2019 OFFICIAL RACE GUIDE

IRON DOG 36 >> FEBRUARY 15-23, 2019
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The 2019 Iron Dog Racers Will Pass Through more than 20 communities on their way to the finish line. This race is one of the most exciting times of the year for many of these remote villages and towns, who often see few visitors. So, it’s safe to say that there are plenty of people who will be able to watch live.

Still, Iron Dog knows there are thousands of fans out there who may not have such front-row seats for the races. So the race has come to you.

Those new to the sport of snowmachine racing have many opportunities leading up to and after the Iron Dog race to meet teams, ask questions and determine if they have what it takes to become a future Iron Dog champion. Drop in on the Donlin Gold Safety Expo anytime between 1 and 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 15, at Menard Sports Center in Wasilla. This is where teams are inspected before given approval to race. Fans can talk to racers, see the packing list of gear spread out, inspect the snowmachines, and enjoy some extra family fun and excitement. The racers also will draw their starting order at the expo, starting at 5 p.m.

Two days later on Feb. 17, Iron Dog pro racers will officially start their race, taking off in two-minute intervals at Deshka Landing, milepost 70.5 of the Parks Highway. The start was moved from Big Lake due to lingering safety concerns over ice stability.

If you splurge on a ticket to Nome, or live there already, you’ll get a unique perspective on how hard teams are racing, the toll it takes on them and their machines, the halfway awards banquet and the release for the second leg of the course to Fairbanks. It’s also the finish line for Trail Class riders and a chance to hear their race, taking off in two-minute intervals at Deshka Landing.

In Fairbanks, the crowd will gather to watch weary racers as they sprint to the finish. The finish moves back to Pike’s Waterfront Lodge, which for years was the traditional end point.

“Pike’s Landing is going to be 50 years old in 2019, so we love hosting unique Alaskan sporting events like this to help celebrate,” said Pike’s Riverfront Lodge owner Jay Ramras. “We’re excited

We’ve got you covered

Watch the race — from Deshka Landing to Fairbanks, and even on your phone

By MELISSA DEVAUGHN

Schedule of Events

FEB. 13: Trail Class Tech Inspection (Wasilla at Hatcher Pass Polaris)
FEB. 15: Trail Class Start (Big Lake at Southport Marina)
FEB. 15: Donlin Gold Safety Expo (Mat-Su Valley at Menard Center)
FEB. 17: Pro Class Start (Deshka Landing)
FEB. 20: Halfway Ceremonies in Nome
FEB. 23: Finish of the Pro Class in Fairbanks (Pike’s Waterfront Lodge)

– we’ve got a giant, 12-by-8 sign in the middle of our parking lot that has the route of the race and the history of the race. We are delighted for the race to come back to this part of the Chena.

“We just think it’s going to be a great sporting event – there is so much room on the river and in our parking lot for snowmachine trailers and friends and family, we just want everyone to have fun and enjoy it.”

Cheer racers on from the sidelines or watch from the lodge. The first teams are expected to start showing up in Fairbanks sometime on Saturday, Feb. 23.

Either way, it will be a good time, said John Woodbury, executive director of the Iron Dog.

“Post race events include an awards ceremony at Pike’s immediately following the finish, and there is usually a pretty racous afterparty following the awards,” Woodbury said. “On April 2, we are planning the raffle draw combined with the Iron Dog Hall of Fame ceremony in Anchorage. We are working with friends of Iron Dog to secure a venue large enough for the anticipated crowd, so check www.irondog.org for updates on this event.”

Out of sight but on your device

Stay abreast of the action using the latest technology. Watch news coverage on KTUU Channel 2, listen on the radio, or surf the Iron Dog website and Facebook page. Expect news coverage and prerace information from KTUU before and during the race.

2019 Iron Dog

Iron Dog

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907.563.4414
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Race Week
Nome Headquarters:
City of Nome Public Works Garage
Fairbanks Headquarters:
Pike’s Waterfront Lodge

Continued on Page 8
The South Anchorage High School Media Team will be providing live streaming coverage from the start line in Deshka Landing, all the way to the finish line in Fairbanks. It’s a tradition that began in 2015 and is going into its fifth year.

“Our students will be streaming the start of the race, the Nome garage, and the finish of the race, as well as collecting video and audio data for future commercials and fillers for live streams,” said Lee Butterfield, South Anchorage’s electronic media teacher.

“Our students are also working on commercials for the events and activities related to Iron Dog as we speak and will be aired on local television and streamed on the South Anchorage High School YouTube Page (Be sure to check it out at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQyWqa3IHaljxxNctJXg5w).”

Woodbury said Butterfield’s students are proving that the younger generation really is the future. With all of the material the teens have provided, Iron Dog spectators are better informed than ever.

“Social media, television, radio, print ads, race guides – all are outlets to share what Iron Dog is all about, and each requires a unique plan to make an effective use of the medium,” he said. Butterfield’s team of teens is key to all of that, he added.

As for Butterfield, it’s a win-win situation: Iron Dog gets coverage, and his students get valuable life experience.

“Our students get real-world experience in media, broadcast, digital design, and field engineering throughout this experience,” he said. “They work with a real client, providing a highly technical product with deadlines and the stress of managing a live worldwide stream of an internationally known event. Racers get coverage and connection to fans that reach further than ever before. We have viewers from around the world tune in to watch the race unfold and have racer family members that feel more connected to their racers through the work done by these students.”

Other ways to get the latest

For the most current live stream online, go to www.irondog.org/live as well as find previous live streams.

For web-based and mobile viewing information and near-real-time GPS tracking, visit WWW.IRONDOG.ORG, and look for Race Tracking, where you can follow your favorite team.

FACEBOOK: https://www.facebook.com/snowmobilerace
TWITTER: @irondograce
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YOUTUBE: https://www.youtube.com/user/IronDogRace/videos

Follow the hashtag #irondog2019 for updates all along the route.

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As snow continued to fall liberally across Alaska in December, it’s safe to say Iron Dog snowmachiners were eagerly anticipating the race to come just a few short weeks away. This year’s Iron Dog race is already a step ahead of past years, with a healthy amount of snowfall to enhance trail conditions, and a streamlined race course – racers are thrilled to see that the finish line has moved back to Pike’s Waterfront Lodge – among other details that maintain the event as the “World’s Longest, Toughest Snowmobile Race.”

“If there ever was a year to ‘shake things up’ this would be it,” said John Woodbury, Iron Dog’s new executive director. “We’ve had some spectacular obstacles this year, from a late freeze-up and snowfall, right down to the Nov. 30 earthquake. But, in true Iron Dog fashion, we’ve remained tenacious to overcome every challenge placed before us, even if that means changing the longtime start from Big Lake to Deshka Landing this year.”

And, oh, what a challenging race it’s going to be. Iron Dog 2019 features 24 teams comprised of 15 rookies and 33 veterans. Within those statistics lie some impressive names – last year’s winners Mike Morgan and Chris Olds will be back to defend their title, but they will have plenty of competition from such rugged veterans as Tyler Aklestad, Tyson Johnson, Todd Minnick and Nick Olstad, to name a few.

“There’s a lot of other teams that have a lot of talent – a lot of veterans and a lot of fast times to compete against,” said Olds, whose win last year made it three for him and a first for Morgan. “We will try to repeat, that’s what we want to do.”

Then there are the up-and-comers – such as 25-year-old Zach Weisz, who was on top-placing rookie Team 5 during last year’s Iron Dog, racing with teammate Andy Gocke. This

The 2018 race saw two dozen rookies entered. This year, there are 15, meaning veterans outweigh the rookies more than 2-to-1.

2019 Iron Dog

A snowmachine tradition

This year’s Iron Dog is anyone’s race to win

By MELISSA DEVAUGHN

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Deshka Landing

Sunday, Feb. 17

9 a.m.

Sponsors and vendors open up for the race-day festivities; check out the pit area; get official Iron Dog gear at the merchandise tent; receive free samples from sponsors; visit vendor tents for more goodies. Also, meet and greet the Pro Class racers as they prepare to leave.

11 a.m.

Closing of the pit area, and the first green flag drops.
year, he pairs with 26-year-old Willow rider Brett Lapham, who finished the 2015 and 2016 races in fifth and 11th places, respectively. Also worth eyeing are Anchorage racers Casey Boylan and Bryan Leslie, who last year placed fifth in only their second Iron Dog race, and were Rookies of the Year in their 2017 inaugural race.

“We’ve got 24 pro teams, and every one of them is an expert rider in their own right,” Woodbury said. “With seven former champs, it’s hard to pick a favorite. I don’t actually have a favorite team. All of the racers on this trail have an equal chance to win once the start flag drops.”

