, LEAD-DOG, MGM, Ski-Doo Racing, Team CC Eagle River, Team CC Wasilla, Tel Alaska, Tesoro, Toklat, Tour Buddy, Woody's, XP-S High Performance Lubricant



Andy George

Age 43
Wasilla

Andy has lived in Alaska for 41 years. He is self-employed as a mechanic at Mr. Lube. He enjoys hunting, family and boats.

YEARS RACED

99, '00, '01(DNF), '04, '05, '06

Champion: '06

18 ARCTIC CAT



Dwayne Drake

Age 42
Fairbanks

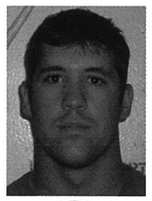
Dwayne currently works as a technician for Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. He enjoys hunting and fishing.

YEARS RACED

93, '94, '95, '96, '97, '98, '99, '02, '05, '06

Champion: '95, '06

SPONSORS: Advance Powder Coating, Alaska Automotive Equipment, Alaska Cab Valley, Alaska Comprehensive Dental Center, Alaska Logistics, Allied Electric, Arctic Cat, Barbie & Kids, B-Original Signs, Hammer Nutrition, Hill Top Recycling, Inlet Petroleum, Jiffy Lube, Liberty Tax Services, Mr. Lube, Napa Auto Parts, Night Shift Janitorial, Northern Powersports, Parkhurst Mechanical, Renton Coil Springs, Ron Zugg, Six Robblees, Swan Employer Services, TCI Inc., Wasilla Arctic Cat, Woody's



Joshua Pool

Age 23
New Iberia, LA

Josh grew up in Willow, but most recently moved to Louisiana for work. He enjoys all outdoor activities. This is Josh's first Iron Dog. He currently works for CalDive International as a commercial diver.

ROOKIE

19 POLARIS



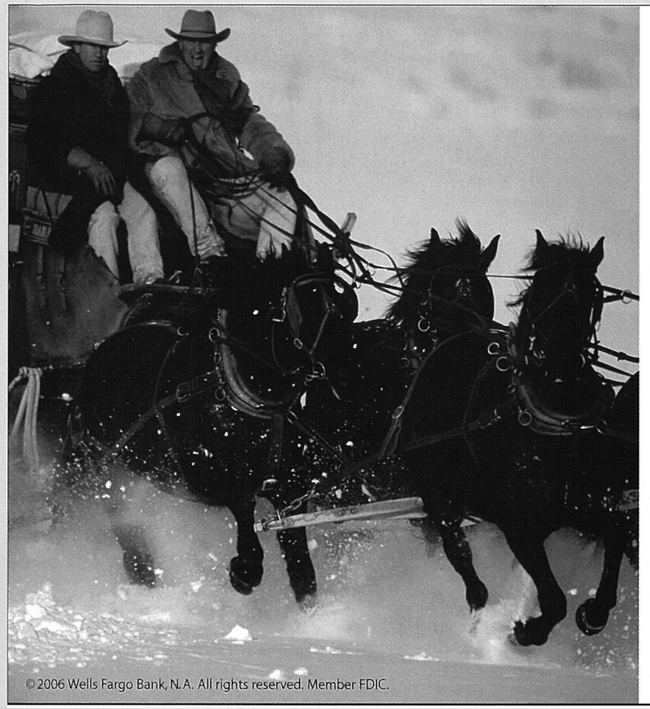
David Spain

Age 23
Willow

David is 23 years old, a third-generation Alaskan, member of the local 302 Operating Engineers since 2002. He is an avid snowmachiner since age 5. He participates in various events such as cross-country, snowcross, and ice racing.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Alaska Automated Storage, Alaska Excavating, Alaska Interstate Construction, Alpine Chiropractic, Fish Creek Sales, G&G Foodmart, Hatcher Pass Polaris, J.A Spain & Sons, Klim USA, Little Rascals Daycare, North Country RV Park, Pioneer Lodge, Tew's Excavating, Trapline Realty, Willow Trading Post Lodge



