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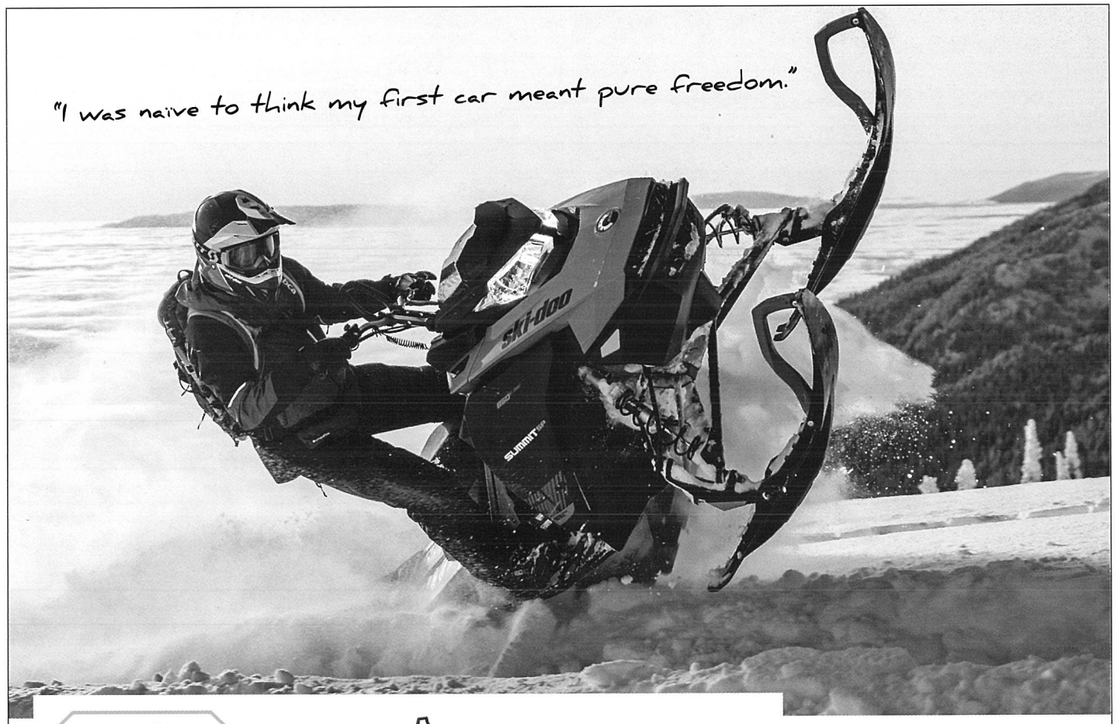
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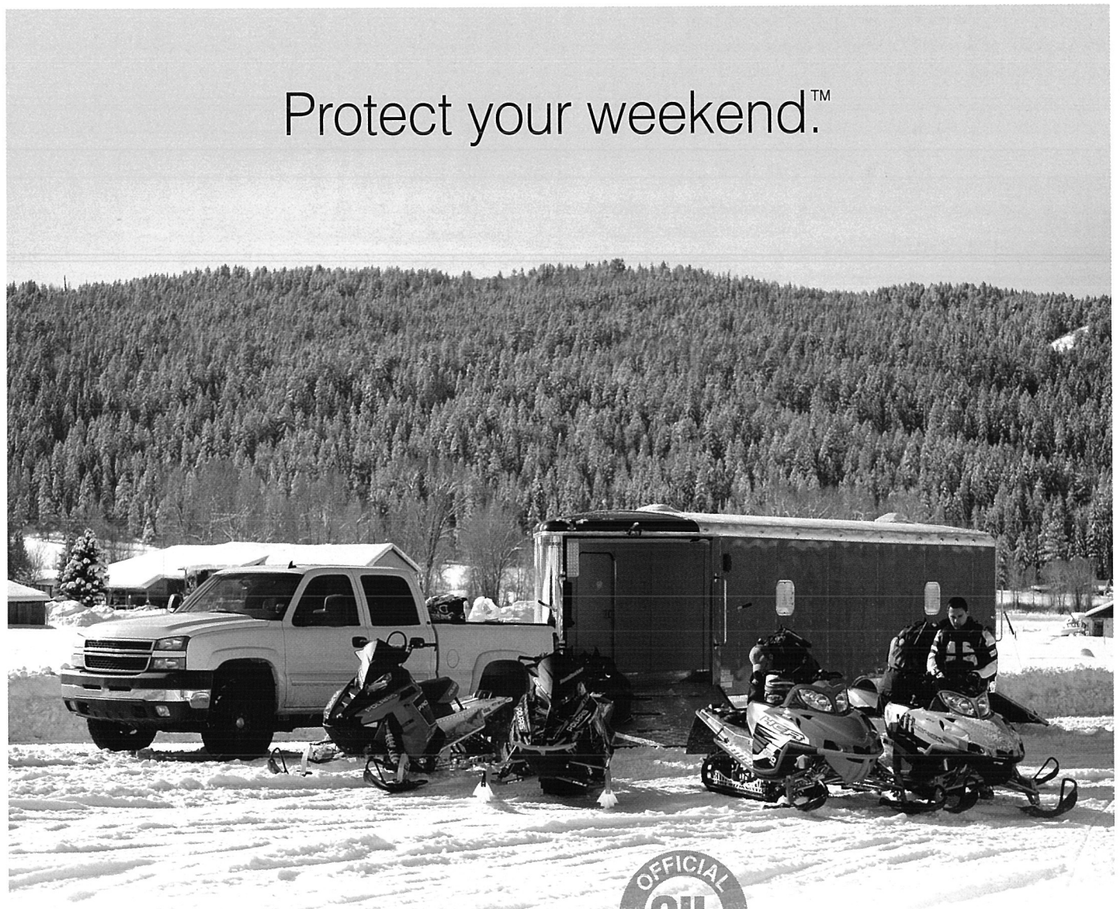
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2019 CONTINGENCY PRIZES

PRIZE DETAILS	CATEGORY	SPONSOR	AMOUNT
"Make Traxxas Award" by Monster Energy for the 5th Place overall finish for an All-Rookie team. (One Monster Energy Traxxas RC car per racer, $300 value each)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*	$600
Two Beaver hats for Fastest Team from Unalakleet to Kaltag	All Pro Class	Justin Esmailka	$700
$1000 in the form of two $500 Shell gift cards awarded to the Fastest Rookie Team to the Crowley Checkpoint at North Pole	Rookies	Crowley Fuels	$1,000
"Eighth is Great Award", for the 8th Place team to Finish in Fairbanks. Gift cards for each racer valued at $500 each. Product certificate.	All Pro Class	Alaska Industrial Hardware*	$1,000
First Place Finish in Fairbanks on Polaris snowmobiles by an All-Rookie Team. Cash.	Rookies	Big Lake Power Sports	$1,000
$1,000 for first team to scratch after starting flag drop	All Pro Class	Tom Germany/Tri-State Disposal Inc	$1,000
Fastest All-Rookie Team Nome – Two $550 Woody's Product Certificates and two Woody's Gear Bags	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	$1,202
Fastest All-Rookie Team into "Checkpoint KLIM" in McGrath. $750 Product Certificate for each racer. Product certificate.	Rookies	Klim USA*	$1,500
$1,500 in store credit to 1st Place Finish in Fairbanks on Polaris snowmobiles. Product certificate.	All Pro Class	Big Lake Power Sports*	$1,500
Fastest All-Rookie Team to Fairbanks – Two $550 Woody's Product Certificates and two Woody's Pit Coats	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	$1,850
ACS We've Got Your Back award for the team with the most time given back by the race marshals for time lost rendering aid along the trail.	All Teams	ACS	$2,000
$3,000 for the Second Fastest team and $2,000 for the Third Fastest team to Nome. Cash	All Pro Class	City of Nome	$5,000
$5,000 for team with most mileage at finish line in Fairbanks.	All Pro Class	Tom Germany/Tri-State Disposal Inc	$5,000
Fastest team from White Mountain to Nome (Northbound). Cash.	All Pro Class	Bering Sea Lions Club in Nome	$4,000
First Place overall Finish on Polaris snowmobile.	All Pro Class	Polaris Industries	$10,000
First Place overall $10,000 ($5,000 each racer) on Ski-Doo snowmobiles.	All Pro Class	BRP/Ski-Doo	$10,000
Donlin Gold's, Gold Rush Prize awarded to the 1st Fastest team to arrive in Nome. Gold Coins	All Pro Class	Donlin Gold	$10,000
First Place $10,000 overall, Second Place $5,000 overall, Third Place $3,000 overall on an Arctic Cat snowmobile. Cash.	All Pro Class	Arctic Cat	$18,000
		Total Contingency Prizes for 2019	**$82,746**

*denotes product or service value/ not cash. Award Details will be received by Race Participants prior to the Race Event Start.
**certificate is based on the individual, is non-transferable and only valid for the 2018 event. All other entry requirements and deadlines still apply.
Not all dollar amounts represent a cash prize. Visit www.irondog.org/prizes for details on these contingency awards.
Note: Cancellation from Sponsor does not bind Iron Dog, Inc. for award payout. Iron Dog reserves the right to cancel or alter program at any time.



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Good luck, riders. We'll see you in Nome and Fairbanks!



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2019 CONTINGENCY PRIZES

PRIZE DETAILS	CATEGORY	SPONSOR	AMOUNT
Two Woody's Gear Bags to the 3rd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Nome. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	$102
Two Woody's Gear Bags and two Woody's Sled Hats to the 3rd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Fairbanks. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	$132
2 Fastest All-Rookie Team into Galena Southbound. Gift Cards.	Rookies	Holiday Stationstores	$200
2 Fastest All-Rookie Team into Galena Southbound. Gift Cards.	Rookies	Holiday Stationstores	$200
First Pro Team into Fairbanks, LEAD-DOG helmet lights. Product Certificate	All Pro Class	LEAD-DOG Helmet Lights	$230
Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*	$240
Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*	$240
Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*	$240
Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*	$240
Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*	$240
Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*	$240
Two $200 Woody's Product Certificates to the 2nd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Nome. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products* (Official Traction Supplier)	$400
Two $200 Woody's Product Certificates and two Woody's Sled Hats to the 2nd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Fairbanks. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products* (Official Traction Supplier)	$430
All-Rookie Team that has never run the Iron Dog before, with the Fastest time to Skwentna. Credit at Roadhouse.	Rookies	Skwentna Roadhouse	$500
$500 product certificate for First Place Overall Finish in Fairbanks	All Pro Class	Amsoil	$500
The Perseverance Award to any Pro Class team that Finishes in Fairbanks and overcame the most adversity. Voted by ballot at the Finish Awards by 2015 Pro Class racers. Credit at Roadhouse.	All Pro Class	Skwentna Roadhouse	$500
First Place All-Rookie Team on Arctic Cat to Finish in Fairbanks. Cash.	Rookies	Anchorage Suzuki/ Arctic Cat	$500
"SBS Handyman Award" Fastest All-Rookie Team into Poorman. Two powertools from SBS. Product.	Rookies	Spenard Builders Supply*	$500
MarkGyver Award $500	All Pro Class	Mark Torkelson Memorial Foundation	$500
Top Notch Accessories Award: First rookie team to Fairbanks. $500 gift card	Rookies	Top Notch Accessories	$500
Top Notch Accessories Award: First Pro team to Fairbanks. $500 gift card	All Pro Class	Top Notch Accessories	$500
"Red Lantern Award" to the last team that makes it into Fairbanks - $1,000 worth of Iron Dog specific goods ($500 from each sponsor). Product certificate.	All Pro Class	Fine Line Interiors* and Anchorage Sheetmetal and Custom Fabricators*	$1,000

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POLARIS

Sponsors: Bergeron Mechanical, Hatcher Pass Polaris



KIM BERGERON

AGE: 49 / **FROM:** Dublin, N.H.
STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback Assault
RACE HISTORY: 2015: Finished, 2018: Finished
BIO: I'm a small-business owner who volunteers at the local, state and international level to protect our rights to ride. I'm an avid wheeled enthusiast – races, hares, scrambles – and proud to be a future Alaska resident.

Personal Sponsors: Bergeron Mechanical Systems, Hatcher Pass Polaris.



DENNIS FALLDORF

AGE: 63 / **FROM:** Ketchikan
STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris
RACE HISTORY: 2009: Finished, 2010: Finished, 2012-2013: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2018: Finished
BIO: The 2019 run will be my seventh Trail Class ride and second ride to Nome with teammates Kim Bergeron and Rebecca Charles. The team will run with the number 60 designation. Every February the Iron Dog calls, we must answer. The 2019 run will celebrate my 55th year riding the snowmobile.

Personal Sponsors: Lead Dog Helmet Light, EMC Engineering, Falldorf's Snow and Sand Adventures, Curt's Pit Stop



REBECCA CHARLES

AGE: 38 / **FROM:** Wasilla
STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback XCR 600
RACE HISTORY: Trail Class Finishes in 2014, 2015, 2016
BIO: I am looking forward to riding with two great teammates, seeing old friends along the way, and to encountering more memorable challenges on the way to Nome.

Personal Sponsors: Klim, Big Lake Powersports, friends and family

70

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Wilderness Ski-Doo



BRAYDEN BAHNKE

AGE: 18 / **FROM:** Nome
STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: Brayden is from Nome and attends Mount Edgecumbe High School. He is appreciative of his family: John Bahnke (father), Nancy Bahnke (mother), David Reese Bahnke (brother), Audrey Bahnke (sister), and Sarah Bahnke (sister). On the trail class he is looking forward to spending time with his father and snowmachining through Alaska.

Personal Sponsors: Dad



JOHN BAHNKE

AGE: 46 / **FROM:** Nome
STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo Renegade X
RACE HISTORY: 2002: Finished, 2008: Finished, 2013: Finished
BIO: I was born and raised in Nome, own and operate Wilderness Ski-doo. Married to wife, Nancy, for 18 years, and we have four kids – Brayden, 18; Reese, 15; Audrey and Sarah, 12.
RACING EXPERIENCE: Nome-Golovin: Racing cross-country in Nome and Kotzebue since 1994 with mixed finishes (some good/some DNF).

Personal Sponsors: Wife, Nancy; Brayden, Reese, Audrey and Sarah; Mom and Dad

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ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Anchorage Suzuki Arctic Cat, Quam Tech, Snap On (Stan Marshall), Trail Toyz Offroad, Northstar Sales Group , Fine Line Interiors, International Mechanical



TREVOR HELWIG

AGE: 21 / **FROM:** Anchorage
STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: I am a lifelong Alaskan who was raised in a power sports family. My hobbies include almost any outdoor activity, with riding sleds being my passion. I enjoy many weekends spent at our cabin with family and friends, who are my biggest supporters. I am employed with Sea Star Stevedoring through the 302 Operating Engineers.
RACING EXPERIENCE: 2018 Alyeska MotorMadness semi pro XC, second place.

Personal Sponsors: Anchorage Suzuki/Arctic Cat, Grandma Deb and Doug, Eric Quam, Geoff Crouse



RYAN ROFIDAL

AGE: 20 / **FROM:** Eagle River
STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000 RS
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: I'm a lifelong Alaskan of 20 years. Being brought up in a powersports family I've always enjoyed snow-machining. When I'm not riding I enjoy spending time with my friends and family. Ever since I was young, Iron Dog has been a dream of mine.
RACING EXPERIENCE: Alyeska Motor Madness Vintage X-Country, third place

Personal Sponsors: Dad, Grandma Connie and Grandpa John, Grandma Deb and Doug, Eric Quam, Geoff Crouse and the ASAC crew

80

ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Howl-A-Day Inn Boarding and Training LLC, Big Lake Arctic Cat, Alaska Better Built Homes & More LLC



ANTHONY BOCKELMAN

AGE: 36 / **FROM:** Streator, Ill.
STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat F6
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: Your average Dad/thrill seeker. Trying to check off another bucket list item.

Personal Sponsors: AK Better Built Homes & More LLC



ROY REDIFER

AGE: 56 / **FROM:** Wasilla
STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat Crossfire 600
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: I grew up in upstate New York and have lived in Alaska for nearly 25 years. I currently live in Wasilla with the love of my life Trisha Kolegar-Redifer and son Timothy. Hobbies include snowmachining, guitar player and dog training.

Personal Sponsors: Howl-a-Day Inn Boarding & Training

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44 MICHAEL LILLEY

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** Tanana

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000R XC

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I grew up in Tanana, so it was cool to be able to watch the Iron Dog come through when I was a kid, and now to be a part of the race is awesome for me. I've helped good friends race in past years and always had a good time, now it's my turn in the saddle. I'm a heavy Equipment Mechanic that works all over the state as a member of the Local 302, when I'm not working (which is rare, ha!) I like to be outside riding, hiking, fishing, hunting, hanging out with my buddies, and relaxing at home alone is nice too.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None

Personal Sponsors: Big Foot Pumping and Thawing, True North Oilfield Services, SSR Scott Sluka Racing, Powered by Lymburner Realty, Darby's Performance Machine, Mossy Oak Properties of Kenai, Mike Hendrix with Lawson Products, H&H Sheet Metal, Hostile Racing & Machine, Rx Goggles, Grip-N-Rip Racing, Tim Johola, Deryl Krause, Lori Bishop, Selina Sam, Courtney and Archie Agnes, Team Arctic Alaska Racing, Ken Lilley and the Yukon River Rats, Paddy Santucci with Santucci Construction, Anne Lilley, Kyle's pain in the butt wife Anesha Krause, all the friends, family and race vets who've been giving advice and training with us, and me.