This year marks the 36th annual Iron Dog race, and the differences from this years race to last are notable. The 2018 race saw two dozen rookies entered, but this year, there are 15, meaning veterans outweigh the rookies more than 2-to-1. This could prove to be key, as the Iron Dog is a race where experience can outsmart young, brute strength. The lessons learned on this trail are hard-earned and come from enduring the bone-jarring abuse of racing at top speeds, on little sleep and lots of sleep deprivation.

“Each year (you race), you learn a little bit more about it,” Olds said, “and that helps you prepare. For me and Mike, we have a good combination. Still, you never know what can happen.”

In what could also be a race-history first, this year a father-daughter team will compete together. Danielle Levine and her father, Dr. Larry Levine, represent Team 29. Although Danielle – Dani, as she’s known – is listed as the rookie of the pair (Larry has raced in three, and completed two Iron Dogs) Larry Levine readily admits that it is his daughter who is the natural competitor.

“She’s been doing Alaska Motor Mushers since she was 14, and she has done Arctic Man and much more racing than me,” said Levine, who took up racing in 2016 as a way “to keep up with my daughter.”

“She had planned on racing Iron Dog when she was a senior in high school, but she broke her throttle finger playing football and that put an end to it,” he added. “I’m thankful for the opportunity we have to do this together.”

Another difference between last year’s race and this year is the notable absence of riders from outside of Alaska. The 2017 race featured the largest field of Outside competitors in the race’s history, with 16 hailing from outside the state. And the 2018 race hosted a respectable five. This year, however, there are only two racers - Team 31’s Bobby Menne, from Virginia, Minn., has since moved to Alaska, after racing twice in Iron Dog, and this year pairs with Fairbanks’ Troy Conlan as he shoots for a Top-3 finish.

Team 15 includes Colorado racer Wesley Selby from Grand Lake – although he currently lives in Thief River Falls, Minn. He’s a rookie cross-country racer who is pairing with the very experienced Micah Huss of Big Lake, who has raced Iron Dog twice (finishing third in 2017) and has a 26-year history of cross-country racing under his belt.

“Iron Dog got a late start in letting riders know when we opened registration this year, so the normal influx of Outside riders is smaller due to a much tighter registration period,” Woodbury said. “We gave folks about a month to register in the Pro class this year, when typically there are months. I think it was just too tight of a window for riders outside of Alaska to make their plans.

“But, we are happy to have new racers and I do expect more to enter next year now that we all can plan a bit more ahead.”

While the “who will win” question lingers, organizers of Iron Dog are busy working out other important details. One key detail to figure out was finding a safe alternative to starting on the potentially earthquake-compromised ice of Big Lake.

“In the name of safety, we had to make the decision to move the start to Deshka Landing this year,” Woodbury said.

Also new this year – although not new to the race – is the return of the original finish line, directly in front of Pike’s Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks.

“The downtown Fairbanks finish was a great place to wrap up the Iron Dog, but with the unofficial theme of “shake it up” we figured this would be a good year to return to the traditional finish line at Pike’s,” Woodbury said.

“This change reroutes the final leg of the race route,” noted Sarah Miller, Iron Dog’s key organizer, but otherwise the race checkpoints will stay the same.

Also returning this year is the Trail Class event, with 10 riders entered. This category allows for larger teams to band together and ride the first half of the race, from Big Lake to Nome, to get a feel for the conditions. It often is the steppingstone for future racers and an event that offers valuable experience and camaraderie among riders.

As with past years, Woodbury said this year’s race will be easy to follow thanks to technology. Iron Dog’s GPS tracking and minute-by-minute coverage of the racing keeps the event exciting even for those sitting on their couches at home. Visit www. irondog.org/live to get the best up-to-date coverage no matter where you happen to be.

As for the trails, in late-December and with two months still left for Mother Nature to continue her winter wonderland magic, Miller said organizers remain optimistic that this could be the snow year all snowmachiners dream of.

“It is still very early to tell what the race route will look like,” she said. “While we have had a large amount of snow in South-central, there have been slightly warmer temperatures and added insulation from the snow, making the rivers slower to freeze. We have heard from many trail markers that they are beginning to put in trail in their local areas. However there are still large sections that have not been broken out.”
THE IRON DOG SNOWMACHINE RACE is an unforgiving challenge for even the toughest of riders. But for those who have crossed that finish line – or have been beaten back and now can’t resist the challenge of chasing that dream – it’s a race that is a bit addictive, too.


“Our primary concern is safety,” Woodbury said. “We will not start this race if the race marshals deem it unsafe to continue, which has happened in the past in the form of delays and checkpoint holds. It’s a high-speed competition that crosses through some of Alaska’s most difficult backcountry, so there will always be inherent dangers. We work with everyone along the trial to gain as much local knowledge as possible to trim as many of the dangerous variables as possible. But, every team is going to experience at least one scary moment over these 2,000 miles. We all just hope it only makes for another tale from the trail and nothing more serious.”

One of the best ways to be safe is to be prepared, and that’s what the Donlin Gold Safety Expo is all about. Here is where all of the sled and gear inspections take place, and where lay-spectators can gain a true appreciation of what all is needed to traverse Alaska’s wilds by snowmachine.

2019 Donlin Gold Safety Expo

WHEN: 1-8 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 15
WHERE: Menard Sports Center, Wasilla
WHO: This is a free, public event hosted by Iron Dog and sponsored by Donlin Gold with vendors and race teams included. Learn how to become a safer outdoors person. All of the Pro class snowmachines will be on display, and racers will be on hand to meet and greet.

RAFFLE TICKETS: Enter to win door prizes and refresh your winter skill while there. Raffle tickets are $60. Go to www.iron-dog.org or call 907-563-4414 for ticket locations near you.


2019 Iron Dog Racer Draw

WHEN: 5-8 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 15
WHERE: Menard Sports Center, Wasilla
WHAT: Pro Class teams reach into the hat, where team numbers are drawn for start positions.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20
Win a piece of Alaska!

WHAT’S BETTER THAN LIVING THE DREAM in Alaska? Owning your very own piece of it. And, thanks to some clever and generous sponsors, the folks at Iron Dog are trying to make that possible for you.

Each year Iron Dog incorporates a raffle into their event in an effort to help fund the World’s Longest, Toughest Snowmobile Race. The raffle is also used to assist fellow nonprofit groups in the form of charitable donations from Iron Dog. To date, Iron Dog has donated more than $200,000 from funds raised during previous raffles. This year, Alaska’s legacy snowmachine event plans to again donate money to charitable groups. In addition, the person who sells the winning tickets earns a $1,000 gift card to Cabela’s, and the person or group that sells the most tickets this year earns $1,000 cash courtesy Specialty Truck and Auto.

“Every year the raffle gives back to Alaska in the form of donations to various groups, and this year will be no different,” said John Woodbury, Iron Dog executive director. “What makes this year’s raffle unique is we will be giving away land and a tiny house as the grand prize, thanks to Johnson Investments and Spenard Builders Supply. Some lucky person is going to walk up, buy a raffle ticket, and walk away with a near-complete Alaska homesteader’s kit.”

The half-acre plot is south of Big Lake in southcentral Alaska and is part of the Johnson Investments family of rural properties. The tiny house is a 12-foot by 16-foot Caribou Cabin kit from Spenard Builders Supply, complete with just about all the fixings.

Hatcher Pass Polaris put some fun into the raffle by donating a 2017 Polaris 600 Switchback Pro S snowmachine, which is sure to bring a smile to the second-place raffle prizewinner. White Spruce added to the prize list with a 10-foot Aluma-tilt trailer package, while Alaska Specialty Equipment/Bailey’s is offering up a $2,500 gift card. Team CC donated a $1,000 shopping spree to either of their locations, and Chevrolet Buick GMC of Fairbanks rolled in with a set of Blizzak tires. Rounding out the prizes, AMSOIL and Klim teamed up to offer gift cards and gear to the top-three prizewinners.

Earning a chance at your own homestead, or to win any of the raffle prizes, costs only $60. Iron Dog, operating under permit #79, will hold its drawing on April 2 in Anchorage and you need not be present to win. Want to ensure you have the best chance to win? Buy a ticket by calling (907) 563-4414! More Iron Dog raffle information can be found at www.irondog.org.

—Sarah Miller

EXPO: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

Did you know, for instance, that there are more than 30 required items that racers must carry or use, including 25 feet of 1,200-pound test rope, arctic stove with fuel, fire-starting materials, backup eye and face protection, and an assortment of spare parts for the sled.