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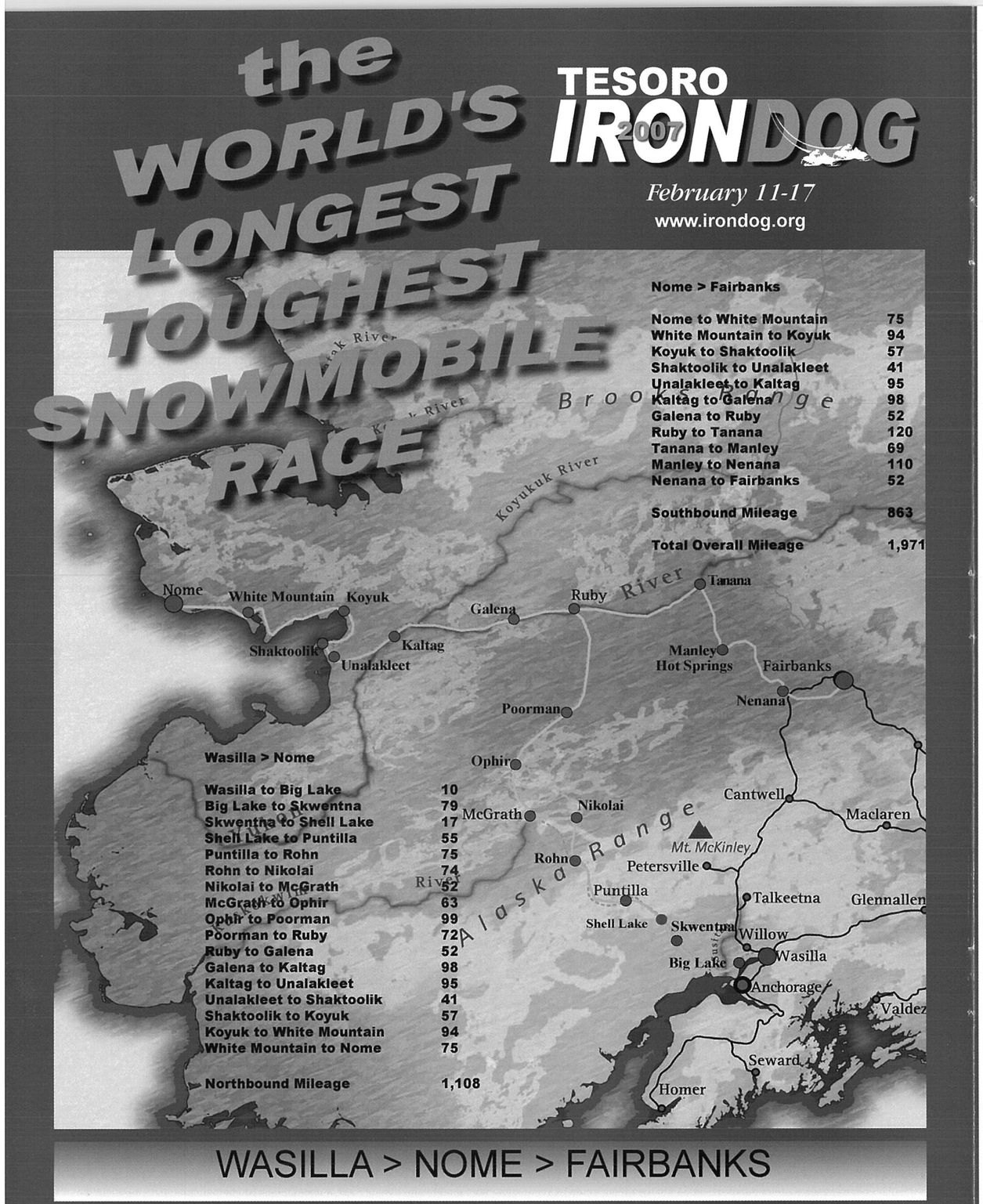
The Tesoro Iron Dog

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PRO CLASS



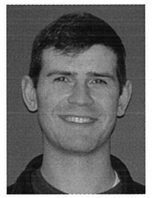
James Stelling

Age 35
Anchorage

James is attempting Iron Dog for the third time, living in Alaska for over 28 years. Snowmachining has always been in his life. He has been documented in freerider snowmobile movies including Turnagain Hardcore 110, and Turnagain 907 Hustlers. He finished second in the K-150.

ROOKIE
05(DNF), '06(DNF)

12 SKI-DOO



Chet Williams

Age 30
Anchor Point

Chet has run the Iron Dog twice, finishing the top seven on both attempts. He has also competed in the Arctic Man Ski and Sno-Go Classic.

YEARS RACED
04, '05

SPONSORS: AK-49, Alaska Frontier Services, Alaska Snow Safaris, Alaska Snowmobile Salvage, Alaska Trailblazing, Central Paving Products, FXR Racing, Global Fuel, Greenearth Landworks, Iliamna Transportation Co., Local 907 Riders Union, MGM, Pile Bay Fuel, Studboy, Team CC, Team Industries, Turnagain Hardcore, Wilder Construction, XP-S High Performance Lubricant, Yukon Electric



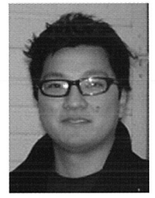
Daniel Thibault

Age 23
Anchorage

Daniel has lived in Alaska his entire life. He enjoys hockey, snowmobiling, four-wheeling, hunting, camping, and spending time with his family. He currently works as a technician for MGM Truck Accessories.