45 SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team CC (Top Sponsor), Donlin Gold, KLIM, Dr. Hodges, Dock Masters, Side Pay Mining, Lee Hoffpauir, AC Commercial, Hotel McGrath B&B, Takotna Community Association, Anchorage LED



BARNEY ANSELMENT

AGE: 43 / **FROM:** Takotna

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** P Ski-Doo MXZ-XRS

RACE HISTORY: 2017 and 2018: Finished.

BIO: I am Alaska born and raised, and live in Takotna with my wife, Misty, and our three kids, Alana, Kaden and Kainoa. I'm the owner and pilot of Magnuson Airways.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2017 Iron Dog.

Personal Sponsors: My god; my wife, Misty, and our kids Sabrina, Alana, Kaden and Kainoa, my father and mother; and Matt Shelborne



THOMAS BAUMGARTNER

AGE: 39 / **FROM:** McGrath

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ-XRS

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I'm Alaska born and raised, and McGrath is my home. I work seasonally for DNR Forestry in McGrath and Middle Kuskokwim Electric Cooperative in the villages of Stony River, Sleetmute, Red Devil, Crooked Creek and Chuathbaluk. Outdoor adventure is in my blood.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None

Personal Sponsors: My parents, Ernie and Natalie; sister Jennifer Vanderpool (Hotel McGrath), Tamara Vanderpool, Justin and Kaelen Rosander

49 POLARIS

Sponsors: Walker Manufacturing (Top Sponsor), Polaris Racing, FXR Racing, Pioneer Peak Orthopedics, Rulien + Associates, Mat-Su Miners, Fast Trac Traction, Special Events Alaska, Doug's Machining, Gorilla Fireworks, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., Diversified Tire, Arctic Fox Steel Buildings, Rugged Radios, Woody's Traction Products, Earth X Batteries, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Zugger Shocks, Shaklee Resource Center, Galloway Consulting, Mat-Su Landscaping and Lawn Maintenance, Woody's Traction, Donebysaturday.



ANDREW GUMLEY

AGE: 38 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: Andrew lives in Wasilla with his wife, Anne-Renee, and two children, Kailee and Jamison. The Gumley family owns a small business in Wasilla and they are grateful to be part of a growing community. Andrew endeavors to do his best in all that he does as for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is his hope that Christ will demonstrate and extend grace to others through his effort and participation in this great race.

RACING EXPERIENCE: The 2019 Iron Dog will be my first race ever.

Personal Sponsors: My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. My amazing wife and kids along with family and friends - thank you for your continued prayer and support! Walker Manufacturing, Pioneer Peak Orthopedics, Rulien + Associates, Jon Melot, Thomas Causa, and Slater Strategies.



KLINTON VANWINGERDEN

AGE: 38 / **FROM:** Big Lake

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2017: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I do my best to live my life on purpose, committed to my beautiful bride, Calli, my daughter Reese, my son Miles, family and friends, my job, but most importantly my Savior Jesus Christ. It is my desire to do my best in all I do as if doing it unto my Lord, Jesus Christ. It is a daily battle but I strive to stay focused on what I believe to be the most important matter in life: Remember the life Jesus Christ lived and demonstrated on earth, as documented in the bible, and strive hard to model my life after his example. It is my hope Christ will extend his grace through this team, our efforts and participation in this great race. We have an amazing team supporting us. Thank you to all who've taken an interest in our team and a very special thanks to all that have either supported and/or joined Team SonsofThunder! Please connect with us on Facebook: Iron Dog Team #49, Instagram: @sonsofthunderracing, or mewe.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Fourth place 2017 Iron Dog, second place Larry Healy Memorial.

Personal Sponsors: My beautiful wife and best friend, Calli; my children Reese and Miles for pushing me to be better; family and friends, for your continued prayers and support.

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35 POLARIS

Sponsors: Eagle River Polaris Arctic Cat (Top Sponsors), Fly Racing, Alaska Mechanical Contractors Association/ SMACNA, Tomas Paniataaq, Quality Auto Parts, Matanuska Brewing Co., Adventures in Eye Care, Ingersoll Sheet Metal, Revival Homes LLC., Preferred Care at Home, Shea Oliver, Jerry Oliver, Daylight Electric LLC, Opus Memorial, Lexin Electronics Inc., Big Dipper Clothing, Color Art Printing Co., Alaskad, Auntie, Matt Mercer



MICHAEL OLIVER

AGE: 32 / **FROM:** Nome

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Polaris INDY XC 600

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I was born and raised in Nome and for the last 12 years I have been working as a Diesel Mechanic for Chevrolet of South Anchorage. In my free time, I enjoy fishing, hunting, camping and spending time with my friends, family, and son, Lincoln.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None listed.

Personal Sponsors: Jerry Oliver, Shea Oliver, Jeri Ann Oliver, Porter and Leslie Karmun, Delbert and Candy Hutchinson, Matt Tomter.



JERROD VAUGHN

AGE: 35 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2013: Finished, 2014: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I've lived in Alaska for over 20 years and have been racing Iron Dog since 2013. Looking forward to another year of racing. Thankful my wife and kids support me doing this each year.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None listed.

Personal Sponsors: Jennifer, Kenna, Austin, Rylee, Mark, & Lynne Vaughn, Darrell & Shelli Koontz, Geoff Crouse, Sarah Miller.

39 POLARIS

Sponsors: Klim (Top Sponsors), Polaris Racing , Alaska Air Taxi, Walker Evans Racing, Aurora Drilling and Consulting, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Woody's Traction Products



CODY BARBER

AGE: 24 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback PRO-S

RACE HISTORY: 2015: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Willow, where I grew up riding, racing, hunting and anything else that involves the outdoors. I am married to an awesome woman who I've been with for about four years now. We just added another little racer to the family in September. I'm now a proud dad of a little boy and couldn't be happier.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2011 x-country semi-pro Alaska state champion.

Personal Sponsors: My wife (Brandi Barber), Mom and Dad, Shana and Evan; the rest of my family as well.



SHANE BARBER

AGE: 44 / **FROM:** Willow

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2000: Finished, 2004: Finished, 2006: Finished, 2007: Finished, 2009: Finished, 2014: Finished, 2015: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I am a born and raised Alaskan. I live in Willow Alaska where my wife, Tammy, and I have raised a family and learned to enjoy many aspects of what life has to offer. I enjoy the outdoors and spending time with my family and friends. I truly have been blessed and try not to take that for granted. I thank God for these things.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Finished third three times, seventh three times, K-400 champion and never finished outside the Top 10 in Iron Dog. I have a 60-percent completion rate for Iron Dog races.

Personal Sponsors: My Spain family, Mom and Dad and the support from all my other friends and family. Special thanks to Ivanoffs and the West family.

42 SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Wilderness Ski-Doo (Top Sponsor), Q-Trucking, KLIM, Stud Boy Traction Products, Danny Gueco/Team CC, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, NorthWest Gold Diggers, Camso, Amsoil, Glacier Autoworks, MTNTK Performance, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Rigid LED Lights



AMOS CRUISE

AGE: 29 / **FROM:** McGrath

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS 600r

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I'm a lifelong Alaskan and a longtime volunteer of the Iron Dog in McGrath and Rohn.

I've been a gold miner for several years in Nome, but these days I'm a member of the Local 302 in Anchorage. I love everything Alaska, camping, hunting, fishing, riding and racing, but my greatest times come from time spent with my two sons, Rohn and Hayden. I'd like to thank my family and friends for all their support.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Raced the Nome Golovin 200 nine times.

Personal Sponsors: Chris Cruise, Ryan and Jessica Tonseth, Jordan Miller, Joe and Terry Miller, Charley and Jennifer Reader, Misty Reader, Steve and Christine Pomrenke, Jeff and Peggy Darling, Johnny Bahnke, Dennis Bahnke, Freda Beasley, Perry Burass Louie Stang Will Gemar JohnJohn Schaeffer Danny Gueco Big Joe Fullwood Stacey Green and all the Iron Dog volunteers and staff.



JARVIS MILLER

AGE: 27 / **FROM:** Nome

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo XRS

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I was born and raised in Nome, where I reside with my girlfriend, Hattie, and daughter Kaia. I enjoy the outdoors including fishing, hunting, boating and racing snowmachines. I work for the State of Alaska Department of Transportation as a heavy equipment operator.

RACING EXPERIENCE: First place Overall 2018 Nome-Golovin 200; second place 2018 Kotzebue Archie Ferguson Willie Goodwin Memorial Race; third place 2015 Nome-Golovin 200; second place 2013 Kotzebue Archie Ferguson Willie Goodwin Memorial Race; first place Open Class 2011 Nome-Golovin 200 and Rookie of the Year; and third place 2010 Nome-Golovin 200.

Personal Sponsors: Wilderness Ski-Doo, Johnny Bahnke III; Q Trucking, Charley and Jennifer Reader; KLIM; Studboy; Jeff and Peggy Darling; VFW Nome Post # 9569; Gueco Racing, Danny Gueco; Joe and Terry Miller; Hattie Keller and Kaia Miller; Louie Stang; Will Gemar; Jordan Miller and Chelsea Reader; Lucas Bauman; John and Kathy Bahnke; Jerry Miller; NorthWest Gold Diggers; Misty Reader

44 ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Amsoil, Arctic Cat (Top Sponsors), Northern Power Sports, Darby's Performance Machine, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Innovative Off Road - Vision X, IUOE Local 302, Auto Trim Design, Big Foot Pumping and Thawing, Polar Supply Company



KYLE KRAUSE

AGE: 33 / **FROM:** Nenana

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR6000 XC

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I was born and raised in Nenana, and I've been racing in one way or another since I was 10 years old when I started racing BMX. I moved up to full-size cars on the dirt track in Fairbanks at 14 and bought my first sprint car at 22. It's been a lifelong goal to race across Alaska in the Iron Dog. This dream would not be possible without the love and support of my wife, Anesha Krause, and son, Devin, 6.

RACING EXPERIENCE: The only snowmachine race I've ever entered was the 2018 Tanana 140, where I finished ninth of 22.

Personal Sponsors: First and foremost my amazing wife, Anesha; Big Foot Pumping and Thawing; Northern Powersports; True North Oilfield Services; SSR Scott Sluka Racing; Powered by Lymburner Realty; Darby's Performance Machine; Mossy Oak Properties of Kenai; Mike Hendrix with Lawson Products; H&H Sheet Metal; Hostile Racing & MachineRx Goggles, Grip n Rip Racing, Kevin Kornack, Tim Jahola, Deryl Krause, Lori Bishop, Selina Sam, The world famous Courtny Agnes, Team Arctic Alaska Racing, Willie Thomas

We've got you covered

Watch the race — from Deshka Landing to Fairbanks, and even on your phone

By **MELISSA DEVAUGHN**

THE 2019 IRON DOG RACERS WILL PASS THROUGH more than 20 communities on their way to the finish line. This race is one of the most exciting times of the year for many of these remote villages and towns, who often see few visitors. So, it's safe to say that there are plenty of people who will be able to watch live.

Still, Iron Dog knows there are thousands of fans out there who may not have such front-row seats for the races. So the race has come to you.

Those new to the sport of snowmachine racing have many opportunities leading up to and after the Iron Dog race to meet teams, ask questions and determine if they have what it takes to become a future Iron Dog champion. Drop in on the Donlin Gold Safety Expo anytime between 1 and 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 15, at Menard Sports Center in Wasilla. This is where teams are inspected before given approval to race. Fans can talk to racers, see the packing list of gear spread out, inspect the snowmachines, and enjoy some extra family fun and excitement. The racers also will draw their starting order at the expo, starting at 5 p.m.

Two days later on Feb. 17, Iron Dog pro racers will officially start their race, taking off in two-minute intervals at Deshka Landing, milepost 70.5 of the Parks Highway. The start was moved from Big Lake due to lingering safety concerns over ice stability.

If you splurge on a ticket to Nome, or live there already, you'll get a unique perspective on how hard teams are racing, the toll it takes on them and their machines, the halfway awards banquet and the release for the second leg of the course to Fairbanks. It's also the finish line for Trail Class riders and a chance to hear their tales from the trail.

In Fairbanks, the crowd will gather to watch weary racers as they sprint to the finish. The finish moves back to Pike's Waterfront Lodge, which for years was the traditional end point.

"Pike's Landing is going to be 50 years old in 2019, so we love hosting unique Alaskan sporting events like this to help celebrate," said Pike's Riverfront Lodge owner Jay Ramras. "We're excited – we've got a giant, 12-by-8 sign in the middle of our parking lot that has the route of the race and the history of the race. We are delighted for the race to come back to this part of the Chena.

"We just think it's going to be a great sporting event – there is so much room on the river and in our parking lot for snowmachine trailers and friends and family, we just want everyone to have fun and enjoy it."

Cheer racers on from the sidelines or watch from the lodge. The first teams are expected to start showing up in Fairbanks sometime on Saturday, Feb. 23.

Either way, it will be a good time, said John Woodbury, executive director of the Iron Dog.

"Post race events include an awards ceremony at Pike's immediately following the finish, and there is usually a pretty racous afterparty following the awards," Woodbury said. "On April 2, we are planning the raffle draw combined with the Iron Dog Hall of Fame ceremony in Anchorage. We are working with friends of Iron Dog to secure a venue large enough for the anticipated crowd, so check www.irondog.org for updates on this event."

Out of sight but on your device

Stay abreast of the action using the latest technology. Watch news coverage on KTUU Channel 2, listen on the radio, or surf the Iron Dog website and Facebook page. Expect news coverage and prerace information from KTUU before and during the race.

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 8**

Schedule of Events

FEB. 13: Trail Class Tech Inspection (Wasilla at Hatcher Pass Polaris)
FEB. 15: Trail Class Start (Big Lake at Southport Marina)
FEB. 15: Donlin Gold Safety Expo (Mat-Su Valley at Menard Center)
FEB. 17: Pro Class Start (Deshka Landing)
FEB. 20: Halfway Ceremonies in Nome
FEB. 23: Finish of the Pro Class in Fairbanks (Pike's Waterfront Lodge)

2019 IRON DOG

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Year Round: 7100 Old Seward Hwy, Unit C
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Race Week
Nome Headquarters:
City of Nome Public Works Garage
Fairbanks Headquarters:
Pike's Waterfront Lodge



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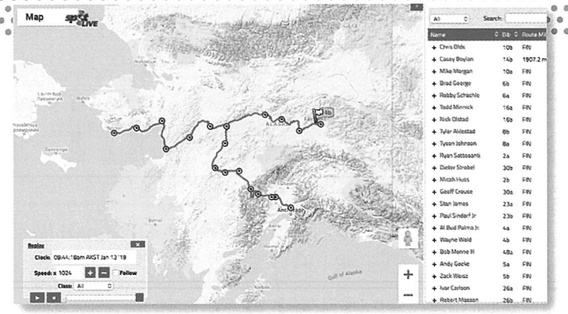
36 Pro Class racer bios

44 Trail Class bios

On the cover: Chris Olds and Mike Morgan cross the finish line in Fairbanks to win the 2018 Iron Dog race. The pair covered the 2,000-mile route with a course time of 36 hours, 54 minutes and 49 seconds. **Photo by James Wicken**

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Other ways to get the latest

For the most current live stream online, go to www.irondog.org/live as well as find previous live streams.

For web-based and mobile viewing information and near-real-time GPS tracking, visit **WWW.IRONDOG.ORG**, and look for Race Tracking, where you can follow your favorite team.

FACEBOOK: https://www.facebook.com/snowmobilerace/
TWITTER: @irondograce
INSTAGRAM: @irondograce
YOUTUBE: https://www.youtube.com/user/IronDogRace/videos

Follow the hashtag #irondog2019 for updates all along the route.

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The South Anchorage High School Media Team will be providing live streaming coverage from the start line in Deshka Landing, all the way to the finish line in Fairbanks. It's a tradition that began in 2015 and is going into its fifth year.

"Our students will be streaming the start of the race, the Nome garage, and the finish of the race, as well as collecting video and audio data for future commercials and fillers for live streams," said Lee Butterfield, South Anchorage's electronic media teacher. "Our students are also working on commercials for the events and activities related to Iron Dog as we speak and will be aired on local television and streamed on the South Anchorage High School YouTube Page (Be sure to check it out at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQyWqa3IHaljxxkNctJXg5w)."

Woodbury said Butterfield's students are proving that the younger generation really is the future. With all of the material the teens have provided, Iron Dog spectators are better informed than ever.

"Social media, television, radio, print ads, race guides – all are outlets to share what Iron Dog is all about, and each requires a unique plan to make an effective use of the medium," he said. Butterfield's team of teens is key to all of that, he added.

As for Butterfield, it's a win-win situation: Iron Dog gets coverage, and his students get valuable life experience.

"Our students get real-world experience in media, broadcast, digital design, and field engineering throughout this experience," he said. "They work with a real client, providing a highly technical product with deadlines and the stress of managing a live worldwide stream of an internationally known event. Racers get coverage and connection to fans that reach further than ever before. We have viewers from around the world tune in to watch the race unfold and have racer family members that feel more connected to their racers through the work done by these students."