From the moment the racers leave the chute at Deshka Landing, until they are safely at the finish in Fairbanks, there are countless ways in which they put themselves at risk – and the Safety Expo helps reiterate the ways in which they can stay safe. It’s the Donlin way, Woodbury said.

In fact, he added, “One of our most inspiring sponsors is Donlin Gold. Not only have they been a dedicated and notable supporter of the race for years, their motto of ‘every person going home safe and healthy every day’ is a motto we’ve unofficially adopted at Iron Dog. Their attitude and message is so applicable to what we do here.”

The safety message is consistently delivered and ever evolving when or if the need arises, said Iron Dog’s Sarah Miller, one of the lead coordinators behind the annual race.

“If there are any areas we are unsure of, the race marshals will dictate a mandatory race route to keep all riders as safe as possible on the trail,” she added.

Woodbury said trail crews are keeping a watchful eye on race conditions to ensure smooth sailing – or as smooth as a cross-Alaska fast-speed chase can be expected to go – ahead.

“The earthquake and slothy freeze of the Southcentral lakes and rivers have created some unique problems,” he said. “We’ve had pro teams take unplanned dips in rivers during early-season training, and there are lingering concerns about lake ice. But, the foremost mission of Iron Dog is to stage a safe race, and in 2019 we plan to uphold that unblemished tradition.”

And, while safety is the overriding theme of the Expo – it also is meant to be a prerace celebration of the days to come. To add to the festivities, organizers will have special deals, Iron Dog gear and the annual raffle ticket sale, which this year awards a half-acre of land at Point Mackenzie and a tiny home for the winning ticketholder (not to mention a long list of additional prizes – see our story on this page for more).

Tickets are $60 and winners will be announced April 2.
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Iron Dog’s Communities and Checkpoints

Deshka Landing
The 2019 Iron Dog race moves from its traditional start venue of Big Lake to Deshka Landing. Safety concerns following a late freeze-up and potential ice issues created by the Nov. 30 earthquake convinced the Iron Dog board of directors to shift the start to the Susitna River launch near Mile 70.5 of the Parks Highway. The trail mileage remains the same out to Skwentna, and there is ample parking and quick access to the river trail system and the Iron Dog trail.

Nome
Until 1994, Nome was officially the race finish, tying Iron Dog to the Gold Rush history of Alaska, hence the earlier race name, Gold Rush Classic. In 1998 the race finish was moved to Fairbanks. Nome remains heavily involved in the race as a halfway point, perhaps more involved now than before. Instead of hosting the ending of the long journey, Nome now facilitates the Trail Riders finish, numerous support efforts and crews, lodging and banquets for Trail Rider and Pro Racers, and a race restart. Nome is in western Alaska on the coast of the Bering Sea, and the surrounding area is some of the most challenging on the course, due to ice shelves and open-water conditions.

Fairbanks
Since 1998, Fairbanks has been the official finish of the race. Fairbanks facilitates the final rallying of Pro Class racers who completed the entire near 2,000-mile journey. Fairbanks is home to the final banquet and awards ceremony. The racers will finish at Pike’s Waterfront Lodge, after traveling along the Chena River from Nenana. Fairbanks is Alaska’s second largest city and home to more than 50,000. It is known as the home of University of Alaska Fairbanks, the popular Chena Hot Springs Resort and the World Ice Art Championships.
WIN LAND AND A TINY HOUSE IN ALASKA!

**1st Prize:** Half-acre of land courtesy of Johnson Investments and a Caribou Cabin kit from Spenard Builders Supply

**2nd Prize:** 2017 Polaris 600 Switchback Pro S from Hatcher Pass Polaris

**3rd Prize:** 10’ Aluma tilt trailer package from White Spruce Trailers

**4th Prize:** $2,500 gift card provided by Alaska Specialty Equipment/Bailey’s

**5th Prize:** $1,000 Gift Card provided by Team CC

**6th Prize:** Set of 4 Blizzak tires, up to $800 in value, courtesy Chevrolet Buick GMC of Fairbanks

Top three winners get gift cards & gear from AMSOIL & Klim!

$1,000 CASH to the person or organization that sells the most raffle tickets courtesy Specialty Truck and Auto

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See www.irondog.org/2019-iron-dog-raffle/ for complete rules

Alaska Gaming Permit #79. $60 per ticket, 5,000 tickets to be sold. Odds of winning based on total # of tickets sold. Drawing date: April 2, 2019. Need not be present to win. A total of 9 prizes will be awarded.
**Small communities & checkpoints**

**Skwentna**, population 38 (as of July 2015), is located on mostly flat land in South-central Alaska on the Skwentna River. It is 89 miles from the start.

**Puntilla**, population two (as of 2013), is located on a Puntilla Lake near a breathtaking mountain pass. Puntilla is 161 miles from the start.

**Rohn**, population zero (as of 2012), is located at a small roadhouse where two rivers join, and is 236 miles from the start.

**Nikolai**, population 96 (as of 2013), is 310 miles from the start on the south fork of the Kuskokwim River.

**McGrath**, population 354 (as of 2013), located on the Innoko River, is 362 miles from the start.

**Ophir**, population zero (as of 2013), is 425 miles from the start located on the Innoko River.

**Poorman**, population zero (as of 2013), located in a flatland region and the last checkpoint before Ruby, is 524 miles from the start.

**Ruby**, population 170 (as of 2013), is on the Yukon River and marks the turning point to Nome. Pro racers pass through Ruby twice – first 596 miles from the start on the way to Nome and again at mile 1,620 on the return route to Fairbanks.

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**Mileage chart for the race course**

**Northbound**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mileage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Deshka Landing to Skwentna.................................
| Skwentna to Shell Lake                                 |
| Shell Lake to Puntilla                                 |
| Puntilla to Rohn                                        |
| Rohn to Nikolai                                        |
| Nikolai to McGrath                                     |
| McGrath to Ophir                                       |
| Ophir to Poorman                                       |
| Poorman to Ruby                                        |
| Ruby to Galena                                          |
| Galena to Kaltag                                       |
| Kaltag to Unalakleet                                    |
| Unalakleet to Shaktoolik                                |
| Shaktoolik to Koyuk                                     |
| Koyuk to White Mountain                                 |
| White Mtn. to Nome                                     |
| Northbound Mileage                                     |

Total mileage: 1,108

**Southbound to Fairbanks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mileage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nome to White Mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Mtn to Koyuk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Koyuk to Shaktoolik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaktoolik to Unalakleet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unalakleet to Kaltag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaltag to Galena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galena to Ruby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruby to Tanana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanana to Manley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manley to Nenana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nenana to Fairbanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southbound Mileage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total mileage: 1,108
**GALENA**, population 479 (as of 2013), is an Athabascan village in the Interior, 648 miles from the start on the way to Nome and 1,568 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

**KALTAG**, population 194 (as of 2013), located near the windy coast of Norton Sound, is 746 miles from the start on the way to Nome and 1,470 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

**UNALAKLEET**, population 712 (as of 2013), on the coast of Norton Sound north of the Unalakleet River, is 841 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,375 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

**SHAKTOOLIK**, population 260 (as of 2013), is on a point jutting into Norton Sound, 882 miles from the start and 1,334 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

**KOYUK**, population 344 (as of 2013), located on the coast, is 939 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,277 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

**WHITE MOUNTAIN**, population 197 (as of 2013), located in the mountains on the Fish River, is 1,033 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,183 miles from the start on the return route to Fairbanks.

**TANANA**, population 251 (as of 2013), located on the Yukon River, is 1,740 miles from the start.

**MANLEY HOT SPRINGS**, population 89 (as of 2010), is 1,812 miles from the start.

**NENANA**, population 386 (as of 2013), located on Mile 305 of the George Parks Highway, is 1,917 miles from the start.

Source: Population and location descriptions based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates and the Iditarod Trail Committee.

—Melissa DeVaughn
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WHEN IRON DOG RACERS HEAD OUT into the great Alaska unknown, they are pretty much on their own. That’s why it’s so important that they not only know how to ride, but also how to fix their machines should problems arise.

But a mechanical issue can stump sometimes even the best riders. And if they can limp into the halfway point in Nome, help will be there for them.

Once the racers reach Nome, they can rest their bodies and recharge their machines. There, racers are allowed a short window in which to inspect their snowmachines, schedule maintenance and even have the help of up to two approved assistants during their brief shop visit. This all happens in the Nome garage, and it is a place of unprecedented activity during the days leading up to the halfway restart.

“There is so much going on there,” said Lee Butterfield, a South High teacher whose students will be filming in the garage during the checkups.