ROOKIE

13 POLARIS



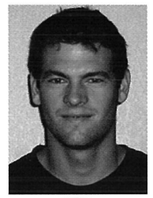
Frank Harris

Age 23
Big Lake

Frank was born and raised in Alaska. He is a college student and runs the service and sales department at the family-owned business. Enjoys snowmachining, dirt bikes, four-wheeling, pretty much anything motivated by a combustion engine. Also enjoys hunting, fishing and camping with his girlfriend.

YEARS RACED
05, '06 (DNF)

SPONSORS: Big Lake Power Sports & Marine, Kreative Audio & Security, MGM Truck Accessories, PIAA Headlamps, Polaris Industries, Walker Evans Racing, Woody's Traction and Control



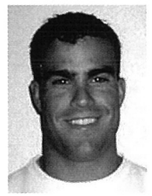
Nick Olstad

Age 24
Wasilla

Nick has lived in Alaska since 1987. This is his third Iron Dog, winning first place in 2005. Nick has won the '05 and '06 K-150, as well as the '05 and '06 Valdez Mayor's Cup. Nick loves to go four-wheeling, snowmachining and spending time with his girlfriend.

YEARS RACED
Champion: '05, '06 (DNF)

14 ARCTIC CAT



Marc McKenna

Age 32
Anchorage

Marc and his twin brother have lived in Alaska their entire life. Marc has raced the Iron Dog in '99,'00,'01,'02,'04,'05, and '06; taking first in 2005. Marc is President and co-owner of McKenna Bros. Paving. Marc enjoys traveling, hockey, dirt biking and snowmobiling.

YEARS RACED
Champion: '05, 99, '00, '01, '02, '04(DNF), '05, '06(DNF)

SPONSORS: Alaska Growth Capital, Anchorage Suzuki/Arctic Cat, Bri Scheu, Curt Gojenla, Dave Calkins, Dave McRae, Don & Jennifer Olstad, Don Jones, Eric Quam, Korey Klingenmeyer, Kristen McKenna, Mark's Big Lake Repair, Mass X, Matthew McKenna, McKenna Bros Paving, Munro Enterprises Inc., Olstad Construction, Park & Sell America, Perkup Espresso, Phil Haws Auto Outlet, Quam Technologies, Walker Evan Racing, Wasilla Arctic Cat



Jeff Dyer

Age 53
Fort Collins, CO

Jeff currently works as a technician for ACS, he enjoys all outdoor activities, hockey and softball.

ROOKIE
2000(DNF)

15 SKI-DOO



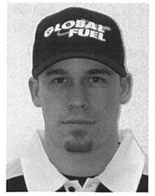
Tracy Dyer

Age 33
Fort Collins, CO

Tracy was raised in Fairbanks, played hockey through Junior "A" and college ranks, likes keeping busy outside and traveling. He currently works as a construction inspection manager for Weld County-Engineering.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Compeau's, Elwood Enterprise, XP-S High Performance Lubricant



Tyson Johnson

Age 27
Anchorage

Tyson has lived in Alaska his entire life. He started racing in 1996, winning the Klondike 150 in '01, the Klondike 400 in '02, Arctic Man '02 and '03, also finishing the Mayor's Cup in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th places. Tyson raced the Iron Dog starting in 1997. Other hobbies include fishing, dirt biking and working out. He is currently single.

YEARS RACED

97, '98(DNF), '99, '00, '01, '02, '04(DNF), '05(DNF), '06(DNF)

8 SKI-DOO



Tyler Aklestad

Age 21
Anchorage

Tyler has lived in Alaska his entire life. He started racing in 2001. Tyler has raced the Iron Dog in '04 and '06. His winnings include the Klondike 150, Mayor's Cup, and competing in billcross racing. Other hobbies include flying, fishing, hunting, and racing dirt bikes.

ROOKIE

04(DNF) '06 (DNF)

SPONSORS: Global Motorsports Racing, ACE, Action Sign and Graphics, CC Ski Doo, Compeaus, Fine Line Interiors, Global Fuel, International Aviation Services, Key Bank, Klim, MGM Truck Accessories, Northward Bound, Northwoods Lodge, Ski Doo, Woodys, World Fuel Services, XP-S High Performance Lubricant



Darrick Johnson

Age 34
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Darrick has always had a passion for snowmobiling, starting out building lightweight mountain sleds, now owning his own dealership, Edge Performance. Always searching for excitement, the Tesoro Iron Dog is right up his alley.

