

For Iditarod Classic Sled Dog Race—

Atlantic Richfield Co. Posts \$50,000 Prize Money

ANCHORAGE, Nov. 26 — The Iditarod Trail Committee recently announced that Atlantic Richfield Company has agreed to post 50,000 dollars prize money for the 1,049 mile sled dog race

to be run between Anchorage and Nome next March.

Jay Bashor, chairman, confirmed that he had signed the agreement with Howard A. Slack, vice president and resident

manager of Atlantic Richfield's Alaska Region. The prizes will be awarded in Nome at the conclusion of the race.

Bashor also announced a number of revisions in the rules designed to improve the race, to give veterinarians working in the race the amount of stress placed on sled dogs during the race.

The new rules were developed with the assistance of the Alaska Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Southcentral Alaska Veterinarians Association to meet concerns expressed by the ASPCA, the veterinarians and mushers.

Slack noted in signing the agreement that Atlantic Richfield elected to provide the prize money "to foster the long-time Alaskan tradition of sled dog racing."

The company has been active in sponsoring dog mushers in southcentral and interior Alaska events for about five years. In March of this year, Atlantic Richfield sponsored Carl Huntington of Galena in his successful bid for the 1974 Iditarod championship.

The race, which will run for the third time when the official starting signal is given at 10:00

a.m., March 1, will have first-place prize of 15,000 dollars. Other prizes will be 10,000 dollars for second place, 7,500 dollars for third, 5,000 dollars for fourth, 3,000 dollars for fifth, 2,500 dollars for sixth, 2,000 dollars for seventh, 1,500 dollars for eighth, 1,000 dollars for ninth, 750 dollars for tenth and 350 dollars each for places 11 through 15.

The new rules include provision for the dropping of fatigued, sick, or injured dogs at any of the 24 checkpoints to be established along the trail. Any dog dropped at a checkpoint must be left with two days food and a tag indicating the owner's name, where the dog is to be shipped, and why the dog was dropped.

Race officials have arranged to have any dropped dogs picked up at the checkpoints within two days and flown temporarily to dog lots in Skwentna, McGrath, Galena, Unalakleet, Nome, where they will be cared for until they recovered enough to be sent home.

Also, each team must make at least one 24 hour stop at one of the checkpoints during the race. The timing of the stop will be up

to the musher.

The race marshall and official veterinarians will have absolute authority over the dog teams, including the authority to order rest or withdrawal of any dog or dogs at any time during the race.

All dogs will undergo a physical examination by a veterinarian the day before the start of the race. No dog will be allowed to race unless it qualifies for a certificate of good health.

Mushers must carry booties for the protection of the dog's feet. Use of the booties will be at the discretion of the mushers but no team can leave a checkpoint without one day's food for each dog (minimum of two pounds per dog) and two sets of dog booties.

The race marshall, veterinarians or checkpoint operators may detain any team for the purpose of repair or replacement of equipment if such equipment may be injurious to the dogs.

Bashor said the Iditarod will still be a tremendous challenge to mushers and dogs, but the new rules are intended to assure that the animals will be treated in a humane manner.