According to race rules, as racers arrive in Nome, they take their sleds in for the checkups. After letting the machines thaw out a bit, racers have 15 minutes off the clock to inspect their machines and ask for assistance.

After the brief inspection, racers then strategize, getting the parts they need and coming back later for their timed and scheduled work. Their efficiency – or lack of it – adds an exciting element to the race strategy. A team that arrived five minutes ahead of another to Nome, for example, can lose that lead-time if they spend that many more minutes than their competitor working on their sleds. All of a sudden the lead team is behind by a minute, all because they changed a part out slower than the other racer or had larger mechanical issues with which to contend.

Spectators can watch the action from a cordoned-off section of the garage; it looks a bit like an arctic version of a NASCAR pit stop.

“Our students will be streaming the Nome garage, as well as collecting video and audio data for future commercials and fillers for live streams,” Butterfield added. View the action at the students’ YouTube page, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQyWqa3lHaljxkNctJXg5w

—Melissa DeVaughn

IRON DOG 2019 / 29
cause it was a last-minute decision for me to race with my dad. I’ve had a lot less prep than last time, so it’s just been trying to work out and deal with finals. Now that I’m back up here on my break, I’ll be getting up to speed on wrenching and working a quick program to get ready for Iron Dog.”

Larry Levine said the pair will be doing lots of riding, and have already started their gym workouts.

“Getting ready for this race, you get in the best shape you’ve ever been in your life and then you go out there and it becomes a struggle,” he said. “You can’t train for the beating you take, you just minimize the fatigue. You still go out there and put in 14-, 16-hour days so it’s important to be in the best shape as you can.”

Dani Levine said she is eager to finally have her Iron Dog dreams come true, and while she may have had to put the goal off in favor of school, the timing may just have worked out well.

“Now it’s coming full circle,” she said. “When my dad and I talked about (racing Iron Dog) when I was graduating from high school, I was a much better rider than he was at the time. It would’ve been a stretch then just for me, let alone both of us as rookies. Now at least one of us has the experience. My dad’s riding ability has increased dramatically, and that will help us.”

Larry Levine said his goal is to have a safe, clean race – and also keep his wife’s fears for her husband’s and daughter’s safety at bay, he joked. He knows it’s going to be a new dynamic working together as race partners rather than the father-daughter relationship they already have.

“We are starting to come up with plans B, C and D so we can be as prepared as possible,” he said. “Absolutely stuff is going to go wrong, but we are expecting it and we are trying to stop and make one small fix at a time so we can be as ready as possible.”

Dani wholeheartedly agrees.

“There’s going to be conflicts and there’s going to be times when we’re not happy with each other, but we have different roles and need to keep a calm head, hopefully a little preemptive thinking about that will help us deal with situations as they arise.”

As for how they place in this year’s Iron Dog? The first goal is to finish the race because the Iron Dog has proven to elude even the most experienced of riders, she said.

“And the secondary goal would be a Top-10 finish,” she added. “I think if we could eke out that Top 10 that would be huge.”
Good Luck to all Iron Dog Racers!
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By MELISSA DEVAUGHN

There were a few tense moments for Chris Olds and Mike Morgan last year as they battled to their first victory together since forming Team 10 eight years ago.

But with less than a five-minute lead, the duo made it to the finish line and celebrated the win – a third championship for Olds and the first for Morgan, who’d been chasing the dream for a decade.

“This was Mike’s first win – we’ve been racing together since 2012,” Olds said. “We’d come close quite a few years, and we ran somewhat toward the front, so we were quite a few times in the hunt. But still, there were little things that kept us from the win.”

Olds and Morgan piloted their Polaris Indy XC 600s to victory with a course time of 36 hours, 54 minutes and 49 seconds. That 4-minute margin for the win gave them just enough time to take off their helmets, catch their breath and hug their family and supporters at the finish line.

Cutting it close during Iron Dog 2018

Olds recalls third win, and some fun facts about the ‘world’s longest, toughest snowmobile race’

“This was Mike’s first win – we’ve been racing together since 2012,” Olds said. “We’d come close quite a few years, and we ran somewhat toward the front, so we were quite a few times in the hunt. But still, there were little things that kept us from the win.”

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"We did what we planned on doing in the beginning, trying to run a nice, clean race," Olds said. "We had a few small machine issues at the end that took us some time, but we were able to keep ahead of everyone else and hold on for the win."

The rest of the racers were not far behind. A second-place finish for Robby Schachle, 32, of Big Lake, and Brad George, 25, of Wasilla, did not come as challenge-free as Team 10’s race. While they often had Olds and Morgan in their sights, the pair of veteran racers battled for every minute of their 36 hours, 59 minutes and 2 seconds race, encountering mechanical problems, weather challenges and even running out of gas at one point.

Still, they were able to hold off third-place finishers Todd Minnick, 39, and Nick Olstad, 36, two veteran racers who are no strangers to victory. Minnick won the race in 2009 and 2014, and Olstad notched wins in 2005, 2009 and 2014. Their time of 37 hours, 3 minutes and 23 seconds put them more than 22 minutes ahead of the fourth-place team.

A CLEAN RACE

The 2018 race returned to its roots last year, with the elimination of the Anchorage ceremonial start, and the first day of racing starting in Big Lake, as it used to. Overall, racers experienced favorable conditions, but lots of deep snow meant the leaders had to break trail – which adds to the already exhausting work of riding at speeds in the 100 mph range for days on end.

Leaving the Big Lake starting chute in two-minute intervals, teams battled against brutal swamps, deep snow, thin river ice and the clock. Winding their way through Southcentral mountain passes, they broke out into the broader swaths of the Interior and the ultra-fast river corridors.

"The race changes from a physical race to more of a mental race," Olds said. "You’re going at really high speeds and looking ahead to try and keep things together."

The first racers to drop out were George Mountain and Kelly Sommer, just 160 miles or so from the start. A mechanical issue ended their race (but they’re back this year to try again).

And, as the racers made their way to the northwest, the casualties kept coming. Next to leave the competition was Aaron Bartel and Tre West, in Ophir, due to an injury; then came Team 34 racers Christopher Collins and Lawrence Jones, a team out of Ambler and Kotzebue who experienced mechanical and electrical problems that ended their race in Galena.

In the end, mechanical problems ended the race for two other teams (Team 22, Rachel Kidwell and Ashley Wood in Kaltag; and Team 20, Scott Faeo and Chad Gueco in Tanana), but the race continued, with 21 teams still in the hunt.

That, in a nutshell, is what makes the race such a challenge, said John Woodbury, Iron Dog’s executive director. No matter how much one prepares, there are always unforeseen events – whether it’s injury, weather, mechanical breakdowns – it doesn’t matter. Iron Dog levels the playing field.

“There are a very few true Alaska legacy events, and Iron Dog holds one of those coveted spots,” he said. “There simply is no other event like it in the world. This is an event where you can go 100 mph for an hour. This is an event where you can skip for hundreds of yards over an open ocean, and you do it because you absolutely have no other alternative. This is a race that will bring you to tears — of joy, of fear, or pain. I’ve only been a Trail Class rider, and it was the most intense winter excursion I’ve ever done. It really does take a unique individual to race this thing.”

As for Trail Class riders, they end their ride in Nome. The Pro Class worked on necessary repairs then headed back out 24 hours later to the Fairbanks finish. The ever-changing coastal route along Norton Sound was a fast-paced challenge as they raced back toward the interior.

"The coast is similar to the fast rivers, but it can fluctuate so much from year to year," Olds said. "One year, or even one week, it can be smooth and almost no different from the rivers. Other times, even as little as a week later, it can be like jumping over concrete curbs. It is always changing."

Those new to the race received their education, no matter where they placed.

Rookie of the Year status went to the 11th-place finishing team, Andy Gocke and Zach Weisz, from Willow and Wasilla, respectively. The two finished their race in 42 hours, 35 minutes and 48 seconds, more than five hours behind the winners, but more than...
TOMMY GERMANY

Tommy Germany (at left, with wife Sheryl) and Jacob Evans (at right, with girlfriend Stephanie Johnson) were Iron Dog 2018’s Red Lantern award winners.

22 hours ahead of Red Lantern riders Jacob Evans of Anchorage and Tommy Germany of Palos Heights, Ill., also rookies.

Germany chanced upon the opportunity to run the race in a swimming pool while on vacation, after meeting a friend of a friend who wanted to race Iron Dog himself. He jumped at the chance, and sight unseen flew to Alaska to meet with his soon-to-be partner, Evans. Evans, an Alaskan, had the know-how to get the sleds prepped and educate Germany on racing logistics.

“It was an experience of a lifetime,” said Germany. “I said I’d never do it again; and now I’m thinking about doing it again next year.”