ROOKIE

9 ARCTIC CAT



Fred Grubb

Age 47
Athol, ID

Fred was introduced to racing by his father, and he was hooked after a short time. Moving from DuBois he gave up racing to start a roller-coaster construction company (Rocky Mountain Coasters), keeping a few thrills in his life. Now the opportunity to race in the Iron Dog has reignited his passion for racing.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: CCI, Bartman Signs, Coeur d'lane Lube, Contractor's Consortium, Edge Performance, Forest Steel, Fred's Excavation, GMAC Real Estate, Grizzly Glass, H & E Equipment, HCI, Helmet Outlet, INC Engineering, Interstate Concrete, Pacific Iron and Steel, Reed Concrete RMC, Thompson Electric, Western Power Sports, Western States Caterpillar, Western States Equipment, Winkler Materials



Matthew Spernak

Age 22
Anchorage

Matthew has lived in Alaska his entire life, currently working as a foreman for Alaska "X" Inc. He likes camping, rafting, and riding sleds. This is his second Iron Dog, finishing 5th in 2006, and also 4th place in the Nome Golovin race, winning rookie of the year. He has also raced the K-150 and K-400.

YEARS RACED

2006

10 POLARIS



Chris Olds

Age 35
Eagle River

Chris is racing his sixth Iron Dog, and is currently working as a program manager for Dibthaad Global Services. He is married with two children, and enjoys spending time with his family, snowmachining, four-wheeling, hunting and fishing.

YEARS RACED

00, '01, '02, '04(DNF), '06

SPONSORS: Alaska X Inc., Annette's Trucking, Blue Marble, Eagle River Polaris, Fly Racing, Hatcher Pass Polaris, HMK Boots, LEAD-DOG Helmet Lights, Polaris Industries, Stud Boy Traction Products, Walker Evans Racing



Jimmer Dick

Age 43
Seward

Jimmer has lived in Alaska his entire life, currently working for Shoreside Petroleum as a driver.

YEARS RACED

91, '92, '93, '94(DNF), '96(DNF), '97(DNF), '98(DNF), '00, '01, '02, '05(DNF), '06(DNF)

11 SKI-DOO



Spike Laskey

Age 35
Anchorage

Spike is 26 years old, and enjoys freeriding.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: ACE, Action Sign and Graphics, AK Sleds & Cycles, Compeau's, Fine Line Interiors, Global Fuel, Global Motorsports, HMK Snowmobiling, International Aviation Services, Key Bank, Klim, MGM Truck Accessories, Northward Bound, Northwoods Lodge, Ski-Doo, Team CC Eagle River, Team CC Wasilla, Woody's, World Cup Sports, World Fuel Services, XP-S High Performance Lubricant

Iron Dog from point A to point B

By HANNAH GUILLAUME

Race teams on the Tesoro Iron Dog's trail look forward to the 24 checkpoints communities they'll encounter on the way. At checkpoints they get a chance to warm up out of the wind, grab some grub, wipe their noses and hit the hay.

Race teams drive for each of the checkpoints along the north- and south-bound routes stretching 1,971 miles across Alaska.

The farthest distance between any checkpoint communities is the 120-mile crossing from Ruby to Tanana along the Yukon River in the Kilbuck-Kuskokwim Mountains.

Once competitors reach checkpoints, they warm up, rejuvenate and get ready for another grueling journey over snowy landscapes that can sometimes lead to muddy shoreline traverses and treacherous river crossings.



The Puntilla checkpoint crew await the next team during the 2006 race.

Steve Wilhelmi

Checkpoint roundup:

Wasilla, population 8,471, located in southcentral Alaska on the George Parks Highway, is the starting point of Tesoro Iron Dog and its celebrations.

Skwentna, population 111, located on mostly flat land in southcentral Alaska on the Skwentna River, is 89 miles from the start.

Puntilla, population two, located on a lake near a breathtaking mountain pass, is 161 miles from the start.

Rohn, population zero, located at a small roadhouse where two rivers join, is 236 miles from the start.

Nikolai, population 93, located in a Native village, is 310 miles from the start.

McGrath, population 379, located on the Innoko River, is 362 miles from the start.

Ophir, population zero, located on the crossing of the Innoko River, is 425 miles from the start.

Poorman, population zero, located in a flat-land region and marks the last checkpoint before the Ruby turning-point where riders will carve the same section of trail twice, is 524 miles from the start.

