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# Sled Dog Race from Anchorage to Nome—

## Longest and Richest in Racing History, Race to Take 10 to 14 Days

ANCHORAGE, AK. — A one thousand mile sled dog race which would begin in Anchorage and wind up in the historic gold rush town of Nome, Alaska utilizing the historic Iditarod Trail, has been proposed for this spring by the Iditarod Trail International Championship Race committee, headed by Joe Reddington, Sr. of Knik.

The race, which experts say will be the longest and richest in the history of sled dog racing is expected to take between 10 and 14 days to complete and pay the top twenty winners a total of \$50,000.

"To most people the Iditarod Trail means little, if anything," says Reddington, a life-time "musher" and one of the prime movers behind the proposed race, "but to those familiar with early Alaskan history, the trail brings to mind a great deal. In the early 1900's, hardy souls

laden with supplies, mail, food and clothing entered the trail at Knik, just across the Knik Arm from Anchorage and slowly worked their way north and west through such busy towns as Iditarod and Flat and on to Nome.

Historians say that the Iditarod Trail was considered by early travelers as the primary access route into Alaska's interior until the Alaska Northern Railway (later Alaska Railroad) completed its Anchorage-Fairbanks route in 1923.

The race, which has been scheduled for March 3, has already drawn a great deal of interest from Alaskan "mushers" as well as from several persons in the Lower 48.

Says Reddington: "We have received numerous calls and letters from interested participants both here as well as on the 'outside' wanting to know

more about the proposed race. As a matter of fact, one sled-dog buff called from Michigan and expressed an interest in joining us for the event."

Based on past participation in smaller races around the state, the committee predicts a record number of entries, perhaps even in the hundreds.

The entry fee has been set at \$100 per competitor with the deadline for registration February 28, 1973 at 6 p.m. While tourists wing their way to historic Nome in a few hours in modern jet aircraft, the racers will take a much longer, but also a more colorful route with such towns and hamlets as Rainy Pass, McGrath, Ruby, Kaltag, Unalakleet, and Koyuk greeting them along on their long journey.

A glance at the map of Alaska will quickly confirm the difficulty of the 1,000 mile journey.

Safety precautions have not been left to chance. Every musher will be required to check in periodically at established checkpoints where he and his team will have opportunities to rest and eat. "It is very interesting to note," says Reddington, "that some of the buildings constructed by the early travelers are still standing and will be utilized as check points."

Every checkpoint will be equipped not only with food and rest facilities, but will be in radio contact with race

headquarters so that the progress of the race can be reported to the public.

The race has drawn praise from many sectors of Alaska. U.S. Senator Mike Gravel, who recently asked Interior Secretary Rogers Morton to consider designating the Iditarod Trail a national historic landmark, has called the race "the most historic event in the history of dog mushing. I am certain that this race will do much to focus attention on Alaska's history, and bring understanding of its people and its land."

The prize money for this race will come from donations, according to event organizers.

"As in any event of this magnitude we anticipate great expenses not only in the prize money but also in publicity and promotion costs," explains Reddington.

"For this reason we sincerely hope that all Alaskans will contribute what they can to make this event a national spectacle."

More information on the proposed race may be obtained from Iditarod Trail committee, Box 6108, Anchorage, AK 99502.

## Two Teachers Get Grant

Two Tanana teachers have received a grant of \$1,000 for a project entitled, "RAP — Re-evaluation of Attitudes Program" which will reinforce an existing program.

The teachers, Mary Moses and Ann Howard, will initiate the program which will see students operating a school store.

Basically, the project is designed to motivate students from the 7th through 12th grades to stay in school and return many of them to regular classroom programs.

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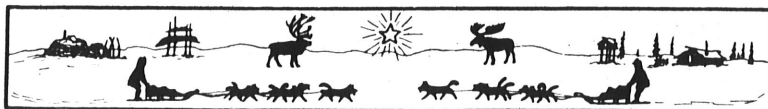
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