Germany said he made many mistakes along the way — “Jake’s a good guy, he put up with a lot of things — I’d get stuck and he’d help me out. He built the sleds, and we ran hard. If it wouldn’t have been for him, we wouldn’t have made it.”

But he also learned a great deal too — Alaska sealed a special place in his heart.

“All the people are awesome, every village, everywhere, they are all awesome,” he said.

This year, his company, Tri State Disposal, which is a garbage company that serves the Chicago area, is awarding $1,000 to the first team to scratch after leaving the checkpoint in Deshka Landing — mostly because he just feels sorry for the people who invest so much money and time into the race only to have their dreams crushed by a broken rib or crashed sled so soon into the race. And he’s also going to award $5,000 to the team that accumulates the most miles between the start and finish, because those are the ones who quite literally follow the trail markers.

“There’s 2,031 miles, and there’s a lot of short cut — Rainy Pass is one — where you go left instead of right and you save time,” he said. “It’s not cheating, it’s just knowing the lay of the land. But as a rookie, you don’t know that.”

Despite the last-place finish, Germany was happy with the race — and most important, the experience.

“It was really an experience,” he said. “I might just have to do it again.”

AN HISTORIC PAST

The first Iron Dog event started in 1984, in Big Lake following the northern route of the Historic Iditarod Trail to Nome. The event began as the “Iron Dog Iditarod,” but the name was quickly changed the next year to the “Gold Rush Classic,” to also honor the state’s Gold Rush past. In 1990 the race was organized as the “Iron Dog Gold Rush Classic” and that name stuck for a decade until Tesoro Corp. became a title sponsor. In 2008, the Alaska National Guard became a top sponsor and top supporter. The 2019 Iron Dog enjoys a strong presence in awareness, attendance and participation by more than 20 communities across Alaska.

BRING ON THE CROWDS

In 2015, Iron Dog made one of its most significant changes since the race’s inception by adding a ceremonial race start on the streets of Downtown Anchorage. This move not only brought more attention to the already-growing race, but also offered winter residents a chance to get out and enjoy the race excitement right outside their doors.

However, in 2018, the race returned to its roots, with the official start line on Big Lake. While the pomp and circumstance of Anchorage was a festive event, the racers seem to like the convenience of the wide-open staging area — and, since it’s literally the back yard for so many riders in this race, the quick commute doesn’t hurt either.

The 2019 start moves to Deshka Landing, Mile 70.5 of the Parks Highway, due to safety concerns.

This year, too, the race will end in familiar territory, with the finish line staged just in front of Pike’s Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. With the return to this location, spectators will better be able to stay warm with a meal or cup of hot chocolate inside, as they watch on the racers to arrive on the Chena River. Organizers are already planning on a busy weekend ahead as the weary racers make their way to the finish line and a well-earned nap.

PLAY BY THE RULES

The most important and often misunderstood rule Iron Dog teams must abide by is that racers are not allowed to accept parts or assistance from bystanders outside of checkpoints. Racers are not allowed to have anyone touch their snowmachines, except when in Nome, where under the watchful eye of race marshals they may have two others assist during work time in the Nome City garage.

The reason is simple: To level the playing field for teams that cannot afford to have their own chase aircraft or similar advantages dictated by a larger budget.

Another rule, added in 2015, requires all riders to refuel using only fuel provided by Iron Dog at specific checkpoints. This keeps well-funded teams from setting up their own fueling stations to avoid having to stop in the official checkpoints in an effort to shave time off their stops.

The complete rules can be found at irondog.org.

The great beyond

AT JUST LESS THAN 2,000 MILES, Iron Dog teams will be racing within or through some 52,100-plus individual square acres of wilderness.

For those who are more accustomed to living and traveling in the Lower 48, the Iron Dog course is roughly the distance from New York City to Phoenix, Miami to Denver, or Seattle to Chicago. For those with a European or Asian reference of distance, how would you like to race from Liverpool, England, to Moscow, Russia, or Vienna, Austria, to Mosul, Iraq, through nothing but wilderness?
Father-and-son duo Scott Davis and Cory Davis get some last-minute advice before heading back out on the Iron Dog trail.

BREAK A LEG
Fortunately, Iron Dog has not experienced a fatality directly related to the Iron Dog race. There have been several close calls and traumatic injuries over the years, but so far everyone has survived and recovered. Most recently, in 2013 Tyler Huntington was on a training run and hit some driftwood along the coast while riding at more than 75 mph. He fractured his pelvis. In the last couple of years there’ve been a few wrecks with lacerated spleens, punctured livers, broken wrists and ankles … and the most common injury of severe frostbite. It’s a tough race and the competition is fierce, so bumps and bruises come with the 2,000-mile territory.

PIMP THE RIDE
The most common sled modification is focused on suspension. Iron Dog is a long race and conditions can be brutal. Add to the fact that racers are required to take certain gear, the added weight only adds to the abuse on the suspension. Second to suspension is the need for additional fuel, so nearly every Pro Class snowmachine will have some kind of auxiliary fuel tank system to compensate for speed, distance and conditions that impact fuel consumption. As Chris Olds is known for saying, “a slow ride beats a fast walk every time.”

THE BESTS AND FIRSTS
The first Iron Dog was known as the Iditarod Iron Dog Classic, ended in Nome, and was won by John Faeo and Rod Frank riding Polaris with a time of 23 hours and 50 minutes.

John Faeo and Scott Davis are tied for the most wins with seven each and they never once rode together.
Northern Air Cargo has been providing continuous support to Iron Dog since the beginning. That’s now 36-plus years of service.
In 1987, the first woman to enter the race, noncompetitively, was Melissa Lyman who raced alongside her husband, Doug.
In 1990, Bill and Doreen Long were the first husband and wife team to race competitively.
In 2003 the race was cancelled for the first time due to warm weather and poor conditions.
In 2015 Yamaha was the only manufacturer to have every sled that started the race also finish the race.

By the numbers

PAST CHAMPS
Over the 35-year history of the Iron Dog, 28 different riders have won the event – 15 have multiple titles, 13 have won only once. There are now two second-generation family names with a championship title, Scott Faeo won the race with Eric Quam in 2015. Scott’s father John Faeo and Scott Davis are tied with the most victories. And in 2017 Cory Davis won with Ryan Simons. Simons is the only non-Alaskan to win. No all-rookie team has won since the first race when all racers were rookies. Nick Olstad, three-time champion, is the only rookie to cross the finish line in first place, when he won in 2005 with Marc McKenna. Only one all-ladies team has finished, Jackie Page and Missy McClurg in 2001. The third woman to complete the Pro Class, finishing in downtown Fairbanks, was Jana Pevan-Peterson in 2012.

FB: ................................. 7
John Davis ................................................................. 7
Dan Zipay................................................................. 5
Dusty Van Meter .................................................... 5
Mark Carr ................................................................. 4
Todd Palin ................................................................. 4
Marc McKenna ......................................................... 4
Bob Gilman ................................................................. 3
Nick Olstad ................................................................. 3
Todd Minnick ............................................................. 2
Evan Booth ................................................................. 2
Dwayne Drake ............................................................ 2
Tyler Huntington ..................................................... 2
Chris Olds ................................................................. 3
Eric Quam ................................................................. 2
Tracey Brassard ........................................................ 1
Gary Eoff ................................................................. 1
Rod Frank ................................................................. 1
Ken Lee ................................................................. 1
Andy George ............................................................. 1
Bill Long ................................................................. 1
Mark Torkelson ........................................................ 1
Scott Faeo ............................................................... 1
Tyler Aklestad .......................................................... 1
Tyson Johnson .......................................................... 1
Cory Davis ............................................................... 1
Ryan Simons ............................................................ 1
Mike Morgan ........................................................... 1

BRAND WINS
The four major manufacturers, Polaris, Arctic Cat, Yamaha and Ski-Doo, are generally represented each year, and all manufacturers have enjoyed victories. This year’s race does not include any Yamaha racers. Here is the breakdown of past brand wins:
- 17 wins on Polaris
- 11 wins on Arctic Cat
- 3 wins on Yamaha
- 4 wins on Ski-Doo
ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Arctic Cat (Top Sponsor), Team Arctic Alaska, Donlin Gold, Anchorage Suzuki Arctic Cat, Prop Shop, Inc., Anchorage Sheet Metal, Northern Powerline Construction, Specialty Track & Auto, KiM, Fine Line Interiors, Yukon Equipment, Ditch Witch, Lynden Air Cargo

STEVEN BONEY

AGE: 38 / FROM: Bethel
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Arctic Cat ZR 6000 R XC
RACE HISTORY: 2012-15: Finished, 2016: DNF.