Ruby, population is 178, located on the Yukon River and marks the turning point to Nome, is 596 miles from the start on the way to Nome and 1,620 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

Galena, population 641, located in an Athabascan village in the Interior, is 648 miles from the start on the way to Nome and 1,568 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

Kaltag, population 218, located near the coast of Norton Sound, is 746 miles from the start on the way to Nome and 1,470 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

Unalakleet, population 752, located on the windy coast of Norton Sound north of the Unalakleet River, is 841 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,375 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

Koyuk, population 299, located on the coast, is 939 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,277 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

White Mountain, population 209, located in the mountains on the Fish River, is 1,033 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,183 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

Nome, population 3,590, located on the coast of the Bering Sea and marks the halfway point Valentines Day celebration where race teams turn around and head back to Ruby where they'll head to Fairbanks for the finish, is 1,108 miles from the start.

Tanana, population 290, located on the Yukon River past the Ruby turning point, is 1,740 miles from the start.

Manley Hot Springs, population 72, located in a flat-land region, is 1,812 miles from the start.

Nenana, population 371, located on mile 305 of the George Parks Highway, is 1,917 miles from the start.

Fairbanks, population 31,324, located at the finish of Tesoro Iron Dog where the shows and celebrations happen, is 1,971 miles from the start.

Source: Population and location descriptions based on 2005 and 2000 U.S. Census Bureau area estimates and the Iditarod Trail Committee.



Safety, education expo kicks-off Iron Dog

By HANNAH GUILLAUME

Passing snowmachine safety tests for the Tesoro Iron Dog can take some creativity.

"They have criteria they have to meet for safety standards," said Laura Bedard, executive director of the Tesoro Iron Dog. "It's kind of amazing. A lot of people don't understand — kind of — what it takes to participate in the event."

The 2,000-mile snowmachine race, which starts in Big Lake and finishes in Fairbanks, is slated for Feb. 11-17.

Racers are required to bring more survival gear than normal snowmachines can carry, including tents, sleeping bags that are good for minus-30 degree temperatures and 3,000 calories of food.

To fit it all in, racers modify their snowmachines by drilling and cutting into the seats and other areas that can handle being hollowed out. But, the snowmachines are still required to handle collisions and must pass the safety inspection.

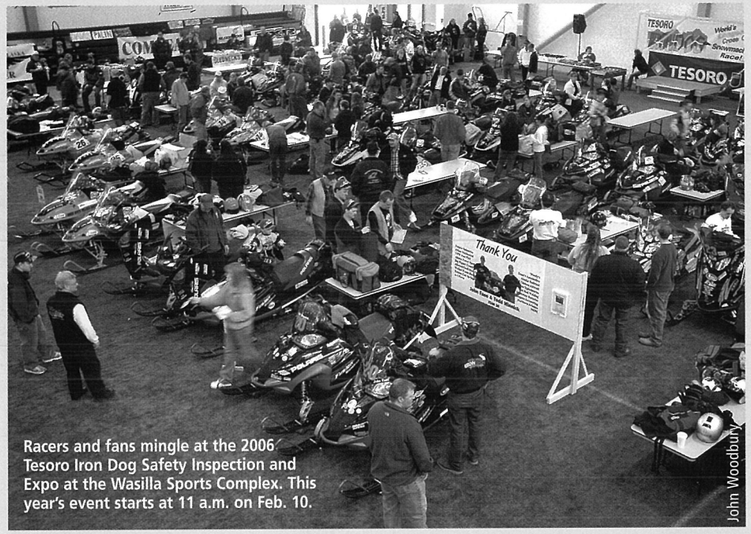
All racing teams bring their snowmachines to the Safety and Educational Expo at the Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex, Feb. 10 at 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., to be put on display for the public during the inspection.

"It's a big part of the show," she said.

The event is free to the public. Inspections will occur from 1-4 p.m.

Winter safety, survival and educational seminars, including avalanche survival and safe riding procedures, happen throughout the event.

Children's snowmachine helmets are available for $25 to families who complete forms proving attendance to multiple seminars.



Racers and fans mingle at the 2006 Tesoro Iron Dog Safety Inspection and Expo at the Wasilla Sports Complex. This year's event starts at 11 a.m. on Feb. 10.

John Woodbury

Bedard said door prizes, including hats and other outdoor gear, are awarded, and an auction is held.

Race director Dennis Falldorf also conducts a private meeting for the racers to talk about trail conditions and settle last-minute details.