30 ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Team Arctic Cat (Top Sponsor), RMG Real Estate Network/Keller Wiliams, Big Boys Toys Storage, Heatsource Mechanical, First Rate Financial, John Brandt/Country Insurance, Punt Brothers Construction, Master Auto, Innovative Off Road - Vision X, Grip-N-Rip Racing, Lone Pine Fabrication, 139 Designs



KYLE CONNER

AGE: 28 / **FROM:** Willow

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000 R XC

RACE HISTORY: 2014: Finished, 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished

BIO: Kyle is a lifelong Alaskan, raised in Willow. He has spent most of his life snowmachining at Hatcher's Pass during the winters and hunting or fishing in the summers. His teenage years were spent racing snowcross, putting his sled back together after races, and outriding his brothers. More recently, he completed both the 2014 and 2015 Iron dog with 13th place finishes and the 2016 Iron Dog in 10th place, 2017 DNF. He's raced Arctic Man for the last five years and a few cross country races. He now resides in Palmer with his beautiful wife, Molly, and their two kids, Sage and Clark. Kyle enjoys spending time in the boat and on snowmachines with his kids and wife.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2014 Iron Dog, 13th place; 2015 Iron Dog, 13th place; 2016 Iron Dog, 10th place; 2017 Iron Dog, DNF.

Personal Sponsors: Molly Conner, the Lamborn Family, the Conner Family, Stonegate Storage, Drifterz Paradise, the Sprankle Family.



BLAKE ELDER

AGE: 29 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR6000XC

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I love all of the adventures that Alaska has to offer. My wife, Natalie, and I have two beautiful daughters and we love to go riding. I raced sno x in high school and have recently enjoyed getting back into the racing world and am looking forward to the Iron Dog.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None listed

Personal Sponsors: Arctic Cat, Big Boys Toys Storage, RMG Real Estate Network-Keller, Williams Realty Alaska Group, Jon Brandt- Country Financial, Punt Brothers Construction, Heatsource Mechanical, Vision X, Grip-N-Rip Racing, Lone Pine Fabrication, 139 designs.

31 SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team Industries (Top Sponsor), Delta Powersports, Team CC Ski-doo, Auto Trim Design, Lavelle's Taphouse, FXR Racing, Mulcare Lawncare, Hutch's Mobile Service, Woody's Traction Products, C&A Pro Skis, Darbys' Performance Machine, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Terri Wolters Allstate Insurance, CMI, Gundersen Painting, Denali Industrial Supply Inc., Sydney Michelle Photography, Holaday-Parks Inc., Everts Air Cargo, Putco Inc.



BOBBY MENNE

AGE: 27 / **FROM:** Wasilla (via Virginia, Minn.)

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2016-2017: Finished

BIO: I'm originally from Virginia, Minnesota, a small town in the woods of Northern Minnesota. I started racing cross country in 2007, and in 2008 I completed my first full race season. For the next 10 years I would race professionally across the Lower 48 and Canada. In 2016, I got a call that a rider had gotten hurt and someone needed to fill his shoes for Iron Dog: 36 hours later I was on the starting line in Big Lake, finishing in ninth place six days later. In 2017 I came back for another year and after the race I made the decision to move to Alaska full time. I flew to Minnesota, packed my truck and trailer, and headed north. I now work in Wasilla for H5 Construction. On the side, I run a small landscaping company doing odd jobs for extra cash to save up for winter. For 2019 we are more than excited to start our new endeavors with Ski-Doo and to have the opportunity to race the Iron Dog again. I have one goal and that is to come home with nothing less than a Top 3 for this year's Iron Dog.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2017-18 1st Larry Heal Memorial, 1st Alyeska Motor Madness; 2015-2016 No. 1 qualifier at Soo I-500 (mechanical during race), 9th place Iron Dog finisher, multiple USXC pro podiums; 2014-2015 3rd place Pro 600 season points; multiple USXC pro podiums, previously 2012-2013; Soo I-500 finished third overall 2012-2013: In USXC cross- country racing finished second in Pro Open points and ninth in Pro Stock points.

Personal Sponsors: 131 Racing, The Van Hoomissen's, Mom, Dad, Paige, Jamie. Diversified Tire, Ski-Doo, 509, Woody's, Team CC, Auto Trim Design, Mulcare Lawn Care, Altitude Chiropractic, C&A Pro Skis, Team Industries, Zollinger Racing Products, Innergy, Lavelle's Taphouse, Digital Ink Design, H5 Construction.

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TROY CONLON

AGE: 28 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2016: Finished; 2017: Finished.

BIO: I was born and raised in Fairbanks, where I work as a welder/machinist for Fort Knox Gold Mine. I have been riding snowmachines since I was 2, riding in the mountains most of my life until in 2013 I entered my first race. What started out as a hobby has grown into a full out passion, which someday I'd like to share with my son Carver. I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, hockey, and boating in my free time. My wife, Chloe, and I have been married for four years and she is the backbone behind my race career, always sacrificing to make schedules and race days work.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Mayor's Cup second place, third place, fifth place; Mayor's Cup semi-pro firsts place, third place; Tanana 140, first place; Motor Madness XC third place, fifth place; Nome/Golovin, eighth place; Multiple Arctic Man finishes; Hillclimb, Hillcross podiums.

Personal Sponsors: Chloe & Carver Conlon, Jerry Conlon & Shannon Winner, Ron Johnson & Chelsea Stanya, Jeanie & Joe Conlon, Stan Hendrickson, Chuck & Ester, Hunter Johnson, Candy Johnson, Mike Nelson

32 POLARIS

Sponsors: Polaris Outpost Alaska (Top Sponsor), Darby's Performance Machine, Compeaus, Street Sounds



GEORGE MOUNTAIN

AGE: 30 / **FROM:** Nulato

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback XCR

RACE HISTORY: 2018: DNF

BIO: I'm George Mountain from Nulato, Alaska, always been a fan of the Iron Dog race and am happy to be here. Had a lot of fun last year racing in AF/WG, Nome-Golovin, Yukon Draanjik and Tanana. Let's give this another go and see what happens this time.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None listed.

Personal Sponsors: Randy Kangas, Kelly Sommer, Vanessa Mountain, and numerous friends and family members.



KELLY SOMMER

AGE: 31 / **FROM:** Nulato

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback

RACE HISTORY: 2012: Finished

BIO: I like to race snowmachines, and I grew up in Nulato and have lived in Galena and Fairbanks. I had a lot of fun racing last year in Iron Dog and Tanana 140 and Kotz AF/WG. This will be my third Iron Dog. Thanks to Randy Kangas, Troy and Bobby for all the advice, Marvin for all the help, and George Demoski for help in the garage.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Tanana 140 finished, Kotz AF/WG finished.

Personal Sponsors: Randy Kangas, George Demoski, Cozzy Mountain

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POLARIS

Sponsors: Donlin Gold (Top Sponsor), Knik Construction, Q Trucking, Alaska Air Transit, KLIM, Stud Boy Racing, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Charlie Reader



NICHOLAS READER

AGE: 26 / **FROM:** Nome

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I was born and raised here in Nome, along with my second home of McGrath. I'm your typical Alaskan who loves the great outdoors when it comes to hunting, fishing, camping, along with riding ATVs/snowmobiles. I work as an operator for Q-Trucking Co.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Nome Golovin: 2014, first place 600cc; Nome Golovin: 2016, second place 600cc; Nome Golovin: 2017, first place 600cc; Nome Golovin: 2017, third place 800cc.



DIETRICH NIKOLAI

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** McGrath

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2017: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I'm Alaskan born and raised, I live in McGrath, with my wife, Renae, and three beautiful kids, Kierra, Jacob and Alyzabeth. I enjoy hunting fishing and trapping on my time off from working for Knik Construction. I'd like to thank all my personal sponsors and volunteers who made this possible.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None.

Personal Sponsors: Renae, Kierra, Jacob, Alyzabeth Egrass, Gary and Rosalie Egrass, the communities of Nikolai, McGrath and Nome.

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POLARIS

Sponsors: Dynamic Paint (Top Sponsor), A&A Roofing, FS&G, Allstate Dave Mongold, Dynamic Painting, Auto Trim Design, Darby's Performance Machine, KLIM, Zbroz Racing, Zollinger Racing Products, Stud Boy Traction Products, Polaris Outpost Alaska, Polaris Racing, Indy Specialty, Alaska LED Industries, HYDZ clothing, Rebel roots, Advanced Powder Coating, A2D Sledworks, Southside Tattoo, Southside Strength and Fitness, Bikman Perfomance, Exit Shocks, College Collision, Polaris Lubricants



IVAR CARLSON

AGE: 36 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris XC 600

RACE HISTORY: 2018: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Fairbanks. I currently live in Anchorage, but work for a Fairbanks-based company, Slayden Plumbing and Heating, as a certified pipe and structural welder. When I'm not working out of town, I am still working it seems, always trying to be innovative, thinking and coming up with new ideas for custom fabrication I enjoy hanging out with my beautiful 4-year-old daughter, Winter Rose. I grew up doing in the '90s, skateboarding, snowboarding and BMX freestyle, all that was short lived when I discovered snowmachines. I found myself doing freestyle and racing snocross, making a name for myself being known to taking sleds to a whole new level. I'd like to thank all my friends and family who support my expensive habit and who have stuck with me along the way.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2004: third place Pro Open Arctic Tire Snocross; 2005: King Rules Snow Circus tour in Finland; 2012: second place, 800 Open Arctic Man Hillcross; 2013: third place, 800 Open Arctic Man Hillcross; 2013: first place, Alyeska Motor Madness Hillcross; 2013: seventh place, Big Lake to Skwentna cross country; 2013: first place, Willow Festival Highway Race; 2015: first place, 800 Open Arctic Man Hillcross; 2015: first place; 800 King of Kings Class, Arctic Man Hillcross; 2016: eighth place, 800 Open Valdez Hillclimbs; 2016: ninth place, 800 Modified Valdez hillclimbs; 2017: third place Cross Country team race Alyeska Motor Madness; 2018: 15th place, Iron Dog.

Personal Sponsors: Bikeman Peformance, ZBROZ Racing, KLIM, INDY Specialty, Innovative Designs LLC, Polaris Outpost, Advanced Powder Coating, A2D Motorsports, Southside Strength and Fitness, Zollinger Racing Products



ROBERT MASSON

AGE: 39 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2018: Finished

BIO: I am a lifelong Alaskan born in raised in Fairbanks. I grew up riding snowmobiles every weekend throughout the winters with my family and have been addicted to it ever since.

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RACING EXPERIENCE: Arctic Man: 1994, DNF; 1995, 29th place; 1996, DNF; 1997 Pro Class, third place; 1998, sixth place; 1999, 15th place; 2000, seventh place; 2002 fifth place; 2003, seventh place; 2004, fifth place; 2005, fourth place; 2007, fourth place; 2013, 14th place; 2015, 14th place. Hay 100: 1995, fourth place. K400: 1998, DNF. Birch Lake 250: 2001, second place 600 stock, second place 800 open. FRLC snow cross: 2001, first place (points) 600 stock, second place (points) 800 open; 2002, first place points 600 stock, first place (points) 800 open; 2003, second place (points) 600 stock, second place (points) 800 open. Arctic Man Hill Cross: 2007, second place pro class. Arctic Man men's snowboard: 2018, fourth place; men's Ski, fifth place.

Personal Sponsors: Rodney Masson, my children, Lisa Bishop, my friends and family.

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POLARIS

Sponsors: Alaska Spine Institute (Top Sponsor), DHT, KLIM, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Northern Solutions, Spernak and Son, Woody's Traction Products, White Spruce Trailers, Complete Concepts Automotive



DANIELLE LEVINE

AGE: 24 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback XCR SC

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I grew up in Anchorage, and currently am a mechanical engineering student at the University of Nevada, Reno. I started riding snowmachines around the age of 6 and began racing Arctic Man and AMMC cross-country races at 14. I was unable to race Iron Dog in 2013 and I'm excited to be called up short notice to compete in the 2019 Iron Dog with my dad.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Arctic Man: 2012, first place women's snowboard and second place women's ski; 2011, second place womens snowboard; 2012 AMMC Cross Country Series Overall: women pro, first place; men semi-pro, second place.

Personal Sponsors: Alaska Spine Institute, DHT, KLIM, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Northern Solutions, Spernak and Son, Woody's Traction Products, White Spruce Trailers, Complete Concepts Automotive.



LARRY LEVINE

AGE: 55 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback XCR SC Select

RACE HISTORY: 2015: DNF, 2016: Finished; 2018: Finished

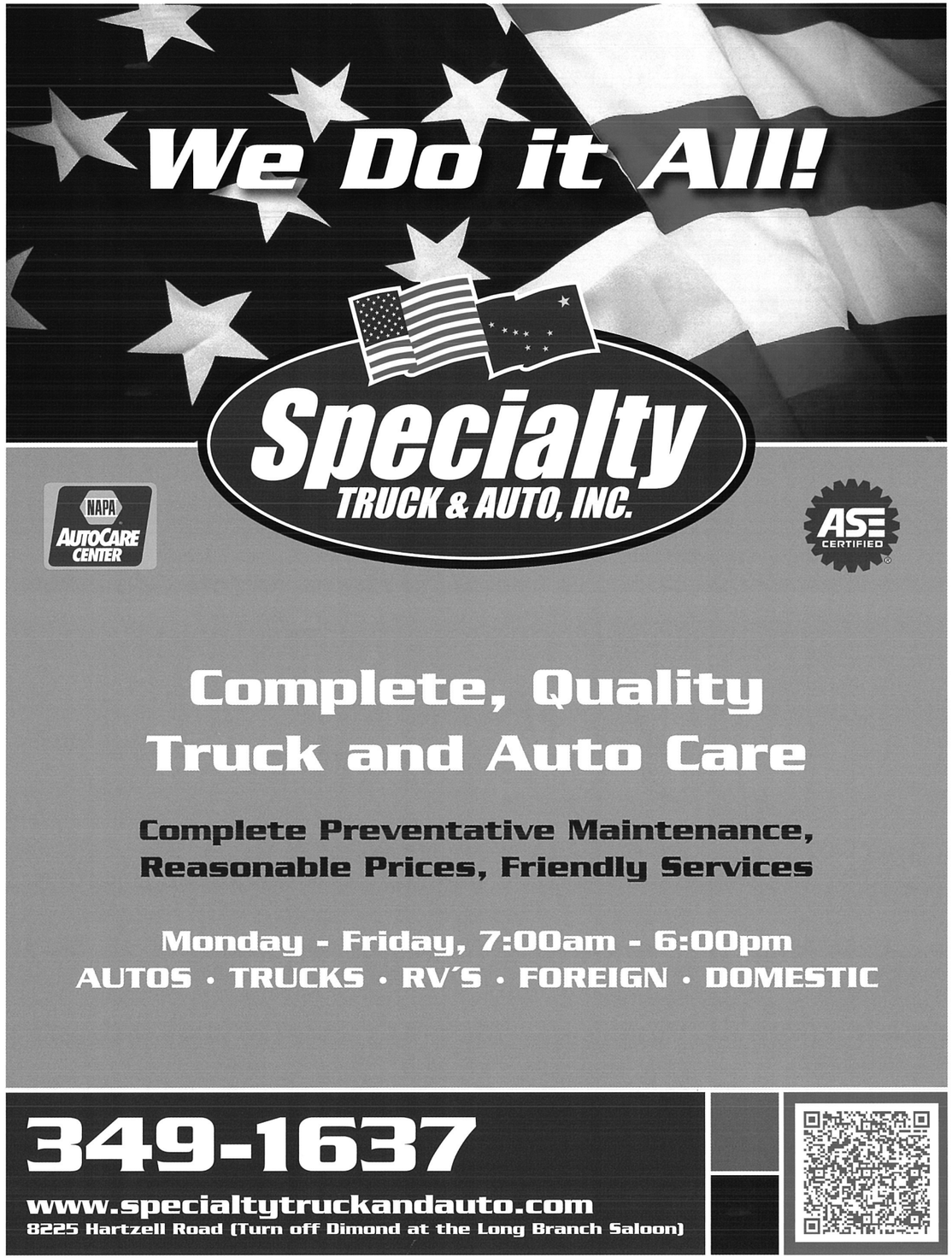
BIO: I was born and raised in Anchorage and am practicing medicine in Alaska following training beginning in 1995. Started riding snowmachines to keep up with my friends and daughter.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2013-2017 Arctic Man

Personal Sponsors: Want to thank all my family, friends and supporters – Karen Levine, Dave Hausbeck, Mathew Spernak, Jerry Alward and Stan English.







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MINNICK RACING EXPERIENCE: 2002: Finished, 2004-2008: Finished, 2009: first place, 2010-2018: Finished.

Personal Sponsors: Sharilyn Minnick, Emma and Canyon Minnick, Paul and Diane Minnick, Eric Quam, Ken Lee, Rod and Arden Miller, Mike and Jayne Koskovich, Gilbert Perez, Al Palma, Dan Thibault, Sam and Nita Towarek, Hazel Esmailka, Justin Esmailka, Alina Rubeo



NICK OLSTAD

AGE: 36 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS 600

RACE HISTORY: 2005: first place, 2009: first place, 2011: Finished, 2014: first place, 2016-2018: Finished

BIO: Nick is a longtime Alaskan who enjoys the outdoors. When not working at Andeavor Construction, he's spending time with wife, Brianne, daughter, Kaia, and son, Jackson. Nick loves to be out riding his side-by-side in the summer, and snowmachines until the snow is gone. This will be Nick's 14th time racing Iron Dog.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Mayor's Cup 2005 and 2006: first place; 2011: third place; K-150 2005 and 2006: first place

Personal Sponsors: Brianne, Kaia and Jackson Olstad

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POLARIS

Sponsors: Little Red Services (Top Sponsor), ASRC Energy Services, Mechanial Specialist Inc., Hatcher Pass Polaris, Klim Technical Riding Gear, Heli Alaska Inc.



