

Another Attla may be making his mark

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The name Attla may one day be almost as familiar to Iditarod mushers as it is now to those who run the World Championship Sled Dog races.

Gary Attla, son of nine-time World Championship winner George Attla, is running the Iditarod, the first time either of the mushers with the famous last name, has entered that grueling event.

When the young Attla first told his father that he wanted to run the Iditarod, George said, "Say goodbye to the leaders at the start of the race, and don't expect to see them again."

Gary, however, went into the race with high hopes. "My dogs have an advantage," said Attla. "They were first trained as sprint dogs. Now they are trained for distance, as well."

Gary started training for the race this past October, mushing his dogs around



Photo by Marc Olson

Gary Attla mends his sled near Rainy Pass

the Aurora Golf Course in Fairbanks.

He's running 14 dogs -

eight from his father's team one from Don Anderson and one from his Huslia

neighbor, Bernie Turner. Gary's leader is Trott. The dog that ran lead in the movie "Spirit of the Wind."

Gary's dogs have proved they can run distances as well as just sprints. Attla Senior ran the team to a second-place finish in the Kuskokwim 300, and Gary managed a second in the Cook Creek races.

Earl and Natalie Norris talked Attla into entering the Iditarod this year, but Attla says he couldn't have prepared his dogs in time for the race without help from his handler, Bob McAlpine, and moral support from the people of Huslia and the folks at the Aurora Golf Course.

Is there the possibility that two Attlas might run the Iditarod in the future? Gary isn't saying. But don't discount the possibility of seeing father run against son in years to come.