BIO: I was born and raised in Bethel and have been a Yamaha snowmobile mechanic for 22 years. I’ve been a private pilot for 12 years. I have a loving and supportive wife, Dolly, and three awesome girls, Brittney, 20, Payton, 13, and Riley, 9. I enjoy being with my family, jet-boat ing, flying and hunting, and riding snowmobiles. My father and I own and operate the Prop Shop, a full-line powersports dealer.


Personal Sponsors: Wife, Dolly, and kids, Brittney, Payton, Riley; my father, Craig; Oliver Urhut, Blaine Elliot, Ozzie, Doug Dixon, Keith Mantenach, Steve Spence, Andrew Smith, and all the others who help along the way.

OLIVER UNRUH

AGE: 49 / FROM: Anchorage
STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Yamaha SP Viper R-TX LE
RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: After helping some friends with this race for a couple of years, I jumped at the opportunity to actually participate. I have raced motorcycles a bit, but relatively new to sled racing.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None.

Personal Sponsors: Anchorage Yamaha, Doug and the crew at FineLine, Steve Spence, Bill Buck, Repairs Unlimited LLC, and of course my wife, Shelly.

SKI-DOO


BEN MEBS

AGE: 37 / FROM: Wasilla
STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ-600 X-RS
RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I am a born and raised Alaskan. I am employed with Electric Power Constructors as a journeyman power lineman. I am married to Annie, and we have three children – Jack, Dylan and Tess and two ridiculous bulldogs. I enjoy spending time with my family, while hunting, fishing, trapping, playing at our cabin and taking in all that Alaska has to offer.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None.

Personal Sponsors: Annie, Jack, Dylan, Tess my family and friends for all the help and support.

DANIEL THIBAULT

AGE: 35 / FROM: Anchorage
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ-600 XRS

BIO: I’ve lived in Alaska my entire life. My wife, Katie, and I have two children Ashlyn, 14, and Ellie, 11. I enjoy spending time with my friends and family riding RZRs all over our great state every summer, and snowmobiling with the family in Petersville during the winter.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog finisher, 2007 and 2016; K150, K200, Mayor’s Cup, Trapper Creek 200, first place; Arctic Man, 10th men’s ski.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, kids and team 16 for helping us this season. I would also like to thank Detrich Nikolai and his wife for all of their hospitality in McGrath.

POLARIS


STEVEN BONEY

AGE: 26 / FROM: Willow
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC
RACE HISTORY: 2015-2016: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Alaska. I currently live in Willow with my wife, Shana, where we spend our free time riding sleds, dirt bikes and hunting with friends and family. I work for Alaska Directional as a drill operator. This will be my third Iron Dog race.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Mayor’s Cup: 2012, semi-pro first place; Mayor’s Cup: 2014, pro fourth place, Willow XC: 2013, pro first place.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Shana, Weisz family, Barber family and all our other friends and family who supports us.

OLIVER UNRUH

AGE: 49 / FROM: Anchorage
STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Yamaha SP Viper R-TX LE
RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: After helping some friends with this race for a couple of years, I jumped at the opportunity to actually participate. I have raced motorcycles a bit, but relatively new to sled racing.

RACING EXPERIENCE: None.

Personal Sponsors: Anchorage Yamaha, Doug and the crew at FineLine, Steve Spence, Bill Buck, Repairs Unlimited LLC, and of course my wife, Shelly.

ZACK WEISZ

AGE: 25 / FROM: Wasilla
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC
RACE HISTORY: Finished, 2018

BIO: Zack is a lifelong Alaskan living in Wasilla. He works for Three Bears Alaska and is a third-generation worker. Zack enjoys the vast outdoors Alaska has to offer. You can find him having fun with friends or enjoying time with family.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2018, 11th place, top-finishing rookie team; 2017 Big Lake 500 first place; 2017 Alyeska Motor Madness XC, second place; 2015 AMMC, second place season points; 2015 Arctic Man XC, first place; 2014 Mayor’s Cup, first place semi-pro, 2014 Alyeska Motor Madness XC, first place.

Personal Sponsors: Three Bears Alaska Inc., Fly Racing, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Polars Racing, Innergy, Alaska Spiritwear, Tom Whitstone, Barber family and I would like to give a big thanks to my parents and all my friends and family.

BRAD GEORGE

AGE: 24 / FROM: Wasilla
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS
RACE HISTORY: 2013-2016: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Wasilla, and my fiancé, Chelsea, and I have two kids – Nelli and Oden. I’m a heavy equipment operator for Western Construction and Equipment. In the summer if I’m not working I’m on the river. In the winter if I’m not working I’m on my sled.

RACING EXPERIENCE: K-150, 2013-2014, first place; Larry Heel, 2012-13, second place; 2014, first place, Nome-Golovin 2013, first place; 2014, fourth place; Mayor’s Cup 2015, second place, Ice Cross 2015, second place.


FINAL ROLL CALL
ADAM DRINKHOUSE

**AGE:** 34  
**FROM:** Wasilla

**STATUS:** Rookie  
**RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

**RACE HISTORY:** None

**BIO:** I was raised like most Alaskans — grew up hunting and fishing with my family and motorsports with my dad. Now with my awesome wife, Hollie, son and daughter Gavin and Rohne, we do the same.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** None

Personal Sponsors: Number 1, my wife and family; Koxey Cronquist; Danny Guoco, Ben and Chelseae Parker, Jared and Cassie Ewing, Doug and Colleen Carter, Alaska Fuel Systems; 18 E.W Local 1947; KJM; Lone Pine Fabrication; Weld Air Alaska; Team CC, Alaska Line Builders

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TYLER AKLESTAD

**AGE:** 33  
**FROM:** Palmer

**STATUS:** Veteran  
**RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

**RACE HISTORY:** 2007: Finished; 2009: Finished; 2012: Finished; 2013: Finished; 2016: first place

**BIO:** I was born and raised in Alaska and love the outdoors. I enjoy flying, fishing, hunting and dirt biking. I also enjoy spending time with my amazing wife, Erin, and sons Liam and Finn. I work for MTA as an IBEW journeyman cable splicer.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** Arctic Man 2014, first place; 2013, first place; 2012, first place; 2011, first place; 2008, first place.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Erin; Koxey and Barbara Cronquist, Keith Mantenach, Eric and Shan Johnson.

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TYSON JOHNSON

**AGE:** 39  
**FROM:** Eagle River

**STATUS:** Veteran  
**RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS


**BIO:** I have been racing Iron Dog since I was 17 years old with this year’s race being my 20th entry. I work for H&K Sheetmetal Fabricators as a journeyman sheet metal fabricator. I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, welding, hanging out with my wife, Alexis, and son Rowan, and pretty much anything that involves the outdoors.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** Iron Dog, including three, second-place finishes and my first win in 2016. I have seven Arctic Man wins (five in ski, two in snowboard). Mayor’s Cup, three wins; K150, four wins; and many other wins and Top 3s in all venues of sled racing.

Personal Sponsors: Special thanks to my wife, Alexis, son, Rowan, and new baby girl Ellie; Koxey and Bark Cronquist, Eric and Shan Johnson, our pilot Keith Mantenach and crew chief Steve Spence and Johnny Thunder, and all of our other friends and family who help support us.

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POLARIS

**Sponsors:** Polaris Industries (Top Sponsor), Polaris Engineered Lubricants, Walker Evans Racing, Eagle River Polaris/AC, UA Local 367 Plumbers & Pipefitters Union, Stan Morgan-Ever Pilot, G-Tracking, Northern Powerline Constructors Inc., Northern Air Cargo, Total Truck & Accessories, Alaska Industrial X-Ray, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Fine Line Interiors, Bering Air, Starting Line Products, Velocity Sled Performance & Original Signs, Tri Jet Manufacturing Services, Rugged Radics, Morgan Enterprises, Stud Boy Traction Products, PowerMadd, Northern Solutions, United Rentals, Allie Body Shop, Nitro Trailers, Ginny Emmons, Mcaul Straughn, Jeremy Hanson, Christine Olds, Christy Hedrick, Marcy Magnuson & Sweepea in McGrath, Barkey Ansellment, Butch and Elizabeth Captain in Ruby, Esmailkas in Katig, Aggie Ketagon in Unalakleet

MIKE MORGAN

**AGE:** 43  
**FROM:** Nome

**STATUS:** Veteran  
**RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC


**BIO:** I was born and raised in Nome and currently reside in Anchorage, having spent all of my 33 years in Alaska. I enjoy hiking, hunting, fishing, traveling, biking, riding and racing snowmobiles and hanging out with friends and family. I work as a welder out of the UA Local 367 Plumbers & Pipefitters Union. This will be my 10th Iron Dog race and eighth with current teammate Chris Olds.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** Four Nome-Golovin wins including a win in 2018; four Kotzebue race wins; six Top 5s in Iron Dog.