COREY BERG

AGE: 29 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris XCR

RACE HISTORY: 2016: Finished

BIO: Born and raised in Wasilla, Alaska. I'm an avid hunter and fisher. When I'm away from my hobbies, I'm working on the North Slope for ASRC. Excited to be back for my Third year racing the Iron Dog. Racing In memory of my dad, Mike Berg; many knew him as Big Mike of the Valley.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2009 Arctic Man Semi Pro Hill Cross, first place; 2009, Alyeska Hill Cross, first place; 2010 Snowcross Semi Pro Anchorage, first place; 2016 Iron Dog, 18th place.

Personal Sponsors: Big Lake PowerSports, Klim, Security Mini Storage, Heli Alaska, beagle Jarvis, Tattoos by Krystal, Jim Agre, JJ's Bottling; mother, Karen Berg, and sister Kristina Berg; Chris Graeber, Terry Hanson, John Eicher, Doug Dixon, Cassi and Dom Nickles, Thomas Whitstine, all family and friends who have made this race possible for us.



RAY CHVASTASZ

AGE: 42 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Switchback XCR

RACE HISTORY: 2015: Finished

BIO: I work on the slope as a Well Testing Operator for Little Red Services/ASRC Energy Services. I am married to Debi with three awesome kids, Jacob, Gavin and Emilie. I love to spend time with my family, playing and coaching hockey, riding sleds, bikes and wheelers. There's just something about this race that keeps pulling me back in, constantly telling me that I can do better.

RACING EXPERIENCE: I-500: second place, several 100-500-mile ice races; Top 3 finishes, and a couple of K-150's; fifth and sixth.

Personal Sponsors: Debi Chvastasz, Joe Chvastasz, Karla Jones, Matt and Terri Trask, Bill and Wendy Hollifield, Little Red Services family, Stevie Leonard (Air Support)

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SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team CC (Top Sponsor), Team Ski-Doo Racing, Fox Racing Shox, Well Solutions Inc., Pat Riley, AK LED Industries, Lone Pine Fabricators, Fine Line Interiors, RPM Composite



SCOTT FAEO

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ-XRS

RACE HISTORY: 2013-2014: Finished, 2015: first place

BIO: I am a born and raised Alaskan. Iron Dog has been a part of me since I was born in 1984. This was also the first running of the Iron Dog, which was then won by my father, John Faeo. My family has been there since Day 1 with support unlike any other. This could not all be possible without support. Sponsors are a major factor to make dreams come to reality. The support from family, sponsors and friends is the only way this could be possible. When not racing, I really enjoy taking some time off at the cabin with my honey, Rebecca McNeal. In the summer, I like to play golf and hang out on the water. I am super excited to be partnering with my lifelong buddy in Chad Gueco. Together, I believe we have the talent and support to bring home the victory. Special thanks to John and Vicki Faeo, and my brother John.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2015 Iron Dog first place; 2014 Larry Heal 150 second place; 2013 Larry Heal Memorial 150 first place; 2012 Big Lake 150 first place.

Personal Sponsors: My parents John and Vicki, and brother John Faeo; also my amazing girlfriend, Rebecca; Bad Grammar, New Horizons, IBEW 1547, Canyon Lake Lodge, Swanson Steel, Motorfist, Fox Racing, Dr. Haggerty, Stud Boy Traction, Heli Alaska, Marc and Deanne, Dick and Jennie, Luff Orthodontics, International Aviation, Northern Quality Homes, Deans Auto, GMC Contracting, Summit Farms, Gexpro, Rock Solid Pile Company, General Constructors, Mike Grow, Perfect Start Espresso, Chad and Hannah Wiehe.



CHAD GUECO

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2012: Finished, 2015-2016: Finished, 2017: second place.

BIO: I am a lifelong Alaskan who loves everything our state has to offer. I spend every chance I get traveling, riding, hunting, fishing and anything that involves a good time! I am a father of three children: Allie, 11; Ella, 8; and Haiden, 5; with my beautiful wife, Jayme Gueco. This will be my seventh Iron Dog that will be nothing short of another great experience.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2013 Alyeska Motor Madness XC, first place; 2013 Valdez Mayor's Cup XC, third place; 2012 Eureka 100 XC, first place; 2011 Valdez Mayor's Cup, first place; 2011 Eureka 100 XC, second place; 2009 Ada, MN 100 XC, sixth place; 2009 Red Lake 500 MN XC, sixth place; 2008 Valdez Mayors' Cup, third place; 2008 Big Lake 500 Grand Prix, first place; 2008 Thunder Bay 200 Enduro MI, first place; 2008 Alpena 300 Enduro MI, first place; 2004-2010 Soo I-500 MI, first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and 12th; 2007 Eagle River World Championship, first place.

Personal Sponsors: Caelus Energy LLC. Team, Alaska Spine Institute, Bills Distributing, Projekt 907, Motorfist, Fox Shox, Trail Tank, Well Solutions Inc., StudBoy Traction, Gueco Racing, Grip-N-Rip, my family, FineLine Interiors, Alaska Comprehensive Dental, Body Renew, AK LED Industries, Independent Lift Truck, Rain Proof Roofing, Mudbusters Car Wash, Independent Lift Truck of Alaska and a special thanks to Korey Cronquist and a big shout out to my father Danny Gueco – it would not be possible without any of you.



KRUZ KLEEWEIN

AGE: 23 / **FROM:** Willow

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2018: Finished

BIO: Kruz is a born and raised Alaskan from Willow. He has always shared a love with anything with a motor such as snowmobiles, stand-up jet skis, dirt bikes and four-wheelers. He's a big fan of any kind of racing and loves being outdoors, going fishing, playing basketball, hockey and golf. He currently works as an apprentice power lineman for the IBEW.

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RACING EXPERIENCE: Big Lake 150: 2013, first place semi pro; AMMC championship: 2016, third overall Pro Class; Big Lake 500: 2017, third place.

Personal Sponsors: My mom and dad for all their support; the whole Taylor family for everything they do; and my girlfriend, Amanda, for all her love and support.

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SKI-DOO

Sponsors: AK frost (Top Sponsor), Team CC Ski Doo



CASEY BOYLAN

AGE: 24 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2017-2018: Finished

BIO: Casey was born and raised in Anchorage and has been racing snowmachines for 14 years, six of them out of state at a national level.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2010 ISOC national sport super stock first-, second- and third place; 2011 podiumed every national after returning from a knee injury; 2012 pro lite ISOC regional champion; 2012 pro lite ISOC national multiple Top 5 finishes; 2013 pro stock ISOC regional champion; 2013 pro lite ISOC national multiple Top 5 finishes & Top 10 year-end points; 2014 pro lite ISOC national heat race wins, Top 5 main event finishes; 2014 Arctic Man men's snowboard win; 2015 Mayor's Cup cross country pro class win; 2017 Iron Dog sixth-place finish rookie year; 2017 Mayor's Cup third-place pro class; 2017 Skwetena 200, second place; 2018 Iron Dog fifth place; 2018 Mayor's Cup first place.

Personal Sponsors: AK Frost, Team CC Ski-Doo, A2D Sledworks, Jon McDonald, Alaska LED, Tom Hendrix, Terry Howard, Jeremy Miller, Anchorage Yamaha, General Constructors, Big Dream Transport, Rebound Sports Physical Therapy, Bill Bishop, Boylan Boyz Racing, Leslie Racing, C&A Pro Skis, Grip-N-Rip Racing, Stud Boy, Bailey's Rental, Auto Armor Alaska.



BRYAN LESLIE

AGE: 25 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS

RACE HISTORY: 2017-2018: Finished

BIO: I love to ride or be in anything with a motor. I have raced quads and dirt bike and have won multiple state and city championships. I also enjoy being with family, fishing, camping and really anything to do with the outdoors.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2015 AMMC semi-pro champ; 2015 Larry Heal first place; 2015 Arctic Man Ice-X, first place; 2017 Iron Dog, sixth place

Personal Sponsors: Team CC, Skidoo, AK Frost, Stan James, Statewide Door and Glass, Carlile, Big State Concrete Coating LLC, Lonepine Fabricators, A2D Sledworks, Alaska Snowmobile Salvage, Alaska LED, Alaska House of Yamaha, Boehmer services, JJ's Lounge, Boylan Boyz Racing, Leslie Racing, Jon McDonald, Bill Bishop, Ben Cruz, Eric Wansor, friends and family.

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ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Arctic Cat (Top Sponsor), Team Arctic Alaska, Fly Racing, Motorfist, Speedwerx, Ericco, Stud Boy Traction Products, C&A Pro Skis , Camso, TKI, HCP Designs, 139 Designs, Thomas Sno Sports, Hayes Braking Systems, C Tech 2 Oil, Vision X, Trail Tank, Fox Racing Shox, Renton Coil Springs, Zugger Shocks, Greatland Welding and Machine, Textron, Fineline Interiors, Lunstra Motorsports, Towz R Us, Wasilla Arctic Cat, Morgan's Sales & Service, Nome Machine Works, RV Sports, Bikeman Performance, Gates Belts, Larson Racing , Thunder Products, Alaska Backcare, Advanced Powder Coating, Anchorage Drag Bike, James Spikes, Team Arctic Race Shop, Mike Kloety, Dawn Haugen, Kelland Bjerke, Alicia Martin, Iris Wieler, Brian Dick, Ben Langaas, Dayne Efta, Elete Electrolytes, Grip-N-Rip Racing, Gu Sports



MICAH HUSS

AGE: 43 / **FROM:** Big Lake

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000 XC

RACE HISTORY: 2017: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I've been racing cross-country snowmobiles for the past 26 years, winning numerous races throughout the years. I'm manager/owner of Team Arctic Alaska race team for Arctic Cat, and equipment manager for Bering Straits Native Corp. I enjoy all powersports, working on engines, helping others, being outdoors, working out and spending time with family and friends.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Many first-, second- and third-place finishes in Kotzebue region races throughout the years. I've raced the I-500 in 2010 and 2011. Raced the Nome-Golovin race seven times as well as Arctic Man. Finished third in 2017 Iron Dog.

Personal Sponsors: Howard Gregg and family; Archie Ervin; Ronnie, Ayden and Kaitlin Huss; Iris Wieler; Tony and Lisa Haugen; Amos Cruise; George Greene and family; Dennis Davis; Leon Shellabarger; Cindy Kottke; and Sarah and David Forbes.



WESLEY SELBY

AGE: 33 / **FROM:** Grand Lake, Colo.

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat Sno Pro XC

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I'm a cross-country racer currently living in Thief River Falls, Minn. During the off season, I work for Arctic Cat snowmobiles on the race-sled development program. During my free time, I enjoy riding motorcycles, restoring A and B body mopars, hunting, mountain biking, and jet skiing.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2018 Soo I 500: first place, 2018 USXC Open: first place, USXC Stock: second place, 2017 Soo I 500: second place, USXC Open: third place, 2016 Soo I 500: second place, USXC Open: first place, USXC Stock: second place, 2015 Soo I 500: first place, USXC Stock: second place, USXC Stock: second place, 2014 USXC Open: third place, USXC: third place, 2013 USXC Stock: fourth place, USXC Open 2012: fourth place, and previous national sno x racing, X-Games sno x multi time competitor, hill climbs and Jackson Hole competitions.

Personal Sponsors: Arctic Cat, Speedwerx, Ericco MFG, Stud Boy, FLY Racing, FOX Shocks, C & A Pro Skis, Camso, TKI, HCP Designs, 139 Designs, Thomas Sno Sports, Hayes, CTec2 oil, Motorfist.

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SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team CC (Top Sponsor), Ski-Doo, Fox Racing Shocks, KLIM, Big Dipper Construction, Perk Up Espresso, Edge Fitness, CMI, VFW Post 9365, B Original Signs, Grip-N-Rip Racing, Palma Tech, Quam Tech, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Glacier Autoworks, QSI Pile Driving, Woody's Traction Products, Maidi Brothers Concrete, Magic Metals, Advanced Powder Coating, RPM Composites



TODD MINNICK

AGE: 39 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2002: Finished, 2004-2008: Finished, 2009: first place, 2010-2013: Finished, 2014: first place, 2015-2017: Finished

BIO: Todd was born and raised in Alaska. Todd is a foreman at Big Dipper Construction. He has been racing snowmachines most of his life. Todd has a beautiful wife named Sharilyn and has two children, Emma and Canyon, who are the light of his life. Todd enjoys adventuring at the cabin, hunting, fishing and exploring with his family.

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IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2019



6 ADAM DRINKHOUSE

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I was raised like most Alaskans – grew up hunting and fishing with my family and motorsports with my dad. Now with my awesome wife, Hollie, son and daughter Gavin and Rohne, we do the same.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None

Personal Sponsors: Number 1, my wife and family; Korey Cronquist; Danny Gueco, Ben and Chelsea Parker; Jared and Cassi Ewing; Doug and Colleen Carter; Alaska Fuel Systems; I.B.E.W Local 1547; KLIM; Lone Pine Fabrication; Weld Air Alaska; Team CC; Alaska Line Builders

8 SKI-DOO

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TYLER AKLESTAD

AGE: 33 / **FROM:** Palmer

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2007: Finished, 2009: Finished, 2012: Finished, 2013: Finished, 2016: first place

BIO: I was born and raised in Alaska and love the outdoors. I enjoy flying, fishing, hunting and dirt biking. I also enjoy spending time with my amazing wife, Erin, and sons Liam and Finn. I work for MTA as an IBEW journeyman cable splicer.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Arctic Man 2014, first place; 2013, first place; 2012, first place; 2011, first place; 2008, first place.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Erin; Korey and Barbara Cronquist, Keith Manternach, Eric and Shan Johnson.



TYSON JOHNSON

AGE: 39 / **FROM:** Eagle River

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 1997: Finished, 1999-2002: Finished, 2007: Finished, 2009: Finished, 2012-2013: Finished, 2016: first place, 2017: Finished

BIO: I have been racing Iron Dog since I was 17 years old with this year's race being my 20th entry. I work for H&K Sheetmetal Fabricators as a journeyman sheet metal fabricator. I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, welding, hanging out with my wife, Alexis, and son Rowan, and pretty much anything that involves the outdoors.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog; including three, second-place finishes and my first win in 2016. I have seven Arctic Man wins (five in ski, two in snowboard). Mayor's Cup, three wins; K150, four wins; and many other wins and Top 3s in all venues of sled racing.

Personal Sponsors: Special thanks to my wife, Alexis, son, Rowan, and new baby girl Ellie; Korey and Barb Cronquist, Eric and Shan Johnson, our pilot Keith Mantenach and crew chief Steve Spence and Johnny Thunder, and all of our other friends and family who help support us.

10 POLARIS

Sponsors: Polaris Industries (Top Sponsor), Klim Technical Riding Gear, Polaris Engineered Lubricants, Walker Evans Racing, Eagle River Polaris/AC, UA Local 367 Plumbers & Pipefitters Union, Stan Morgan-Cover Pilot, O-Trucking, Northern Powerline Constructors Inc., Northern Air Cargo, Total Truck & Accessories, Alaska Industrial X-Ray, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Fine Line Interiors, Bering Air, Starting Line Products, Velocity Sled Performance, B Original Signs, Tri Jet Manufacturing Services, Rugged Radios, Morgan Enterprises, Stud Boy Traction Products, PowerMadd, Northern Solutions, United Rentals, Able Body Shop, Nitro Trailers, Ginny Emmons, Micah Straughn, Jeremy Hanson, Christine Olds, Christy Hedrick, Manzy Magnuson & Sweetpea in Mcgrath, Barney Anselment, Butch and Elizabeth Captain in Ruby, Esmailkas in Kaltag, Aggie Katongan in Unalakleet



MIKE MORGAN

AGE: 33 / **FROM:** Nome

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2009: Finished; 2012-2016, Finished 2018: first place.

BIO: I was born and raised in Nome and currently reside in Anchorage, having spent all of my 33 years in Alaska. I enjoy hiking, hunting, fishing, traveling, biking, riding and racing snowmobiles and hanging out with friends and family. I work construction as a welder out of the UA Local 367 Plumbers & Pipefitters Union. This will be my 10th Iron Dog race and eighth with current teammate Chris Olds.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Four Nome-Golovin wins including a win in 2018; four Kotzebue race wins; six Top 5s in Iron Dog.



CHRIS OLDS

AGE: 47 / **FROM:** Eagle River

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2000-2002: Finished, 2006-2009: Finished, 2010-2011: first place, 2012-2016: Finished, 2018: first place.

BIO: I am a 35-year Alaskan married to Christine with two children, Haley and Mya. I work for UIC Construction as a project manager. I enjoy hunting, fishing, four-wheeling, dirt bikes, mountain bikes and hanging with family. I have been racing snowmobiles since 1998.

RACING EXPERIENCE: First place K-400; numerous Top 3 finishes in Hillclimb, Hillcross, Cross Country and Snowcross. 15 Top 10 and 12 Top 5 finishes in the Iron Dog.

12 POLARIS

Sponsors: Northern Powerline Constructors (Top Sponsor), Polaris Industries, Polaris Engineered Lubricants, NPC Energy Services LLC, Taylor Fire Protection Services, Robinson Millwork, Frontier Dental Care, Law Offices Royce and Brain, Electric Power Constructors (EPC), DuClos Orthodontics, Charter College, Valley Auto Body, Distinctive Ride, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Klim, CF and Hope Baird, Scott Goggles, Venom Products, Walker Evans Racing, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Woody's Traction Products, Taylor Designs, Leatt Protectives, Renton Coil Springs, B Original Signs, Randy Jones & Sara Jansen



KENNETH KLEEWEIN

AGE: 28 / **FROM:** Willow

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2018: Finished

BIO: Kenneth (Kenny) Kleewein II is a lifelong Alaskan, raised in Willow. Kenny has spent most of his life riding anything with a motor. Racing has been a huge part of his life growing up racing four-wheelers and then racing snowmobiles with Alaska Motor Mushers Club (AMMC). He is a second-generation racer after his dad, Kenny Kleewein. When not riding Kenny enjoys spending time with his beautiful wife, Kirsten, and his son, Kenneth Kleewein III, and daughter, Bellamy.

