

Kuskokwim 300 Dog Sled Race purse set higher

by Jay Barrett

The purse for Bethel's Premier Dog Sled Race has been boosted by \$15,000, making the Kuskowim 300 the second largest paying race in the world, second only to the Iditarod.

Race Headquarters announced that the Kusko's purse has been upped from 85 - thousand up to 100 - thousand dollars. Likewise,

the 300's Shorter Siblings, the Bogus Creek 150 and Akiak Dash, have had \$5000 added to each of their purses. The Bogus is now paying \$25000, while the dash doubled it's purse to \$10,000.

No purse breakdown was announced, but organizers say racers can expect an across-the-board increase. Last year, the Kusko paid \$18,000 for first place.

Race officials said they had wanted to offer a purse of this size for years, and because of continued support by sponsors, can do so at this time. After reaching \$100,000, race officials say they don't intend on raising it in the foreseeable future. Any new revenue the race receives will go to other events in the area.

The race committee also announced that the Christmas Clas-

sic Race will be held on Saturday, December 30TH, with a purse of \$2500. They also donated \$500 to the Napa-Eddie Hoffman Sprint Race.

The Kusko Race Committee also will be sponsoring a pair of local mushers entered into next year's Iditarod. They have given both Lori Townsend and Tomas (Tow Moss) Israelsson (Is Rail Son) \$1000 each. The committee has a list of guidelines governing

sponsorship of local teams, which is available from committee headquarters.

Four mushers have tossed their hats into the ring for the big race and include Tony Browning of Nenana, Lori Townsend and Rich Townsend, both of Aniak, and James Ritchie of Wennatche, Washington.

Veteran Race Marshall Nels Alexie will return for his ninth year enforcing the rules.