Iron Dog expo calendar

For calendar updates go to: www.irondog.org

Saturday, Feb. 10
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Safety and Educational Expo
Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex

1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
Mat-Su Health Foundation Seminars on Snowmobile and Outdoor Safety, Winter Rescue, Avalanche Awareness and More
Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex

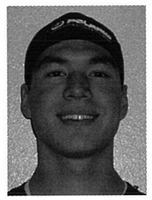
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Snowmachine Safety Inspections and Display
Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex

4 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Mat-Su Health Foundation Seminars on Snowmobile and Outdoor Safety, Winter Rescue, Avalanche Awareness and More
Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex

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PRO CLASS

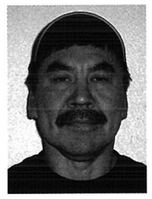


Tyler Huntington
Age 21
Galena

Tyler, a rookie to Iron Dog, works as a floorhand for Doyon Drilling Inc. He enjoys boat racing, basketball, snowmachine racing, fishing and hunting.

ROOKIE

4 POLARIS



Pete Demoski
Age 49
Fairbanks

Pete works as a heavy equipment operator for Brice, Inc. He is married with four children, and one granddaughter.

YEARS RACED
98 (DNF), 99, 04 (DNF) 05 (DNF)

SPONSORS: Huntington Family, Joyce Huntington, Pitka Family, Weldin Construction, Charlie Huntington, Doyon Limited, Brice Inc., McKinley Polaris, Demoski family



Joe Cleaver
Age 26
Galena

Joe is a lifelong Alaskan who enjoys church, trapping, and spending time with his kids.

ROOKIE

5 ARCTIC CAT

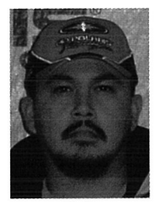


Stewart Pitka
Age 28
Galena

Stewart has lived in Alaska for 27 years, he enjoys running and swimming.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: ANTHC, 741 Crew, Doyon Ltd., Eagle River Arctic Cat, Ed and Alisha, Frank Family, Manly Hot Springs Council



Todd Malamute
Age 33
Fairbanks

Todd works for the Alaska Railroad, he enjoys working on sleds and spending time with his family. He is married with one child.

ROOKIE
'04(DNF), '05 (DNF), '06 (DNF)

6 POLARIS



Kyle Malamute
Age 22
North Pole

Kyle works in maintenance for The Rental Zone. He is a lifelong resident of Galena, now living in Fairbanks. He has two first-place and one third-place finish in the annual Galena Race. He grew up traveling up and down the Yukon River; interests include basketball, snowmachining, and spending time with family

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Arctic Signs & Graphics, Blue Sky Designs, Clayton Benson, David Attla, George, Golden Heart Construction, Hi-Performance, John Sadler, Jolene Malamute, Machelle Oliver, Manoli Carlo, McKinley Polaris, Peter & Kelly Kamper, Terry & Nancy Pitka, The Late Kevin Esmailka and wife Verla, The Rental Zone, True North Adventures

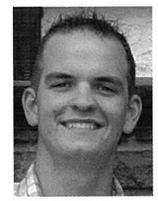


Jordan Hartman
Age 23
Eagle River

Jordan is 23 years old, and works for Cal Worthington Ford as a mechanic apprentice, while seeking a degree in auto tech. He enjoys racing snowmachines, hanging out on the Yentna, fishing the Kenai, spending time with his girlfriend, family and friends.

ROOKIE

7 SKI-DOO



Cole Sullivan
Age 22
Eagle River

Cole is mechanically minded and enjoys fabricating. He is pursuing a degree in computer science. When not working, going to school or doing outdoor activities, Cole enjoys spending time with his girlfriend, family, friends, and his dog Gunner. He is a hard worker and loves to make people laugh.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: Anchorage Tire Factory, Arctic Express Towing & Recovery, Boyer, Timm & Peters of Eagle River, Inc., Cal Worthington Ford, Carlile Transportation, Charter College, Chris Casey, Country Reality, Dakota Diggers, Dr. James Yassick, DDS, Foremost Industries, Guaranteed Services, Hartman Racing, Hummel Enterprises, Iron Horse Express, Land Tech Landscaping & Snow Removal, MM&M Contracting, Northern Adjusters, Inc, Pacific Movers, Qwik Lube, RJB Wholesale, Sicily's Pizza, Sullivan Water Wells, Team CC, Team Schlight, Video Corner, XP-S High Performance Lubricant