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CHRIS OLDS

**AGE:** 47  
**FROM:** Eagle River

**STATUS:** Veteran  
**RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC


**BIO:** I am a 35-year Alaskan married to Christine with two children, Halay and Mya. I work for UIC Construc- tion as a project manager. I enjoy hunting, fishing, four-wheeling, dirt bikes, mountain bikes and hanging with family. I have been racing snowmobiles since 1998.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** First place K-400; numerous Top 3 finishes in Hillichill, Hillcross, Cross Country and Snowcross. 15 Top 10 and 12 Top 5 finishes in the Iron Dog.

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KENNETH KLEEWEIN

**AGE:** 28  
**FROM:** Willow

**STATUS:** Veteran  
**RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC

**RACE HISTORY:** 2019: Finished

**BIO:** Kenneth (Kenny) Kleewein II is a lifelong Alaskan, raised in Willow. Kenny has spent most of his life riding anything with a motor. Racing has been a huge part of his life growing up riding four-wheelers and then racing snowmobiles with Alaska Motor Mushers Club (AMMC). He is a second-generation racer after his dad, Kenny Kleewein. When not riding Kenny enjoys spending time with his beautiful wife, Kirsten, and his son, Kenneth Kleewein III, and daughter, Bellamy.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** AMMC semi-pro Triple Crown: 2015, first place; AMMC pro class Champion: 2016; AMMC Big Lake 500: 2017, third place; AMMC Mat-Su Resort 100: 2018, second place; AMMC Larry Heal Memorial Race 500: 2018, first place.

Personal Sponsors: My amazing wife, Kirsten, for giving me the opportunity to pursue this dream and supporting our family during the long nights and weekends preparing for this great race. Also, I send a special thank-you to my mom and dad for not only being very supportive, but also helping with preparations. I am also very grateful for my dad for not only being very supportive, but also providing his wealth of knowledge of the Iron Dog.
KRUZ KLEWEIN

AGE: 23 / FROM: Willow

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2018: Finished

BIO: Kruz is a born and raised Alaskan from Willow. He has always shared a love with anything with a motor such as snowmobiles, stand-up jet skis, dirt bikes and four-wheelers. He’s a big fan of any kind of racing and loves being outdoors, going fishing, playing basketball, hockey and golf. He currently works as an apprentice power linerman for the IBEW.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Big Lake 150: 2013, first place semi pro; AMMC championship: 2016, third overall Pro Class; Big Lake 500: 2017, third place.

Personal Sponsors: My mom and dad for all their support, the whole Taylor family for everything they do; and my girlfriend, Amanda, for all her love and support.

CASEY BOYLAN

AGE: 24 / FROM: Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

RACE HISTORY: 2017-2018: Finished

BIO: Casey was born and raised in Anchorage and has been racing snowmachines for 14 years, six of them out of state at a national level.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2010 ISOC national sport super stock first-, second- and third place; 2011 podiumed every national after returning from a knee injury; 2012 pro lite ISOC regional champion; 2012 pro lite ISOC national multiple Top 5 finishes; 2013 pro stock ISOC regional champion; 2013 pro lite ISOC national multiple Top 5 finishes & Top 10 year-end points; 2014 pro lite ISOC national heat race wins, Top 5 main event finishes; 2014 Arctic Man men’s snowboard win; 2015 Mayor’s Cup cross country pro class win; 2017 Iron Dog sixth-place finish rookie year; 2017 Mayor’s Cup third-place pro class; 2017 Skwentena 200, second place; 2018 Iron Dog fifth place; 2018 Mayor’s Cup first place.


BRYAN LESLIE

AGE: 25 / FROM: Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ XRS

RACE HISTORY: 2017-2018: Finished

BIO: I love to ride or be in anything with a motor. I have raced quads and dirt bike and have won multiple state and city championships. I also enjoy being with family, fishing, camping and really anything to do with the outdoors.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2015 AMMC semi-pro champ; 2015 Larry Heal first place; 2015 Arctic Man Ice-X, first place; 2017 Iron Dog, sixth place.

Personal Sponsors: Team CC, Skidoo, AK Frost, Stan James, Statewide Door and Glass, Carlisle, Big State Concrete Coating LLC, Lonepine Fabricators, A2D Sledworks, Alaska Snowmobile Salvage, Alaska LED, Alaska House of Yamaha, Boehmter services, UJ’s Lounge, Boylan Boys Racing, Leslie Racing, Jon McDonald, Bill Bishop, Ben Cruz, Eric Wansor, friends and family.

MICAH HUSS

AGE: 43 / FROM: Big Lake

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Arctic Cat ZR 6000 XC

RACE HISTORY: 2017: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I’ve been racing cross-country snowmobiles for the past 25 years, winning numerous races throughout the years. I’m manager/owner of Team Arctic Alaska race team for Arctic Cat, and equipment manager for Bering Straits Native Corp. I enjoy all powersports, working on engines, helping others, being outdoors, working out and spending time with family and friends.


Personal Sponsors: Howard Gregg and family; Archie Evrin; Ronnie, Ayden and Karlin Huss; Iris Weeler; Tony and Lisa Haugen; Amos Cruise; George Greene and family; Dennis, Davis, Leon Shellbarger, Cindy Kottke; and Sarah and David Forbes.

WESLEY SELBY

AGE: 33 / FROM: Grand Lake, Colo.

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Arctic Cat Sno Pro XC

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: I’m a cross-country racer currently living in Thief River Falls, Minn. During the off season, I work for Arctic Cat snowmobiles on the race-sled development program. During my free time, I enjoy riding motorcycles, restoring A and B body mopars, hunting, mountain biking, and jet skiing.


TODD MINNICK

AGE: 39 / FROM: Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS


BIO: Todd was born and raised in Alaska. Todd is a foreman at Big Dipper Construction. He has been racing snowmachines most of his life. Todd has a beautiful wife named Sharilyn and has two children, Emma and Canyon, who are the light of his life. Todd enjoys adventuring at the cabin, hunting, fishing and exploring with his family.
NICK OLSTAD

**AGE:** 36 / **FROM:** Wasilla
**STATUS:** Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS 600

**RACE HISTORY:**

**BIO:** Nick is a longtime Alaskan who enjoys the outdoors. When not working at Andeavor Construction, he’s spending time with wife, Brianne, daughter, Kaia, and son, Jackson. Nick loves to be out riding his side-by-side in the summer, and snowmachines until the snow is gone. This will be Nick’s 14th time racing Iron Dog.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:**

Personal Sponsors: Brianne, Kaia and Jackson Olstad

POWERSPORTS

**Riding Experience:**

**Racing Experience:**
- 2008 Big Lake 500 Grand Prix, first place; 2008 Thunder Bay 200

**Personal Sponsors:**

**Racing Experience:**
- 2005: first place, 2009: first place, 2011: second place; 2013 Larry Heal Memorial 150 first place; 2012 Big Lake 150 first place

**Personal Sponsors:**
- My parents John and Vicki, and brother John Faedo; also my amazing girlfriend, Rebecca; Bad Grammar, New Horizons, IBEW 1547, Canyon Lake Lodge, Swanson Steel, Motorfist, Fox Racing, Dr. Haggerty, Stud Boy Traction, Heli Alaska, Marc and Deanne, Dick and Jennie, Luff Orthodontics, International Aviation, Northern Quality Homes, Deans Auto, GMC Contracting, Summit Farms, Gexpm, Rock Solid Pile Company, General Constructors, Mike Grow, Perfect Start Espresso, Chad and Hannah Wiehe.

