

Westinghouse Will Sponsor Isaac Okleasik

(Special to the Tundra Times)
from BETZI WOODMAN

Installation of gas turbine in Anchorage last year is playing an important role in the life of Isaac Okleasik of Teller.

The colorful dog musher who won the rigorous Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race during the 1967 Alaska Centennial will be able to enter this year's Fur Rendezvous World Championship Sled Dog Race because the Westinghouse Corporation will sponsor him.

The well-known firm with the famous slogan "You can be sure if it's Westinghouse," joined the ever-increasing group of corporation sponsors in the following

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Isaac Okleasik

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manner.

John Coffen from the Philadelphia Steam Division of the firm and R.T. Killen of the Seattle office were in Anchorage in connection with the city's installation of a new Westinghouse gas turbine.

Their visit coincided with the the Rony festivities including the exciting dog race events.

Two Anchorage businesswomen, Mrs. Paula Pence and Mrs. Kelly Martin, were talking with Al Courtney, then with the state's development office and the Westinghouse visitors.

The three Alaskans almost simultaneously suggested that the firm sponsor a dog team for the next year's race. Response, recalls Mrs. Martin, was immediate—and affirmative. Next question: Who shall we sponsor?

The two women both recalled Okleasik from the Iditarod race and realized that he had not been able to get to Anchorage in 1968 for lack of a sponsor. They suggested his name—and it was done.

The two women are acutely aware that there are other colorful mushers with hard-running teams who need sponsors. But at least they were instrumental in bringing back one outstanding musher from a distance. Now they assume new responsibilities among their many other community activities: dog team managers.

Actually, they are the go-betweens for the distant sponsor, Okleasik at Teller and Walt Stephans in Anchorage. Stephans is an old friend of the Eskimo and will be both his host and dog handler. The women will pay the costs of the venture from the \$1,200 sponsor donation.

They are also giving their minds a workout to find names the twenty dogs expected for Rendez-vous might use as they run for Westinghouse. Perhaps the lead dog "Peggy" might not mind being "Jenny"—sort of short of short for "generator."

They say "We can be sure of Isaac's dog power if it's Westinghouse!" And if he wins, think of the possibilities of that slogan.