RACING EXPERIENCE: AMMC semi-pro Triple Crown: 2015, first place; AMMC pro class Champion: 2016; AMMC Big Lake 500: 2017, third place; AMMC Mat-Su Resort 100: 2018, second place; AMMC Larry Heal Memorial Race 500: 2018, first place.

Personal Sponsors: My amazing wife, Kirsten, for giving me the opportunity to pursue this dream and supporting our family during the long nights and weekends preparing for this great race. Also, I send a special thank-you to my mom and dad for not only being very supportive, but also helping with preparations. I am also very grateful for my dad for not only being very supportive, but also providing his wealth of knowledge of the Iron Dog.

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ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Arctic Cat (Top Sponsor), Team Arctic Alaska, Donlin Gold, Anchorage Suzuki Arctic Cat, Prop Shop, Inc., Anchorage Sheet Metal, Northern Powerline Constructors, Specialty Truck & Auto, KLIM, Fine Line Interiors, Yukon Equipment, Ditch Witch, Lynden Air Cargo



STEVEN BONEY

AGE: 38 / **FROM:** Bethel

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000 R XC

RACE HISTORY: 2012-15: Finished, 2016: DNF.

BIO: I was born and raised in Bethel and have been a Yamaha snowmobile mechanic for 22 years. I've been a private pilot for 12 years. I have a loving and supportive wife, Dolly, and three awesome girls, Brittney, 20; Payton, 13; and Riley, 9. I enjoy being with my family, jet boating, flying and hunting, and riding snowmachines. My father and I own and operate the Prop Shop, a full-line powersports dealer.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2012 Iron Dog, 16th place; 2013 Iron Dog, 15th place; 2014 Iron Dog, 14th place; 2015 Iron Dog, 11th place; 2016 Iron Dog, DNF.

Personal Sponsors: Wife, Dolly; and kids, Brittney, Payton, Riley; my father, Craig; Oliver Unruh, Blaine Elliot, Ozzie, Doug Dixon, Keith Manternach, Steve Spence, Andrew Smith, and all the others who help along the way.



OLIVER UNRUH

AGE: 49 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Yamaha SP Viper R-TX LE

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: After helping some friends with this race for a couple of years, I jumped at the opportunity to actually participate. I have raced motorcycles a bit, but relatively new to sled racing.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None.

Personal Sponsors: Anchorage Yamaha, Doug and the crew at Fineline, Steve Spence, Bill Buck, Repairs Unlimited LLC, and of course my wife, Shelly.

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SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Electric Power Constructors (EPC), Team CC, IBEW Local 1547, Fineline Interiors, Woody's Traction Products, VisionX LED Lighting, DMC Power, Arctic FX Graphics, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, XPS Lubricants, All Seasons Clothing Company , Big Dipper Construction, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Java Hut, Edge Fitness, United Rentals, Reliable Equipment, Natural Photography, Windiggers Casino, Potelcom Supply, Northcountry Builders, Acme Auto Body, Pathfinder Aviation, Maidi Brothers Concrete



BEN MIEBS

AGE: 37 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ-600 X-RS

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I am a born and raised Alaskan. I am employed with Electric Power Constructors as a journeyman power lineman. I am married to Annie, and we have three children – Jack, Dylan and Tess and two ridiculous bulldogs. I enjoy spending time with my family, while hunting, fishing, trapping, playing at our cabin and taking in all that Alaska has to offer.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None.

Personal Sponsors: Annie, Jack, Dylan, Tess my family and friends for all the help and support..



DANIEL THIBAULT

AGE: 35 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZX-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2007, finished; 2016, finished.

BIO: I've lived in Alaska my entire life. My wife, Katie, and I have two children Ashlyn, 14; and Ellie, 11. I enjoy spending time with my friends and family riding RZRs all over our great state every summer, and snowmachining with the family in Petersville during the winter.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog finisher, 2007 and 2016; K150, K200, Mayor's Cup, Trapper Creek 200, first place; Arctic Man, 10th men's ski.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, kids and team 16 for helping us this season. I would also would like to thank Detrich Nikolai and his wife for all of their hospitality in McGrath.

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POLARIS

Sponsors: Three Bears Alaska, Inc. (Top Sponsor), Crowley, Prism Design and Construction, Unleashed HP, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Alaska Directional LLC, Palmer Dental Center, Nodak Electric, Vermeer Northwest, KLIM, Polaris Racing, Tri Jet Manufacturing, Fine Line Interiors, Lone Pine Fabrication, Innergy, Walker Evans Racing, Stud Boy Traction, Amsoil, Medical Groups of Alaska



BRETT LAPHAM

AGE: 26 / **FROM:** Willow

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2015-2016: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Alaska. I currently live in Willow with my wife, Shana, where we spend our free time riding sleds, dirt bikes and hunting with friends and family. I work for Alaska Directional as a drill operator. This will be my third Iron Dog race.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Mayor's Cup: 2012, semi-pro first place; Mayor's Cup: 2014, pro fourth place; Willow XC: 2013, pro first place.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Shana, Weisz family, Barber family and all our other friends and family who supports us.



ZACK WEISZ

AGE: 25 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: Finished, 2018

BIO: Zack is a lifelong Alaskan living in Wasilla. He works for Three Bears Alaska and is a third-generation worker. Zack enjoys the vast outdoors Alaska has to offer. You can find him having fun with friends or enjoying time with family.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2018, 11th place, top-finishing rookie team; 2017 Big Lake 500 first place; 2017 Alyeska Motor Madness XC, second place; 2015 AMMC, second place season points; 2015 Arctic Man XC, first place; 2014 Mayor's Cup, first place semi-pro; 2014 Alyeska Motor Madness XC, first place.

Personal Sponsors: Three Bears Alaska Inc., Fly Racing, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Polaris Racing, Innergy, Alaska Spiritwear, Tom Whitstine, Barber family and I would like to give a big thanks to my parents and all my friends and family.

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SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Alaska Fuel Systems (Top Sponsor), Ski-Doo, Team CC



BRAD GEORGE

AGE: 24 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2013-2016: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Wasilla, and my fiancé, Chelsea, and I have two kids – Nelli and Oden. I'm a heavy equipment operator for Western Construction and Equipment. In the summer if I'm not working I'm on the river. In the winter if I'm not working I'm on my sled.

RACING EXPERIENCE: K-150, 2013-2014, first place; Larry Heel, 2012-13, second place; 2014, first place, Nome-Golovin 2013, first place; 2014, fourth place; Mayor's Cup 2015, second place; Ice Cross 2015, second place.

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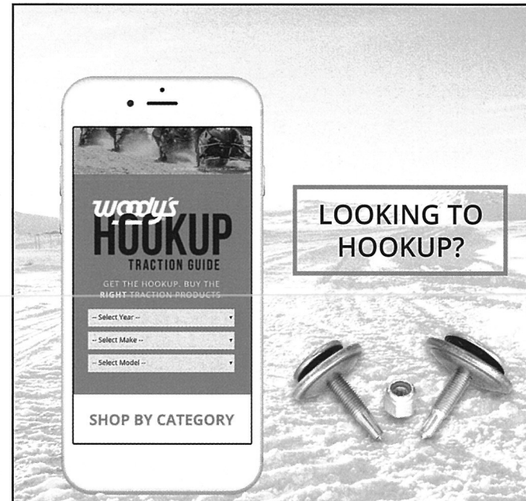
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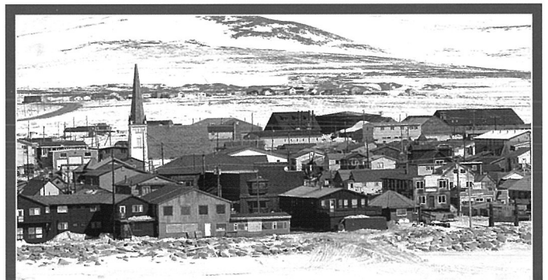
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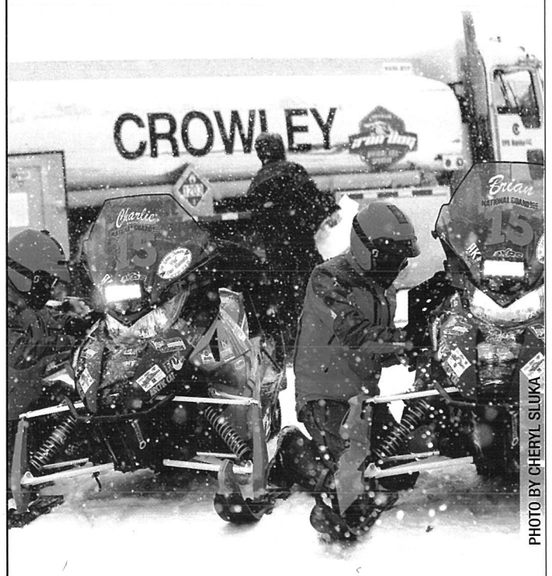


PHOTO BY CHERYL SLUKA

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JOHN WOODBURY

Father-and-son duo Scott Davis and Cory Davis get some last-minute advice before heading back out on the Iron Dog trail.

BREAK A LEG

Fortunately, Iron Dog has not experienced a fatality directly related to the Iron Dog race. There have been several close calls and traumatic injuries over the years, but so far everyone has survived and recovered. Most recently, in 2013 Tyler Huntington was on a training run and hit some driftwood along the coast while riding at more than 75 mph. He fractured his pelvis. In the last couple of years there've been a few wrecks with lacerated spleens, punctured livers, broken wrists and ankles ... and the most common injury of severe frostbite. It's a tough race and the competition is fierce, so bumps and bruises come with the 2,000-mile territory.

PIMP THE RIDE

The most common sled modification is focused on suspension. Iron Dog is a long race and conditions can be brutal. Add to the fact that racers are required to take certain gear, the added weight only adds to the abuse on the suspension. Second to suspension is the need for additional fuel, so nearly every Pro Class snowmachine will have some kind of auxiliary fuel tank system to compensate for speed, distance and conditions that impact fuel consumption. As Chris Olds is known for saying, "a slow ride beats a fast walk every time."

THE BESTS AND FIRSTS

The first Iron Dog was known as the Iditarod Iron Dog Classic, ended in Nome, and was won by John Faeo and Rod Frank riding Polaris with a time of 23 hours and 50 minutes.

John Faeo and Scott Davis are tied for the most wins with seven each and they never once rode together.

Northern Air Cargo has been providing continuous support to Iron Dog since the beginning. That's now 36-plus years of service.

In 1987, the first woman to enter the race, noncompetitively, was Melinda Lyman who raced alongside her husband, Doug.

In 1990, Bill and Doreen Long were the first husband and wife team to race competitively.

In 2003 the race was cancelled for the first time due to warm weather and poor conditions.

In 2015 Yamaha was the only manufacturer to have every sled that started the race also finish the race.

By the numbers

iron dog THE WORLD'S LONGEST TOUGHEST SNOWMOBILE RACE

PAST CHAMPS

Over the 35-year history of the Iron Dog, 28 different riders have won the event – 15 have multiple titles, 13 have won only once. There are now two second-generation family names with a championship title, Scott Faeo won the race with Eric Quam in 2015. Scott's father John Faeo and Scott Davis are tied with the most victories. And in 2017 Cory Davis won with Ryan Simons. Simons is the only non-Alaskan to win. No all-rookie team has won since the first race when all racers were rookies. Nick Olstad, three-time champion, is the only rookie to cross the finish line in first place, when he won in 2005 with Marc McKenna. Only one all-ladies team has finished, Jackie Page and Missy McClurg in 2001. The third woman to complete the Pro Class, finishing in downtown Fairbanks, was Jana Pevan-Peterson in 2012.

Scott Davis	7
John Faeo	7
Dan Zipay	5
Dusty Van Meter	5
Mark Carr	4
Todd Palin	4
Marc McKenna	4
Bob Gilman	3
Nick Olstad	3
Todd Minnick	2
Evan Booth	2
Dwayne Drake	2
Tyler Huntington	2
Chris Olds	3
Eric Quam	2
Tracey Brassard	1
Gary Eoff	1
Rod Frank	1
Ken Lee	1
Andy George	1
Bill Long	1
MarkTorkelson	1
Scott Faeo	1
Tyler Aklestad	1
Tyson Johnson	1
Cory Davis	1
Ryan Simons	1
Mike Morgan	1

BRAND WINS

The four major manufacturers, Polaris, Arctic Cat, Yamaha and Ski-Doo, are generally represented each year, and all manufacturers have enjoyed victories. This year's race does not include any Yamaha racers. Here is the breakdown of past brand wins:

- 17 wins on Polaris
- 11 wins on Arctic Cat
- 3 wins on Yamaha
- 4 wins on Ski-Doo



TOMMY GERMANY

Tommy Germany (at left, with wife Sheryl) and Jacob Evans (at right, with girlfriend Stephanie Johnson) were Iron Dog 2018's Red Lantern award winners.

22 hours ahead of Red Lantern riders Jacob Evans of Anchorage and Tommy Germany of Palos Heights, Ill., also rookies.

Germany chanced upon the opportunity to run the race in a swimming pool while on vacation, after meeting a friend of a friend who wanted to race Iron Dog himself. He jumped at the chance, and sight unseen flew to Alaska to meet with his soon-to-be partner, Evans. Evans, an Alaskan, had the know-how to get the sleds prepped and educate Germany on racing logistics.

"It was an experience of a lifetime," said Germany. "I said I'd never do it again; and now I'm thinking about doing it again next year."

Germany said he made many mistakes along the way – "Jake's a good guy, he put up with a lot of things – I'd get stuck and he'd help me out. He built the sleds, and we ran hard. If it wouldn't have been for him, we wouldn't have made it."

But he also learned a great deal too – Alaska sealed a special place in his heart.

"All the people are awesome, every village, everywhere, they are all awesome," he said.

This year, his company, Tri State Disposal, which is a garbage company that serves the Chicago area, is awarding $1,000 to the first team to scratch after leaving the checkpoint in Deshka Landing – mostly because he just feels sorry for the people who invest so much money and time into the race only to have their dreams crushed by a broken rib or crashed sled so soon into the race.

And he's also going to award $5,000 to the team that accumulates the most miles between the start and finish, because those are the ones who quite literally follow the trail markers.

"There's 2,031 miles, and there's a lot of short cut – Rainy Pass is one – where you go left instead of right and you save time," he said. "It's not cheating, it's just knowing the lay of the land. But as a rookie, you don't know that."

Despite the last-place finish, Germany was happy with the race – and most important, the experience.

"It was really an experience," he said. "I might just have to do it again."

AN HISTORIC PAST

The first Iron Dog event started in 1984, in Big Lake following the northern route of the Historic Iditarod Trail to Nome. The event began as the "Iron Dog Iditarod," but the name was quickly changed the next year to the "Gold Rush Classic," to also honor the state's Gold Rush past. In 1990 the race was organized as the "Iron Dog Gold Rush Classic" and that name stuck for a decade until Tesoro Corp. became a title sponsor. In 2008, the Alaska National Guard became a top sponsor and top supporter. The 2019 Iron Dog enjoys a strong presence in awareness, attendance and participation by more than 20 communities across Alaska.

BRING ON THE CROWDS

In 2015, Iron Dog made one of its most significant changes since the race's inception by adding a ceremonial race start on the streets of Downtown Anchorage. This move not only brought more attention to the already-growing race, but also offered wintertime residents a chance to get out and enjoy the race excitement right outside their doors.

However, in 2018, the race returned to its roots, with the official start line on Big Lake. While the pomp and circumstance of Anchorage was a festive event, the racers seem to like the convenience of the wide-open staging area – and, since it's literally the back yard for so many riders in this race, the quick commute doesn't hurt either.

The 2019 start moves to Deshka Landing, Mile 70.5 of the Parks Highway, due to safety concerns.

This year, too, the race will end in familiar territory, with the finish line staged just in front of Pike's Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. With the return to this location, spectators will better be able to stay warm with a meal or cup of hot chocolate inside, as they wait on the racers to arrive on the Chena River. Organizers are already planning on a busy weekend ahead as the weary racers make their way to the finish line and a well-earned nap.

PLAY BY THE RULES

The most important and often misunderstood rule Iron Dog teams must abide by is that racers are not allowed to accept parts or assistance from bystanders outside of checkpoints. Racers are not allowed to have anyone touch their snowmachines, except when in Nome, where under the watchful eye of race marshals they may have two others assist during work time in the Nome City garage.

The reason is simple: To level the playing field for teams that cannot afford to have their own chase aircraft or similar advantages dictated by a larger budget.

Another rule, added in 2015, requires all riders to refuel using only fuel provided by Iron Dog at specific checkpoints. This keeps well-funded teams from setting up their own fueling stations to avoid having to stop in the official checkpoints in an effort to shave time off their stops.

The complete rules can be found at irondog.org.