2007 ROSTER

PRO CLASS

No.	Last Name	First Name	Hometown	Snowmobile Model	Status
2	Cherrier	Curtis	Anchorage, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
2	Lund	Trevor	Anchorage, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
3	Barber	Shane	Willow, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
3	Booth	Evan	Nome, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
4	Demoski	Pete	Fairbanks, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
4	Huntington	Tyler	Galena, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
5	Cleaver	Joe	Galena, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
5	Pitka	Stewart	Galena, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
6	Malamute	Kyle	North Pole, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
6	Malamute	Todd	Fairbanks, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
7	Hartman	Jordan	Eagle River, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
7	Sullivan	Cole	Eagle River, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
8	Aklestad	Tyler	Anchorage, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
8	Johnson	Tyson	Anchorage, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Veteran
9	Grubb	Fred	Athol, ID	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
9	Johnson	Darrick	Coeur d'Alene, ID	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
10	Olds	Chris	Eagle River, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
10	Spernak	Matthew	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
11	Dick	Jimmer	Seward, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Veteran
11	Laskey	Spike	Anchorage, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
12	Stelling	James	Anchorage, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
12	Williams	Chet	Anchor Point, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Veteran
13	Harris	Frank	Big Lake, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
13	Thibault	Dan	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
14	McKenna	Marc	Anchorage	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
14	Olstad	Nick	Wasilla	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
15	Dyer	Jeff	Fairbanks, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
15	Dyer	Tracy	Ft. Collins, CO	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
16	Jahoula	Tim	Fairbanks, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
16	Masson	Robert	Fairbanks, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Rookie
17	Cronquist	Korey	Wasilla, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Veteran
17	VanMeter	Dusty	Soldotna, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Veteran
18	Drake	Dwayne	Fairbanks, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
18	George	Andy	Wasilla, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
19	Pool	Josh	New Iberia, LA	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
19	Spain	David	Willow	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
20	Faeo	John	Wasilla, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
20	Minnick	Todd	Wasilla, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
21	Branholm	David	Big Lake, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
21	Hunter, Jr.	Randy	Big Lake, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
22	Davis	Scott	Kenai, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
22	Palin	Todd	Wasilla, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
23	Niver	Mark	Wasilla, AK	Yamaha Nytro	Veteran
23	Zugg	Ron	Palmer, AK	Yamaha Nytro	Veteran
24	Colton	Ken	Anchorage, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Veteran
24	Martin	Dennis	Anchorage, AK	Ski-Doo MXZX-RS 600	Veteran
25	Bailey	Wade	Wasilla, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
25	Bailey	Jamie	Wasilla, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
26	O'Conner	Dan	Healy, AK	Ski-Doo MXZ	Rookie
26	Van Bebber	Hawken	Fairbanks, AK	Ski-Doo MXZ	Rookie
27	Fuller	Michael	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
27	McQuality	Mike	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
29	Diggins	Don	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
29	Muir	Robbie	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
31	Esmailka	Justin	Kaltag, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Veteran
31	Richardson	Kane	Fairbanks, AK	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
33	Bonnet	Travis	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie
33	Cross	Shawn	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Rookie

TRAIL CLASS

No.	Racer Names	Hometown	Snowmobile Model	Status
40	Fleming, Rick	Palmer	Ski-Doo Renegade	Rookie
40	Martin, Wayne	Palmer	Ski-Doo Renegade	Veteran
41	Black, Tyler	Kodiak	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
41	Cooper, Aaron	Kodiak	Arctic Cat F6	Rookie
42	Falls, Autumn Lynn	Nome	Ski-Doo Summit 600	Rookie
42	Gandia, Ramon	Nome	Ski-Doo Tundra	Veteran
42	Shapiro, Ken	Nome	Ski-Doo MXZ 550	Veteran
43	Swecker, Michael	Anchorage	Ski-Doo Skandik 440	Rookie
43	Bruns, Tim	Wasilla	Ski-Doo Skandik 440	Rookie
43	Weisheim, Larry	Anchorage	Ski-Doo Skandik 440	Veteran
43	Mielke, Frank	Chugiak	Ski-Doo Skandik 440	Rookie
43	Mielke, James	Wasilla	Ski-Doo Skandik 440	Rookie
44	Brassard, Tracey	Anchorage, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
44	Jensen, Paul	Eagle River, AK	Polaris	Rookie
44	Lee, Ken	Eagle River, AK	Polaris IQ 600	Veteran
44	Lee, Janya	Eagle River, AK	Polaris	Rookie

PRO CLASS



Curtis Cherrier

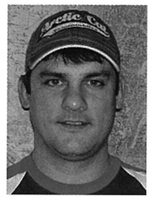
Age 37
Anchorage

Curtis has lived in Alaska for 36 years, he is a project manager for Inlet Electric. His hobbies include: tennis, snowmachining and waterskiing.