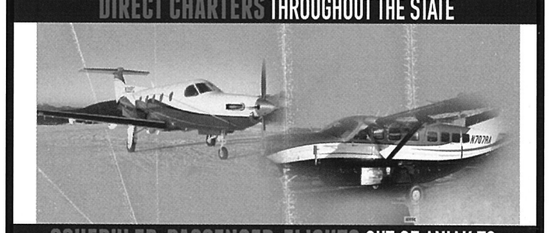


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Being prepared

RACERS ARE REQUIRED to bring stoves, fire-making materials and a way to melt snow into drinking water. While it may seem odd that today with GPS tracking there would be any need for real survival gear, the fact remains that the Iron Dog trail is remote enough that a team could get stranded for days if the weather became severe and impassable. It's conceivable that a team would have to fashion a shelter from a bivouac and live in a sleeping bag for a few days to survive. It's rare, but as the saying goes, "It's better to have and not need, than to need and not have."



JAMES WICKEN

"We did what we planned on doing in the beginning, trying to run a nice, clean race," Olds said. "We had a few small machine issues at the end that took us some time, but we were able to keep ahead of everyone else and hold on for the win."

The rest of the racers were not far behind. A second-place finish for Robby Schachle, 32, of Big Lake, and Brad George, 25, of Wasilla, did not come as challenge-free as Team 10's race. While they often had Olds and Morgan in their sights, the pair of veteran racers battled for every minute of their 36 hours, 59 minutes and 2 seconds race, encountering mechanical problems, weather challenges and even running out of gas at one point.

Still, they were able to hold off third-place finishers Todd Minnick, 39, and Nick Olstad, 36, two veteran racers who are no strangers to victory. Minnick won the race in 2009 and 2014, and Olstad notched wins in 2005, 2009 and 2014. Their time of 37 hours, 3 minutes and 23 seconds put them more than 22 minutes ahead of the fourth-place team.

A CLEAN RACE

The 2018 race returned to its roots last year, with the elimination of the Anchorage ceremonial start, and the first day of racing starting in Big Lake, as it used to. Overall, racers experienced favorable conditions, but lots of deep snow meant the leaders had to break trail – which adds to the already exhausting work of riding at speeds in the 100 mph range for days on end.

Leaving the Big Lake starting chute in two-minute intervals, teams battled against brutal swamps, deep snow, thin river ice and the clock. Winding their way through Southcentral mountain passes, they broke out into the broader swaths of the Interior and the ultra-fast river corridors.

"The race changes from a physical race to more of a mental race," Olds said. "You're going at really high speeds and looking ahead to try and keep things together."

The first racers to drop out were George Mountain and Kelly Sommer, just 160 miles or so from the start. A mechanical issue ended their race (but they're back this year to try again).

And, as the racers made their way to the northwest, the casualties kept coming. Next to leave the competition was Aaron Bartel and Tre West, in Ophir, due to an injury; then came Team 34 racers Christopher Collins and Lawrence Jones, a team out of Ambler and Kotzebue who experienced mechanical and electrical problems that ended their race in Galena.

In the end, mechanical problems ended the race for two other teams (Team 22, Rachel Kidwell and Ashley Wood in Kaltag; and Team 20, Scott Faeo and Chad Gueco in Tanana), but the race continued, with 21 teams still in the hunt.

That, in a nutshell, is what makes the race such a challenge, said John Woodbury, Iron Dog's executive director. No matter how much one prepares, there are always unforeseen events – whether it's injury, weather, mechanical breakdowns – it doesn't matter. Iron Dog levels the playing field.

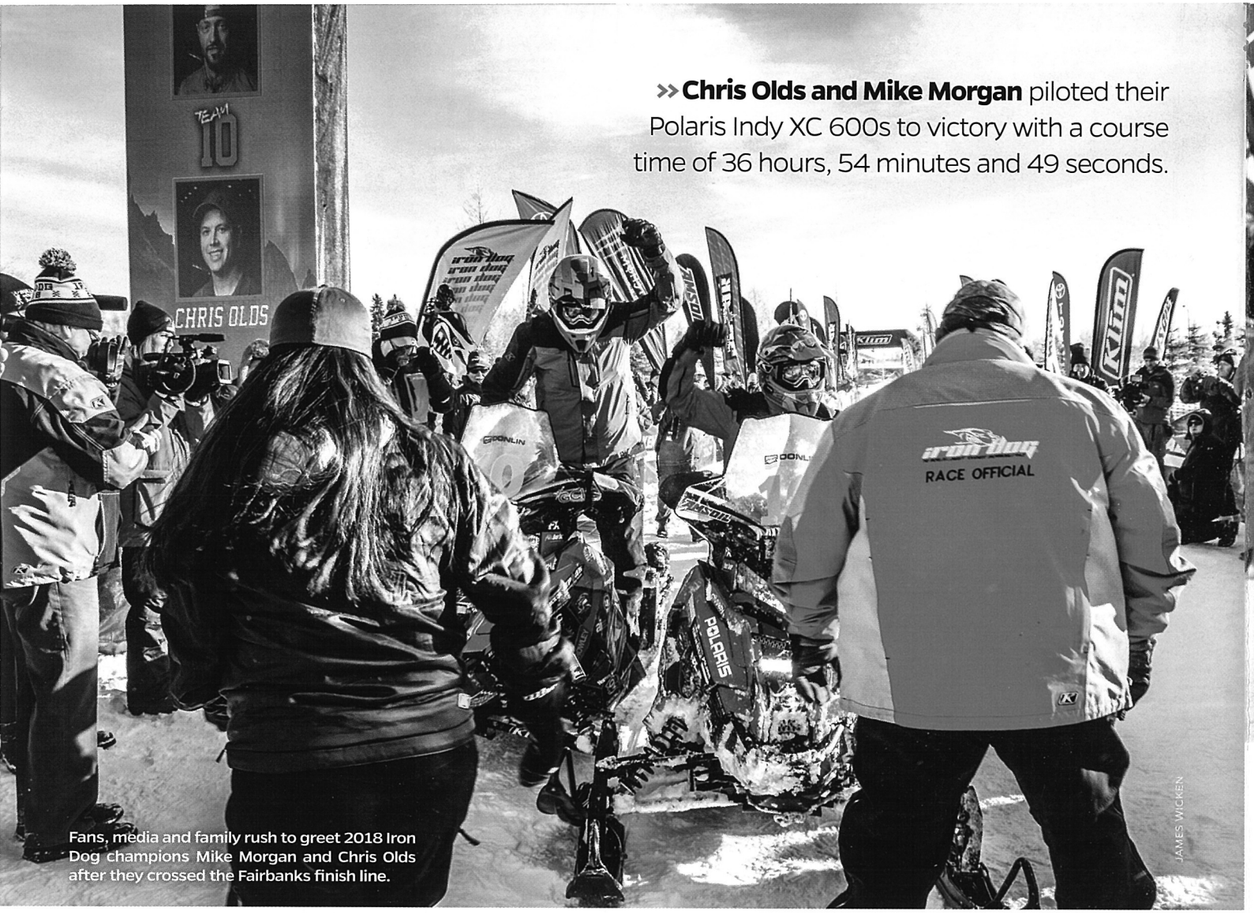
"There are a very few true Alaska legacy events, and Iron Dog holds one of those coveted spots," he said. "There simply is no other event like it in the world. This is an event where you can go 100 mph for an hour. This is an event where you can skip for hundreds of yards over an open ocean, and you do it because you absolutely have no other alternative. This is a race that will bring you to tears — of joy, of fear, or pain. I've only been a Trail Class rider, and it was the most intense winter excursion I've ever done. It really does take a unique individual to race this thing."

As for Trail Class riders, they end their ride in Nome. The Pro Class worked on necessary repairs then headed back out 24 hours later to the Fairbanks finish. The ever-changing coastal route along Norton Sound was a fast-paced challenge as they raced back toward the Interior.

"The coast is similar to the fast rivers, but it can fluctuate so much from year to year," Olds said. "One year, or even one week, it can be smooth and almost no different from the rivers. Other times, even as little as a week later, it can be like jumping over concrete curbs. It is always changing."

Those new to the race received their education, no matter where they placed.

Rookie of the Year status went to the 11th-place finishing team, Andy Gocke and Zach Weisz, from Willow and Wasilla, respectively. The two finished their race in 42 hours, 35 minutes and 48 seconds, more than five hours behind the winners, but more than



>> Chris Olds and Mike Morgan piloted their Polaris Indy XC 600s to victory with a course time of 36 hours, 54 minutes and 49 seconds.

Fans, media and family rush to greet 2018 Iron Dog champions Mike Morgan and Chris Olds after they crossed the Fairbanks finish line.

JAMES WICKEN

2019 IRON DOG

Cutting it close during Iron Dog 2018

Olds recalls third win, and some fun facts about the 'world's longest, toughest snowmobile race'

By **MELISSA DEVAUGHN**

THERE WERE A FEW TENSE MOMENTS for Chris Olds and Mike Morgan last year as they battled to their first victory together since forming Team 10 eight years ago.

But with less than a five-minute lead, the duo made it to the finish line and celebrated the win – a third championship for Olds and the first for Morgan, who'd been chasing the dream for a decade.

"This was Mike's first win – we've been racing together since 2012," Olds said. "We'd come close quite a few years, and we ran somewhat toward the front, so we were quite a few times in the hunt. But still, there were little things that kept us from the win."

Olds and Morgan piloted their Polaris Indy XC 600s to victory with a course time of 36 hours, 54 minutes and 49 seconds. That 4-minute margin for the win gave them just enough time to take off their helmets, catch their breath and hug their family and supporters at the finish line.



Tyler Aklestad and Tyson Johnson leave the starting chute on Big Lake to embark on their 2018 race. The pair finished in fourth place in 38 hours, 26 minutes and 14 seconds.

SOREN SIEBERTS

>> The 2018 race saw two dozen rookies entered. This year, there are 15, meaning veterans outweigh the rookies more than 2-to-1.

2019 IRON DOG

A snowmachine tradition

This year's Iron Dog is anyone's race to win

By **MELISSA DEVAUGHN**

AS SNOW CONTINUED TO FALL LIBERALLY ACROSS Alaska in December, it's safe to say Iron Dog snowmachiners were eagerly anticipating the race to come just a few short weeks away. This year's Iron Dog race is already a step ahead of past years, with a healthy amount of snowfall to enhance trail conditions, and a streamlined race course – racers are thrilled to see that the finish line has moved back to Pike's Waterfront Lodge – among other details that maintain the event as the "World's Longest, Toughest Snowmobile Race."

"If there ever was a year to 'shake things up' this would be it," said John Woodbury, Iron Dog's new executive director. "We've had some spectacular obstacles this year, from a late freeze-up and snowfall, right down to the Nov. 30 earthquake. But, in true Iron Dog fashion, we've remained tenacious to overcome every challenge placed before us, even if that means changing the longtime start from Big Lake to Deshka Landing this year."

And, oh, what a challenging race it's going to be. Iron Dog 2019 features 24 teams comprised of 15 rookies and 33 veterans. Within those statistics lie some impressive names – last year's winners Mike Morgan and Chris Olds will be back to defend their title, but they will have plenty of competition from such rugged veterans as Tyler Aklestad, Tyson Johnson, Todd Minnick and Nick Olstad, to name a few.

"There's a lot of other teams that have a lot of talent – a lot of veterans and a lot of fast times to compete against," said Olds, whose win last year made it three for him and a first for Morgan. "We will try to repeat, that's what we want to do."

Then there are the up-and-comers – such as 25-year-old Zach Weisz, who was on top-placing rookie Team 5 during last year's Iron Dog, racing with teammate Andy Gocke. This

iron dog
THE WORLD'S LONGEST TOUGHEST SNOWMOBILE RACE

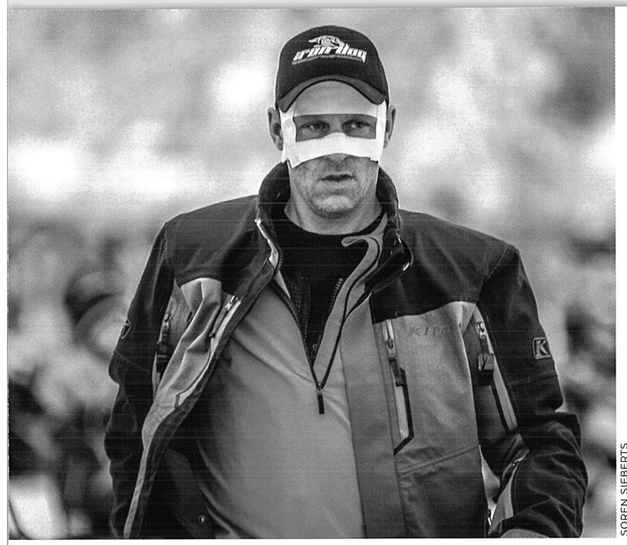
And they're off!

DESHKA LANDING
SUNDAY, FEB. 17
9 a.m.

Sponsors and vendors open up for the race-day festivities; check out the pit area; get official Iron Dog gear at the merchandise tent; receive free samples from sponsors; visit vendor tents for more goodies. Also, meet and greet the Pro Class racers as they prepare to leave.

11 a.m.

Closing of the pit area, and the first green flag drops.



SOREN SIEBERTS

Micah Huss walks through the pit area at the start of the 2018 race.

year, he pairs with 26-year-old Willow rider Brett Lapham, who finished the 2015 and 2016 races in fifth and 11th places, respectively. Also worth eyeing are Anchorage racers Casey Boylan and Bryan Leslie, who last year placed fifth in only their second Iron Dog race, and were Rookies of the Year in their 2017 inaugural race.

"We've got 24 pro teams, and every one of them is an expert rider in their own right," Woodbury said. "With seven former champs, it's hard to pick a favorite. I don't actually have a favorite team. All of the racers on this trail have an equal chance to win once the start flag drops."

This year marks the 36th annual Iron Dog race, and the differences from this years race to last are notable. The 2018 race saw two dozen rookies entered, but this year, there are 15, meaning veterans outweigh the rookies more than 2-to-1. This could prove to be key, as the Iron Dog is a race where experience can outsmart young, brute strength. The lessons learned on this trail are hard-earned and come from enduring the bone-jarring abuse of racing at top speeds, on little sleep and lots of sleep deprivation.

"Each year (you race), you learn a little bit more about it," Olds said, "and that helps you prepare. For me and Mike, we have a good combination. Still, you never know what can happen."

In what could also be a race-history first, this year a father-daughter team will compete together. Danielle Levine and her father, Dr. Larry Levine, represent Team 29. Although Danielle – Dani, as she's known – is listed as the rookie of the pair (Larry has raced in three, and completed two Iron Dogs) Larry Levine readily admits that it is his daughter who is the natural competitor.

"She's been doing Alaska Motor Mushers since she was 14, and she has done Arctic Man and much more racing than me," said Levine, who took up racing in 2016 as a way "to keep up with my daughter."

"She had planned on racing Iron Dog when she was a senior in high school, but she broke her throttle finger playing football and that put an end to it," he added. "I'm thankful for the opportunity we have to do this together."

Another difference between last year's race and this year is the notable absence of riders from outside of Alaska. The 2017 race featured the largest field of Outside competitors in the race's history, with 16 hailing from outside the state. And the 2018 race hosted a respectable five. This year, however, there are only two racers – Team 31's Bobby Menne, from Virginia, Minn., has since moved to Alaska, after racing twice in Iron Dog, and this year pairs with Fairbanks' Troy Conlan as he shoots for a Top-3 finish.

Team 15 includes Colorado racer Wesley Selby from Grand Lake – although he currently lives in Thief River Falls, Minn. He's a rookie cross-country racer who is pairing with the very experienced Micah Huss of Big Lake, who has raced Iron Dog twice (finishing third in 2017) and has a 26-year history of cross-country racing under his belt.

"Iron Dog got a late start in letting riders know when we opened registration this year, so the normal influx of Outside riders is smaller due to a much tighter registration period," Woodbury said. "We gave folks about a month to register in the Pro class this year, when typically there are months. I think it was just too tight of a window for riders outside of Alaska to make their plans.

"But, we are happy to have new racers and I do expect more to enter next year now that we all can plan a bit more ahead."

While the "who will win" question lingers, organizers of Iron Dog are busy working out other important details. One key detail to figure out was finding a safe alternative to starting on the potentially earthquake-compromised ice of Big Lake.

"In the name of safety, we had to make the decision to move the start to Deshka Landing this year," Woodbury said.

Also new this year – although not new to the race – is the return of the original finish line, directly in front of Pike's Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks.

"The downtown Fairbanks finish was a great place to wrap up the Iron Dog, but with the unofficial theme of "shake it up" we figured this would be a good year to return to the traditional finish line at Pike's," Woodbury said.

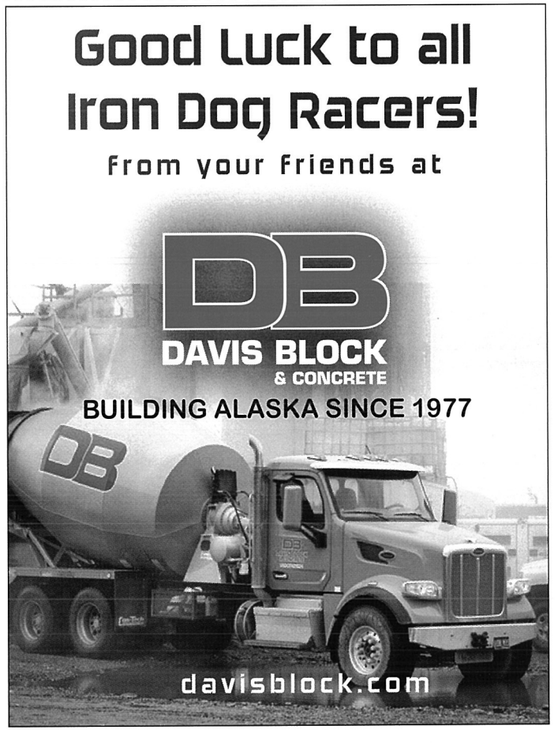
"This change reroutes the final leg of the race route," noted Sarah Miller, Iron Dog's key organizer, but otherwise the race checkpoints will stay the same .