YEARS RACED

'00, '01(DNF), '02, '04, '05(DNF)

2 ARCTIC CAT



Trevor Lund

Age 36
Anchorage

Trevor is married with two children, he works as a real estate appraiser for MacSwain Associates. His interests include: hockey, mountain biking, hunting and fishing.

ROOKIE

SPONSORS: ACE Transport, Alaska Frontier Services, Anchorage Suzuki/Arctic Cat, Brad Cherrier, Brad Helwig, CNJ Mechanical, Dean's Automotive, Go Pro, Inlet Electrical, JD Palin, Lund Family, MacSwain Associates, McAllen & Son Electric, Noble Mechanical, V&H Enterprises



Shane Barber

Age 32
Willow

Shane raced the Iron Dog in '00, '01, '02, '05, and '06. He enjoys contact sports and outdoor activities with family, wife Tammy and children: Cody, Shana and Evan.

YEARS RACED

00, '01(DNF), '02, '05 '06

3 POLARIS



Evan Booth

Age 38
Nome

Evan is married with four children, working as a shop foreman for the state of Alaska, DOT. He is racing his 12th Iron Dog race this year, winning first place in 1992 and 1994.

YEARS RACED

90, '91, '92, '93, '94, '95(DNF), '98(DNF), '99, '00, '01(DNF), '04

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Grants keep Alaska's trails open

By HANNAH GUILLAUME

Mother Nature alone doesn't groom snowmachine trails.

Easy-to-ride trails marked by signs are usually the result of an expensive and time-consuming process years into the making.

The Omnibus Appropriations Act granted $4 million to Alaska's trails on Dec. 8, 2004.

This federal grant went up for grabs to almost anyone willing to compete to develop and maintain trails, including the Matanuska Susitna Gorsuch trails, Arctic Valley trails and Chugach Forest Russian River trails.

SnowTRAC, a component of the Snowmachine Trails Grant and an advisory board to the state parks, formed a money pool for grooming that evenly distributes the resources needed to keep snow-laden trails open.

Grants funded by snowmachine registration fees totaled $130,000 in 2005-06 for snowmachine trail grooming and $259,000 for trail development, maintenance and education in 2005.

In 2005, SnowTRAC and the state parks system divided Alaska into four regions: the Mat-Su, Northern, Kenai and Chugach. Those regions receive funding were determined by measured snowfall and user-groups' feedback to regional state park superintendents, according to the trails coordination division of parks and outdoor recreation.

"We use SnowTRAC as our mechanism of the public process," said Samantha Carroll, Alaska state trails coordinator in the division of parks and outdoor recreation. "For the Snowmachine Trails Grant you have to be an agency, business or non-profit, and that was the choice of SnowTRAC."

Joseph Gauna, trail coordinator for Curry Ridge Riders, showed the need for trail maintenance and received grant monies for use in the 2004-05 season.

"We applied for grants to get money from the SnowTRAC pool to groom trails in the Petersville area," Gauna said. "Now they're 12-feet wide and smooth. It was just a real success."

Gauna, who like many other trail guardians has watched over trails free for years, submitted a bid for a priority trail area and reported back to the superintendents on the money spent by providing receipts.

"It's a lot of work for them to get these funds," Carroll said.

To receive grants for trail development and snowmachine education and safety, the process is slightly different: bidders must show public support and involvement, submit a budget timeline and land status reports.

For information on Snowmachine Trail Grants and applications:, browse www.alaskatrails.org; or call (907) 269-8699.

Trail etiquette and safety

Leave no trace
Don't litter: clean up after your pets, campsites, stay on trails, pack out what you brought in and leave the area you enjoyed as you found it or better.

Share the experience
Be considerate: keep down the noise, be pleasant to others, give the other person assistance if needed and avoid startling trail users. Lead by example.

Share the trail
Yield to the right of way: shut down engines to let horses and dog teams pass, pass oncoming dog teams on the outside of curves and don't be a trail hog.

Know property rights
Respect rights of all landowners, don't trespass and don't vandalize.

Observe rules
Know the law: be aware of and follow posted and unposted trail rules. Know and follow trail-use laws.

Plan ahead
File a trip plan, plan your route and carry a map and compass. Know how to use them and dress appropriately. Carry adequate food, water, fuel and tools. Don't assume there will be others to help you out.

Enjoy and respect the environment
Keep your camp clean. Don't harass wildlife, blaze trees, dig up or cut down trailside vegetation.

Be alert
Think safety: anticipate others and alert them of your presence. Know trail and water conditions. Expect the unexpected. Know where you are and expect weather conditions to change. Don't go faster than you can stop within sight distance.

— Courtesy of the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association: www.snowmobile.org.



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