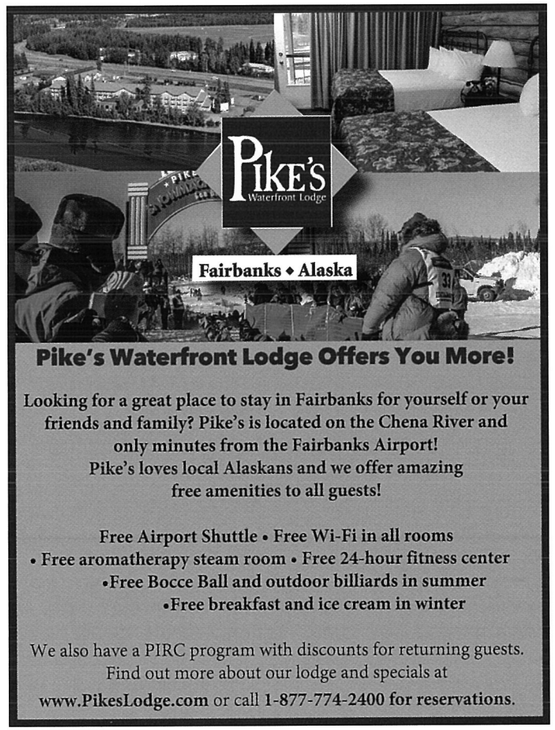
Also returning this year is the Trail Class event, with 10 riders entered. This category allows for larger teams to band together and ride the first half of the race, from Big Lake to Nome, to get a feel for the conditions. It often is the steppingstone for future racers and an event that offers valuable experience and camaraderie among riders.

As with past years, Woodbury said this year's race will be easy to follow thanks to technology. Iron Dog's GPS tracking and minute-by-minute coverage of the racing keeps the event exciting even for those sitting on their couches at home. Visit www.irondog.org/live to get the best up-to-date coverage no matter where you happen to be.

As for the trails, in late-December and with two months still left for Mother Nature to continue her winter wonderland magic, Miller said organizers remain optimistic that this could be the snow year all snowmachiners dream of.

"It is still very early to tell what the race route will look like," she said. "While we have had a large amount of snow in Southcentral, there have been slightly warmer temperatures and added insulation from the snow, making the rivers slower to freeze. We have heard from many trail markers that they are beginning to put in trail in their local areas. However there are still large sections that have not been broken out."







LEVINES: CONTINUED FROM **PAGE 29**

cause it was a last-minute decision for me to race with my dad. I've had a lot less prep than last time, so it's just been trying to work out and deal with finals. Now that I'm back up here on my break, I'll be getting up to speed on wrenching and working a quick program to get ready for Iron Dog."

Larry Levine said the pair will be doing lots of riding, and have already started their gym workouts.

"Getting ready for this race, you get in the best shape you've ever been in your life and then you go out there and it becomes a struggle," he said. "You can't train for the beating you take, you just minimize the fatigue. You still go out there and put in 14-, 16-hour days so it's important to be in the best shape as you can."

Dani Levine said she is eager to finally have her Iron Dog dreams come true, and while she may have had to put the goal off in favor of school, the timing may just have worked out well.

"Now it's coming full circle," she said. "When my dad and I talked about (racing Iron Dog) when I was graduating from high school, I was a much better rider than he was at the time. It would've been a stretch then just for me, let alone both of us as rookies. Now at least one of us has the experience. My dad's riding ability has increased dramatically, and that will help us."

Larry Levine said his goal is to have a safe, clean race – and also keep his wife's fears for her husband's and daughter's safety at bay, he joked. He knows it's going to be a new dynamic working together as race partners rather than the father-daughter relationship they already have.

"We are starting to come up with plans B, C and D so we can be as prepared as possible," he said. "Absolutely stuff is going to go wrong, but we are expecting it and we are trying to stop and make one small fix at a time so we can be as ready as possible."



LARRY LEVINE

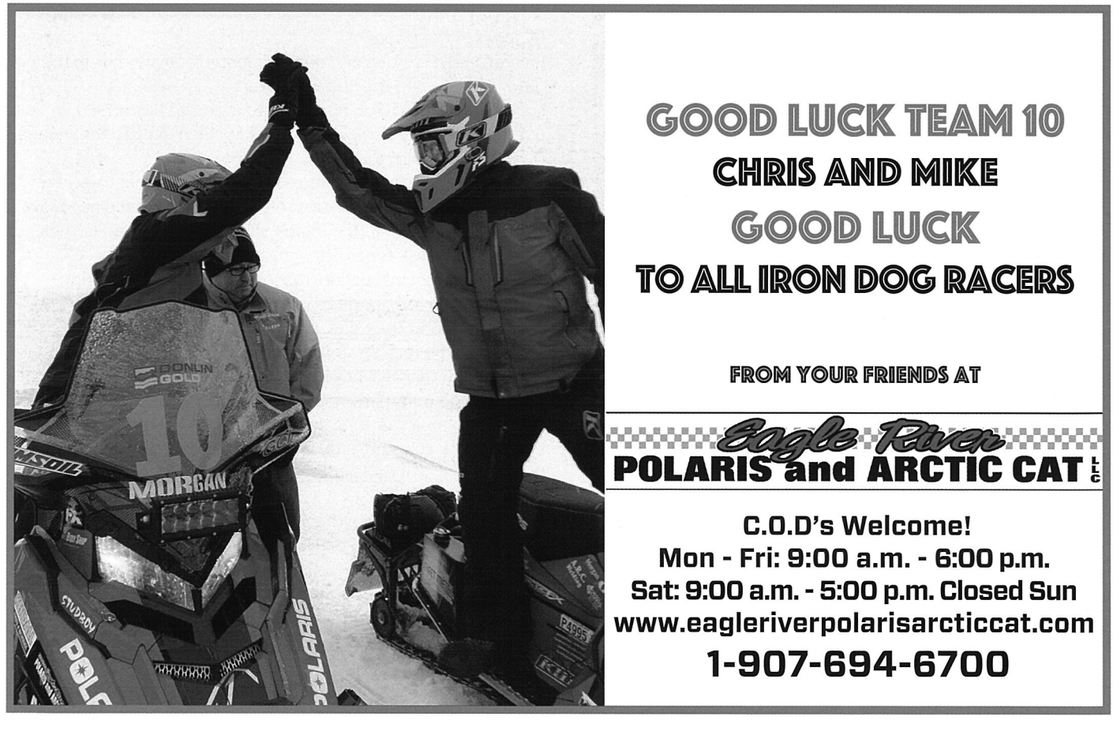
Danielle Levine and her father, Dr. Larry Levine, stop for a break during a training run. The pair is the first father-daughter duo to tackle the Iron Dog pro race together.

Dani wholeheartedly agrees.

"There's going to be conflicts and there's going to be times when we're not happy with each other, but we have different roles and need to keep a calm head, hopefully a little preemptive thinking about that will help us deal with situations as they arise."

As for how they place in this year's Iron Dog? The first goal is to finish the race because the Iron Dog has proven to elude even the most experienced of riders, she said.

"And the secondary goal would be a Top-10 finish," she added. "I think if we could eke out that Top 10 that would be huge."





JOHN WOODBURY

Race fans check out the sleds and gear used by Iron Dog pro racers during the 2014 Iron Dog.

2019 IRON DOG

It's safety first

Donlin Gold Safety Expo doublechecks racers' preparedness, gives spectators a chance to meet the teams

By **MELISSA DEVAUGHN**

THE IRON DOG SNOWMACHINE RACE is an unforgiving challenge for even the toughest of riders. But for those who have crossed that finish line – or have been beaten back and now can't resist the challenge of chasing that dream – it's a race that is a bit addictive, too.

That's why race organizers stress – beyond winning, money, name recognition or any other prize – safety. Sponsors of Iron Dog reiterate that tenet, too, said John Woodbury, Iron Dog's executive director.

"Our primary concern is safety," Woodbury said. "We will not start this race if the race marshals deem it unsafe to continue, which has happened in the past in the form of delays and checkpoint holds. It's a high-speed competition that crosses through some of Alaska's most difficult backcountry, so there will always be inherent dangers. We work with everyone along the trial to gain as much local knowledge as possible to trim as many of the dangerous variables as possible. But, every team is going to experience at least one scary moment over these 2,000 miles. We all just hope it only makes for another tale from the trail and nothing more serious."

One of the best ways to be safe is to be prepared, and that's what the Donlin Gold Safety Expo is all about. Here is where all of the sled and gear inspections take place, and where lay-spectators can gain a true appreciation of what all is needed to traverse Alaska's wilds by snowmachine.

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 20**

2019 Donlin Gold Safety Expo

WHEN: 1-8 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 15
WHERE: Menard Sports Center, Wasilla
WHO: This is a free, public event hosted by Iron Dog and sponsored by Donlin Gold with vendors and race teams included. Learn how to become a safer outdoors person. All of the Pro class snowmachines will be on display, and racers will be on hand to meet and greet.
RAFFLE TICKETS: Enter to win door prizes and refresh your winter skill while there. Raffle tickets are $60. Go to www.iron-dog.org or call 907-563-4414 for ticket locations near you.
EXPO VENDORS: Donlin Gold, Rain Proof Roofing, Monster, City of Wasilla, Alaska Spine Institute, Johnson Investments, Spenard Builders Supply, Hatcher Pass Polaris, White Spruce Trailer Sales, Alaska Specialty Equipment – Bailey's, Team CC, Amsoil, KLIM, Guardian Flight, Army Reserves, LifeMed, ABC RV, Woody's, Subway, Lead Dog Helmet Lights, Helmets on Heads and many more!

2019 Iron Dog Racer Draw

WHEN: 5-8 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 15
WHERE: Menard Sports Center, Wasilla
WHAT: Pro Class teams reach into the hat, where team numbers are drawn for start positions.

Win a piece of Alaska

WHAT'S BETTER THAN LIVING THE DREAM in Alaska? Owning your very own piece of it. And, thanks to some clever and generous sponsors, the folks at Iron Dog are trying to make that possible for you.

Each year Iron Dog incorporates a raffle into their event in an effort to help fund the World's Longest, Toughest Snowmobile Race. The raffle is also used to assist fellow nonprofit groups in the form of charitable donations from Iron Dog. To date, Iron Dog has donated more than $200,000 from funds raised during previous raffles. This year, Alaska's legacy snowmachine event plans to again donate money to charitable groups. In addition, the person who sells the winning tickets earns a $1,000 gift card to Cabela's, and the person or group that sells the most tickets this year earns $1,000 cash courtesy Specialty Truck and Auto.

"Every year the raffle gives back to Alaska in the form of donations to various groups, and this year will be no different," said John Woodbury, Iron Dog executive director. "What makes this year's raffle unique is we will be giving away land and a tiny house as the grand prize, thanks to Johnson Investments and Spenard Builders Supply. Some lucky person is going to walk up, buy a raffle ticket, and walk away with a near-complete Alaska homesteader's kit."

The half-acre plot is south of Big Lake in southcentral Alaska and is part of the Johnson Investments family of rural properties. The tiny house is a 12-foot by 16-foot Caribou Cabin kit from Spenard Builders Supply, complete with just about all the fixings.

Hatcher Pass Polaris put some fun into the raffle by donating a 2017 Polaris 600 Switchback Pro S snowmachine, which is sure to bring a smile to the second-place raffle prizewinner. White Spruce added to the prize list with a 10-foot Aluma-tilt trailer package, while Alaska Specialty Equipment/Bailey's is offering up a $2,500 gift card. Team CC donated a $1,000 shopping spree to either of their locations, and Chevrolet Buick GMC of Fairbanks rolled in with a set of Blizzak tires. Rounding out the prizes, AMSOIL and Klim teamed up to offer gift cards and gear to the top-three prizewinners.



Earning a chance at your own homestead, or to win any of the raffle prizes, costs only $60. Iron Dog, operating under permit #79, will hold its drawing on April 2 in Anchorage and you need not be present to win. Want to ensure you have the best chance to win? Buy a ticket by calling (907) 563-4414! More Iron Dog raffle information can be found at www.irondog.org.

—Sarah Miller

EXPO: CONTINUED FROM **PAGE 19**

Did you know, for instance, that there are more than 30 required items that racers must carry or use, including 25 feet of 1,200-pound test rope, arctic stove with fuel, fire-starting materials, backup eye and face protection, and an assortment of spare parts for the sled.

From the moment the racers leave the chute at Deshka Landing, until they are safely at the finish in Fairbanks, there are countless ways in which they put themselves at risk – and the Safety Expo helps reiterate the ways in which they can stay safe. It's the Donlin way, Woodbury said.

In fact, he added, "One of our most inspiring sponsors is Donlin Gold. Not only have they been a dedicated and notable supporter of the race for years, their motto of 'every person going home safe and healthy every day' is a motto we've unofficially adopted at Iron Dog. Their attitude and message is so applicable to what we do here."

The safety message is consistently delivered and ever evolving when or if the need arises, said Iron Dog's Sarah Miller, one of the lead coordinators behind the annual race.

"If there are any areas we are unsure of, the race marshals will dictate a mandatory race route to keep all riders as safe as possible on the trail," she added.

Woodbury said trail crews are keeping a watchful eye on race conditions to ensure smooth sailing – or as smooth as a cross-Alaska fast-speed chase can be expected to go – ahead.

"The earthquake and slothy freeze of the Southcentral lakes and rivers have created some unique problems," he said. "We've had pro teams take unplanned dips in rivers during early-season training, and there are lingering concerns about lake ice. But, the foremost mission of Iron Dog is to stage a safe race, and in 2019 we plan to uphold that unblemished tradition."

And, while safety is the overriding theme of the Expo – it also is meant to be a prerace celebration of the days to come. To add to the festivities, organizers will have special deals, Iron Dog gear and the annual raffle ticket sale, which this year awards a half-acre of land at Point Mackenzie and a tiny home for the winning ticketholder (not to mention a long list of additional prizes – see our story on this page for more).

Tickets are $60 and winners will be announced April 2.

Like father, like daughter

Levines forge new kind of relationship in tackling Iron Dog 36

By **MELISSA DEVAUGHN**

IRON DOG'S HISTORY IS NOW LONG ENOUGH that teams comprised of two different generations are not unheard of. In the 2017 race, for instance, there were two teams whose racers were separated by 15 or more years. The year before that, six teams were on opposite ends of the age spectrum.

So it's only natural that eventually a father-son team would emerge, as happened when father Scott and son Cory Davis paired up for a fourth-place finish in the 2011 race; or when father-son team Andy and Brad George teamed up in 2014 and 2015 for fourth-place finishes each year. This year, the Barber men, Shane and Cody, are the father/son team to beat.



DANIELLE **LEVINE**



LARRY **LEVINE**

But as far as Iron Dog records go, this is the first year a father-daughter team has entered the race. Dr. Larry Levine and his 24-year-old daughter, Danielle will toe the line on Feb. 17 at Deshka Landing.

"It's kind of a dream come true," Larry Levine said of this, his fourth Iron Dog, and his daughter's rookie run. "We had talked about it a few years back, and I've done it now three times, and successfully two. The partnership that you need to get along and do stuff on the trail, in my mind, has changed our father-daughter relationship."

It is Danielle, though, who was the first racer in the family, her father readily acknowledges. She began competing in short races with Alaska Motor Mushers when she was 14, then entered Arctic Man competing in women's snowboard and ski. And while Danielle (who goes by Dani), had hoped to race her senior year in high school, she broke her throttle finger playing football and that ended the goal for that year.

Then college intervened. Once Dani went off to Nevada for school, she became too busy to put in the time and training involved to race the "World's Longest, Toughest Snowmobile Race."

"This year, the timing worked out well, and her class load could handle it," Larry Levine said. "So here we are."

Dani, back in Anchorage for the holidays, said she is planning to use the time to get ready to race.

"I'm more getting ready than staying ready," she said, "be-

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 30**

Race in the garage

WHEN IRON DOG RACERS HEAD OUT into the great Alaska unknown, they are pretty much on their own. That's why it's so important that they not only know how to ride, but also how to fix their machines should problems arise.

But a mechanical issue can stump sometimes even the best riders. And if they can limp into the halfway point in Nome, help will be there for them.



AARON BROWN

Up to two approved mechanics can help racers for a limited time while in the Nome garage. Here, assistance is given to 2018's rookie Zack Weisz, of Team 5.

Once the racers reach Nome, they can rest their bodies and recharge their machines. There, racers are allowed a short window in which to inspect their snowmachines, schedule maintenance and even have the help of up to two approved assistants during their brief shop visit. This all happens in the Nome garage, and it is a place of unprecedented activity during the days leading up to the halfway restart.

"There is so much going on there," said Lee Butterfield, a South High teacher whose students will be filming in the garage during the checkups.

According to race rules, as racers arrive in Nome, they take their sleds in for the checkups. After letting the machines thaw out a bit, racers have 15 minutes off the clock to inspect their machines and ask for assistance.

After the brief inspection, racers then strategize, getting the parts they need and coming back later for their timed and scheduled work. Their efficiency – or lack of it – adds an exciting element to the race strategy. A team that arrived five minutes ahead of another to Nome, for example, can lose that lead-time if they spend that many more minutes than their competitor working on their sleds. All of a sudden the lead team is behind by a minute, all because they changed a part out slower than the other racer or had larger mechanical issues with which to contend.

Spectators can watch the action from a cordoned-off section of the garage; it looks a bit like an arctic version of a NASCAR pit stop.

"Our students will be streaming the Nome garage, as well as collecting video and audio data for future commercials and fillers for live streams," Butterfield added. View the action at the students' YouTube page, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQyWqa3lHaljxxkNctJXg5w

—Melissa DeVaughn

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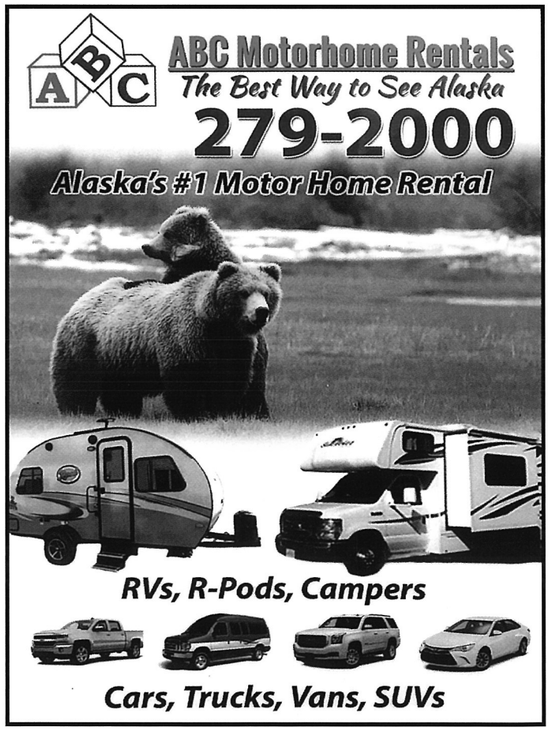
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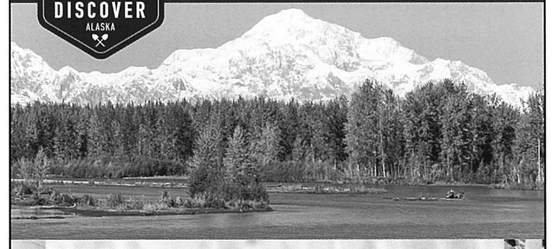
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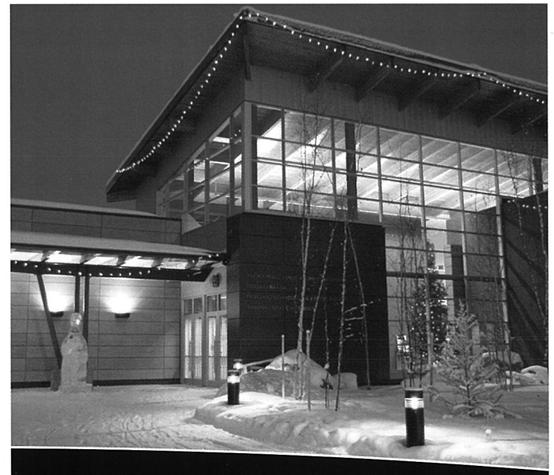
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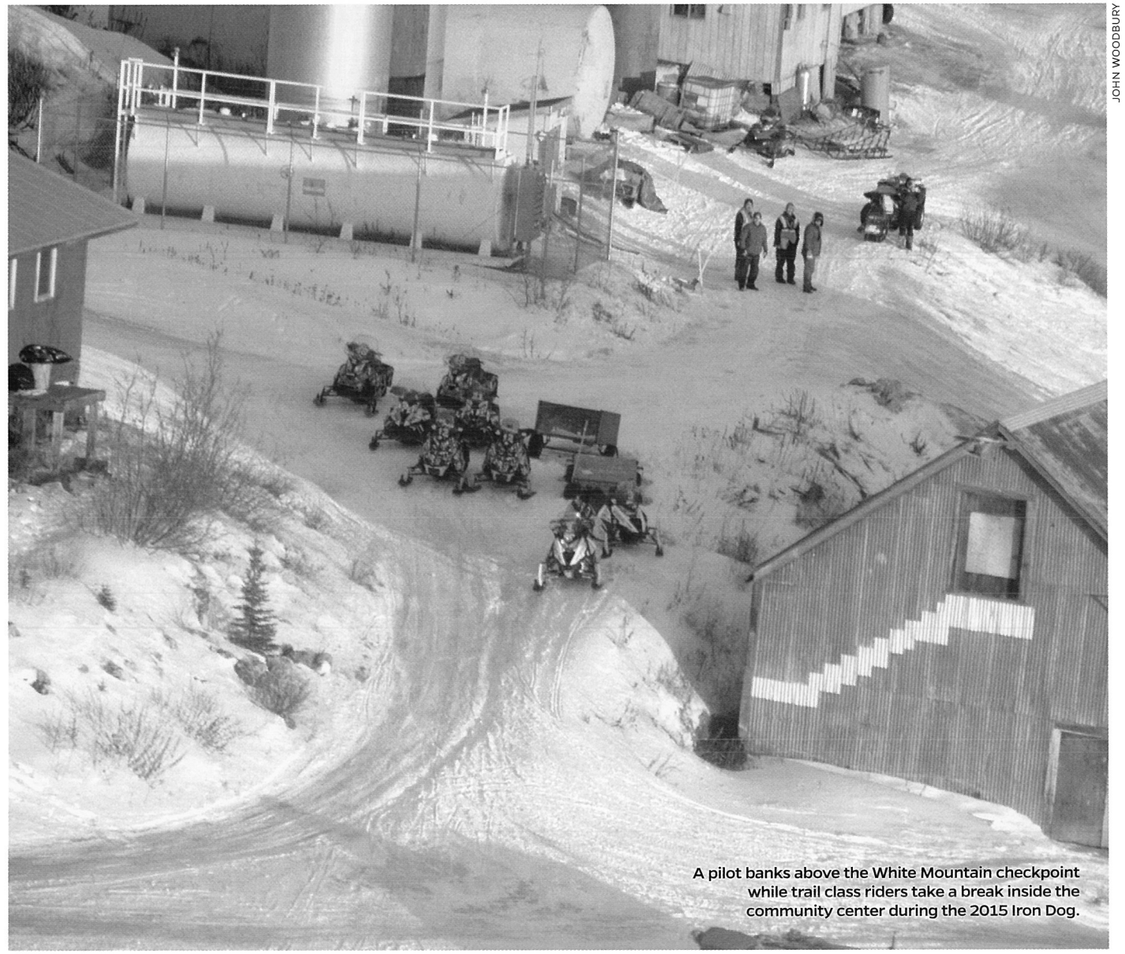
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JOHN WOODBURY

A pilot banks above the White Mountain checkpoint while trail class riders take a break inside the community center during the 2015 Iron Dog.

GALENA, population 479 (as of 2013), is an Athabascan village in the Interior, 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 194 (as of 2013), located near the windy 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 712 (as of 2013), on the 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.

SHAKTOOLIK, population 260 (as of 2013), is on a point jutting into Norton Sound, 882 miles from the start and 1,334 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

KOYUK, population 344 (as of 2013), 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 197 (as of 2013), 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.

TANANA, population 251 (as of 2013), located on the Yukon River, is 1,740 miles from the start.

MANLEY HOT SPRINGS, population 89 (as of 2010), is 1,812 miles from the start.

NENANA, population 386 (as of 2013), located on Mile 305 of the George Parks Highway, is 1,917 miles from the start.

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

—Melissa DeVaughn

Mileage chart for the race course

Northbound

Deshka Landing to Skwentna	89
Skwentna to Shell Lake	17
Shell Lake to Puntilla	55
Puntilla to Rohn	75
Rohn to Nikolai	74
Nikolai to McGrath	52
McGrath to Ophir	63
Ophir to Poorman	99
Poorman to Ruby	72
Ruby to Galena	52
Galena to Kaltag	98
Kaltag to Unalakleet	95
Unalakleet to Shaktoolik	41
Shaktoolik to Koyuk	57
Koyuk to White Mountain	94
White Mtn. to Nome	75
Northbound Mileage	1,108

Southbound to Fairbanks

Nome to White Mountain	75
White Mtn to Koyuk	94
Koyuk to Shaktoolik	57
Shaktoolik to Unalakleet	41
Unalakleet to Kaltag	95
Kaltag to Galena	98
Galena to Ruby	52
Ruby to Tanana	120
Tanana to Manley	69
Manley to Nenana	110
Nenana to Fairbanks	77
Southbound Mileage	888

total mileage: 1,996



REBECCA CHARLES

The ice along the Norton Sound coast can be treacherous, as shown here during the 2015 race, near Ruby.

SMALLER COMMUNITIES & CHECKPOINTS

SKWENTNA, population 38 (as of July 2015), is located on mostly flat land in South-central Alaska on the Skwentna River. It is 89 miles from the start.

PUNTILLA, population two (as of 2013), is located on a Puntilla Lake near a breath-taking mountain pass. Puntilla is 161 miles from the start.

ROHN, population zero (as of 2012), is located at a small roadhouse where two rivers join, and is 236 miles from the start.

NIKOLAI, population 96 (as of 2013), is 310 miles from the start on the south fork of the Kuskokwim River.

McGRATH, population 354 (as of 2013), located on the Innoko River, is 362 miles from the start.

OPHIR, population zero (as of 2013), is 425 miles from the start located on the Innoko River.

POORMAN, population zero (as of 2013), located in a flatland region and the last checkpoint before Ruby, is 524 miles from the start.

RUBY, population 170 (as of 2013), is on the Yukon River and marks the turning point to Nome. Pro racers pass through Ruby twice – first 596 miles from the start on the way to Nome and again at mile 1,620 on the return route to Fairbanks.



SOREN SIEBERTS

Spectators crowd the starting chute during the 2018 race. This year's race starts at Deshka Landing near Willow.

2019 IRON DOG

Iron Dog's Communities and Checkpoints

DESHKA LANDING

The 2019 Iron Dog race moves from its traditional start venue of Big Lake to Deshka Landing. Safety concerns following a late freeze-up and potential ice issues created by the Nov. 30 earthquake convinced the Iron Dog board of directors to shift the start to the Susitna River launch near Mile 70.5 of the Parks Highway.

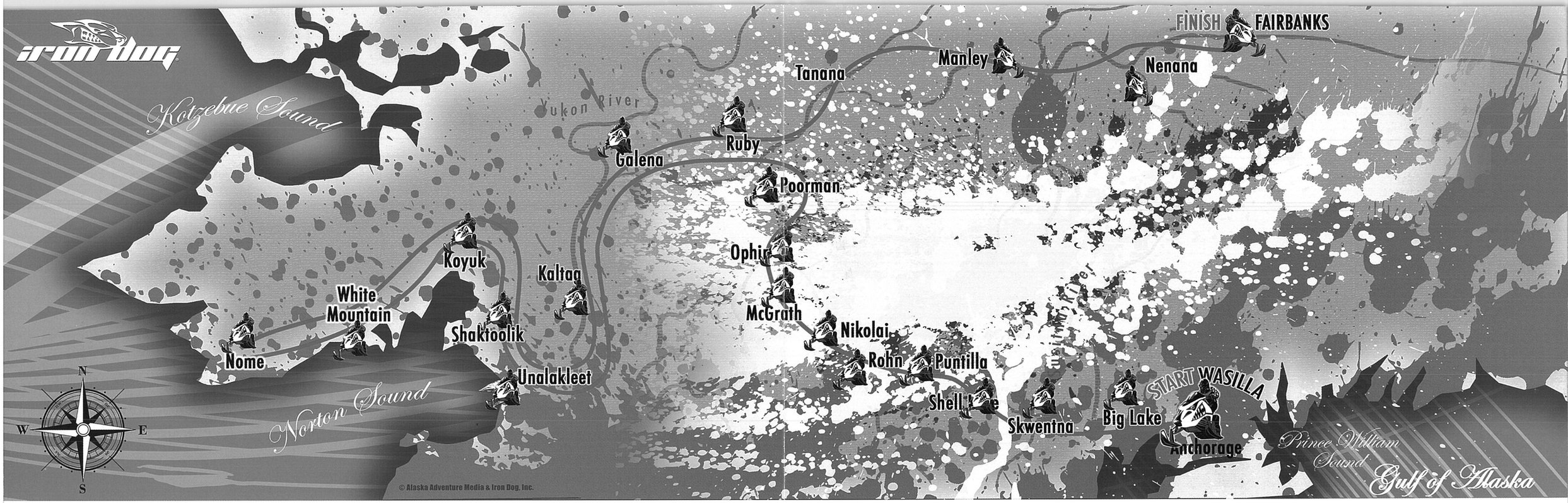
The trail mileage remains the same out to Skwentna, and there is ample parking and quick access to the river trail system and the Iron Dog trail.

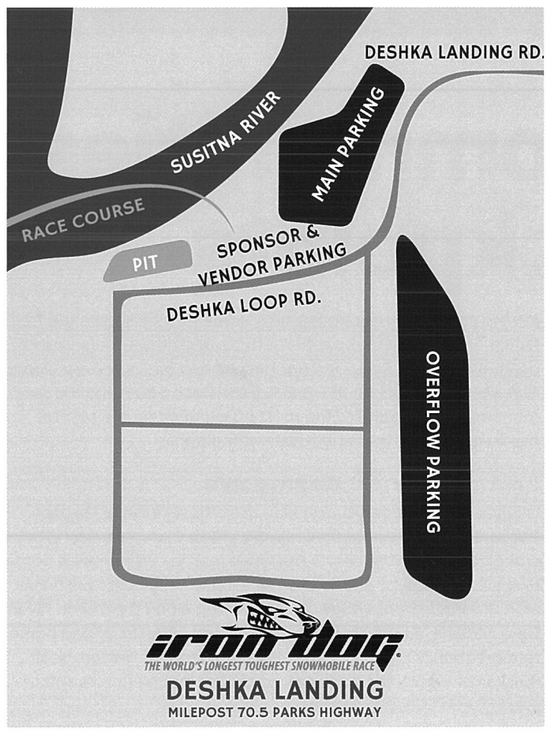
NOME

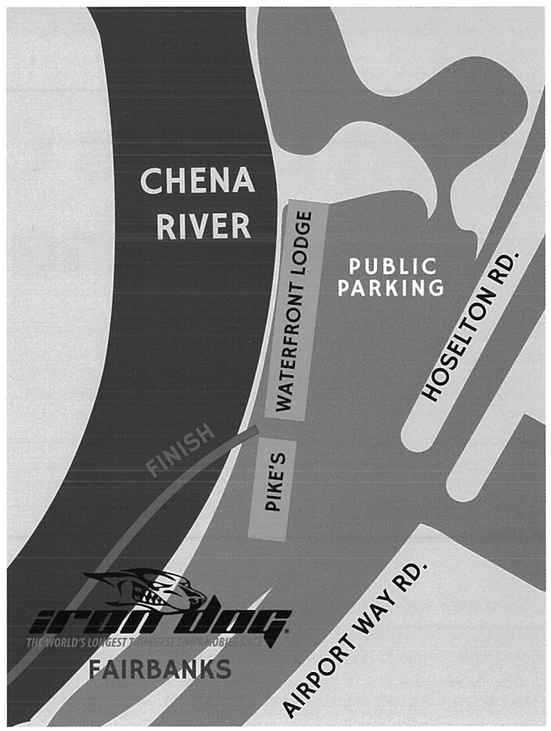
Until 1994, Nome was officially the race finish, tying Iron Dog to the Gold Rush history of Alaska, hence the earlier race name, Gold Rush Classic. In 1998 the race finish was moved to Fairbanks. Nome remains heavily involved in the race as a halfway point, perhaps more involved now than before. Instead of hosting the ending of the long journey, Nome now facilitates the Trail Riders finish, numerous support efforts and crews, lodging and banquets for Trail Rider and Pro Racers, and a race restart. Nome is in western Alaska on the coast of the Bering Sea, and the surrounding area is some of the most challenging on the course, due to ice shelves and open-water conditions.

FAIRBANKS

Since 1998, Fairbanks has been the official finish of the race. Fairbanks facilitates the final rallying of Pro Class racers who completed the entire near 2,000-mile journey. Fairbanks is home to the final banquet and awards ceremony. The racers will finish at Pike's Waterfront Lodge, after traveling along the Chena River from Nenana. Fairbanks is Alaska's second largest city and home to more than 50,000. It is known as the home of University of Alaska Fairbanks, the popular Chena Hot Springs Resort and the World Ice Art Championships.







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TEAM CC

4th Prize: $2,500 gift card provided by Alaska Specialty Equipment/Bailey's

5th Prize: $1,000 Gift Card provided by Team CC

CHEVROLET BUICK GMC FAIRBANKS

6th Prize: Set of 4 Blizzak tires, up to $800 in value, courtesy Chevrolet Buick GMC of Fairbanks

AMSOIL Klim

Top three winners get gift cards & gear from AMSOIL & Klim!

Specialty

$1,000 CASH to the person or organization that sells the most raffle tickets courtesy Specialty Truck and Auto

Cabela's

$1,000 Gift Card to the person selling the winning ticket

See www.irondog.org/2019-iron-dog-raffle/ for complete rules

(907) 563-4414

MONSTER ENERGY

Alaska Gaming Permit #79. $60 per ticket, 5,000 tickets to be sold. Odds of winning based on total # of tickets sold. Drawing date: April 2, 2019. Need not be present to win. A total of 9 prizes will be awarded.