**Racing Experience:**
- 2013 Alyeska Motor Madness XC, first place; 2013 Valdez Mayor’s Cup XC, third place, 2012 Eureka 100 XC, first place; 2011 Valdez Mayor’s Cup, first place; 2011 Eureka 100 XC, second place; 2009 Ada, MN 100 XC, sixth place; 2009 Red Lake 500 MN XC, sixth place; 2008 Valdez Mayors’ Cup, third place; 2008 Big Lake 500 Grand Prix, first place; 2008 Thunder Bay 200 Enduro MI, first place; 2008 Alpina 300 Enduro MI, first place; 2004-2010 Soo 1-500 MI, first, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and 12th; 2007 Eagle River World Championship, first place

**Personal Sponsors:**
- Carlson Energy LLC, Team, Alaska Spine Institute, Billa Distributing, Projekt 907, Motorfist, Fox Shox, Trail Tank, Well Solutions Inc., StudBoy Traction, Quicks Racing, Grip-N-Rip, my family, FineLine Interiors, Alaska Comprehensive Dental, Body Renew, AK LED Industries, Independent Lift Truck, Rain Proof Roofing, Multibusters Car Wash, Independent Lift Truck of Alaska and a special thanks to Korey Cronquist and a big shout out to my father Danny Gueco – it would not be possible without any of you.
**Nicholas Reader**

**Age:** 26 / **From:** Nome  
**Status:** Rookie / **Riding:** Polaris Indy  
**Race History:** None  
**Bio:** I was born and raised here in Nome, along with my second home of McGrath. I’m your typical Alaskan who loves the great outdoors when it comes to hunting, fishing, camping, along with riding ATVs/snowmobiles. I work as an operator for Q-Trucking Co.


**Racing Experience:** Triathlon: 2013, 1st place; 2014, 3rd place.

**Racing Experience:** 2018: 15th place, Iron Dog.


**Racing Experience:** 2019 Iron Dog with my dad.

**Bio:** I am a lifelong Alaskan born in raised in Fairbanks. I grew up riding snowmobiles every weekend throughout the winters with my family and have been addicted to it ever since.

**Sponsors:** Donlin Gold (Top Sponsor), Knik Construction, O Trucking, Alaska Air Transit, KJUM, Stud Boy Racing, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Charlie Reader.

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**Robert Masson**

**Age:** 39 / **From:** Fairbanks  
**Status:** Veteran / **Riding:** Polaris Indy XC  
**Race History:** 2018: Finished  
**Bio:** I am a lifelong Alaskan born in raised in Fairbanks. I grew up riding snowmobiles every weekend throughout the winters with my family and have been addicted to it ever since.


**Personal Sponsors:** Rodney Masson, my children, Lisa Bishop, my friends and family.

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**Ivar Carlson**

**Age:** 36 / **From:** Fairbanks  
**Status:** Veteran / **Riding:** Polaris XC 600  
**Race History:** 2018: Finished  
**Bio:** I was born and raised in Fairbanks. I currently live in Anchorage, but work for a Fairbanks-based company, Slayden Plumbing and Heating, as a certified pipe and structural welder. When I’m not working out of town, I am still working it seems, always trying to be innovative, thinking and coming up with new ideas for custom fabrication I enjoy hanging out with my beautiful 4-year-old daughter, Winter Rose. I grew up doing in the ‘90s, snowboarding, snowmobiling and BMX freestyle, all that was short lived when I discovered snowmobiles. I found myself doing freestyle and racing snowcross, making a name for myself being known to taking sleds to a whole new level. I’d like to thank all my friends and family who support my expensive habit.


**Personal Sponsors:** Bikeman Performance, ZBROZ Racing, KJUM, INDY Specialty, Innovative Designs LLC, Polaris Outpost, Advanced Powder Coating, AZO Motorsports, Southside Strength and Fitness, Zoller Racing Products.

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**Larry Levine**

**Age:** 55 / **From:** Anchorage  
**Status:** Veteran / **Riding:** Polaris Switchback XCR SC Select  
**Race History:** 2015: DNF; 2016: Finished; 2018: Finished  
**Bio:** I was born and raised in Anchorage and am practicing medicine in Alaska following training beginning in 1995. Started riding snowmachines around the age of 6 and began racing Arctic Man and AMMC cross-country races at 14. I was unable to race Iron Dog in 2013 and I’m excited to be called up short notice to compete in the 2019 Iron Dog with my dad.

**Racing Experience:** Arctic Man: 2012, first place women’s snowboard and second place women’s ski; 2011, second place women’s snowboard; 2012 AMMC Cross Country Series Overall: women pro, first place; men semi-pro, second place.

**Personal Sponsors:** Alaska Spine Institute, DNF, KJUM, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Northern Solutions, Spernak and Son, Woody’s Traction Products, White Spruce Trailers, Complete Concepts Automotive.

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**Daniele Levine**

**Age:** 24 / **From:** Anchorage  
**Status:** Rookie / **Riding:** Polaris Switchback XCR SC  
**Race History:** None  
**Bio:** I grew up in Anchorage, and currently am a mechanical engineering student at the University of Nevada, Reno. I started riding snowmachines around the age of 6 and began racing Arctic Man and AMMC cross-country races at 14. I was unable to race Iron Dog in 2013 and I’m excited to be called up short notice to compete in the 2019 Iron Dog with my dad.

**Racing Experience:** Arctic Man: 2012, first place women’s snowboard and second place women’s ski; 2011, second place women’s snowboard; 2012 AMMC Cross Country Series Overall: women pro, first place; men semi-pro, second place.

**Personal Sponsors:** Alaska Spine Institute, DNF, KJUM, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Northern Solutions, Spernak and Son, Woody’s Traction Products, White Spruce Trailers, Complete Concepts Automotive.

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**Polaris**

**ARCTIC CAT**

Sponsors: Team Arctic Cat (Top Sponsor), RMO Real Estate Network/Keller Williams, Big Boys Toys Storage, Heatsource Mechanical, First Rate Financial, John Aadland/County Insurance, Putco Brothers Construction, Master Auto, Innovative Off Road - Vision X, Grip-N-Rip Racing, Lone Pine Fabrication, 139 Designs.

**KYLE CONNER**

**AGE:** 28 / FROM: Willow

**STATUS:** Veteran / RIDING: Arctic Cat ZR 6000 1 R XC

**RACE HISTORY:** 2014: Finished; 2015: Finished; 2016: Finished

**BIO:** Kyle is a lifelong Alaskan, raised in Willow. He has spent most of his life snowmachining at Hatcher’s Pass during the winters and hunting or fishing in the summers. His teenage years were spent racing snowcross, putting his sled back together after races, and outriding his brothers. More recently, he completed both the 2014 and 2015 Iron Dog with 13th place finishes and the 2016 Iron Dog in 10th place, 2017 DNF. He’s raced Arctic Man for the last five years and a few cross country races. He now resides in Palmer with his beautiful wife, Molly, and their two kids, Sage and Clark. Kyle enjoys spending time in the boat and on snowmachines with his kids and wife.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** 2014 Iron Dog, 13th place; 2015 Iron Dog, 13th place; 2016 Iron Dog, 10th place; 2017 Iron Dog, DNF.

Personal Sponsors: Molly Conner, the Lamonton Family, the Conner Family, Stonegate Storage, Drifterz Paradise, the Sprankle Family.

**BLAKE ELDER**

**AGE:** 29 / FROM: Wasilla

**STATUS:** Rookie / RIDING: Arctic Cat ZR6000XC

**RACE HISTORY:** None

**BIO:** I love all of the adventures that Alaska has to offer. My wife, Natalie, and I have two beautiful daughters and we love to go riding. I raced snow in high school and have recently enjoyed getting back into the racing world and am looking forward to the Iron Dog.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** None listed


**SKI-DOO**


**BOBBY MENNE**

**AGE:** 27 / FROM: Wasilla (via Virginia, Minn.)

**STATUS:** Veteran / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ X-RS

**RACE HISTORY:** 2016-2017: Finished

**BIO:** I’m originally from Virginia, Minnesota, a small town in the woods of Northern Minnesota. I started racing cross country in 2007, and in 2008 I completed my first full race season. For the next 10 years I would race professionally across the Lower 48 and Canada. In 2016, I get a call that a rider had gotten hurt and someone needed to fill his shoes for Iron Dog; 36 hours later I was on the starting line in Big Lake, finishing in ninth place six days later. In 2017 I came back for another year and after the race I made the decision to move to Alaska full time. I flew to Minnesota, packed my truck and trailer, and headed north. I now work in Wasilla for H5 Construction. On the side, I run a small landscaping company doing odd jobs for extra cash to save up for winter. For 2019 we are more than excited to start our new endeavors with Ski-Doo and to have the opportunity to race the Iron Dog again. I have one goal and that is to come home with nothing less than a Top 3 for this year’s Iron Dog.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** 2017-18 1st Larry Heal Memorial, 1st Alyeska Motor Madness; 2015-2016 No. 1 qualifier at Soo I-500 (mechanical during race), 9th place Iron Dog finisher, multiple USXC pro podiums; 2014-2015 3rd place Pro 600 season points; multiple USXC pro podiums, previously 2012-2013. Soot I-500 finished third overall 2012-2013. In USXC cross-country racing finished second in Pro Open points and ninth in Pro Stock points.


**GEORGE MOUNTAIN**

**AGE:** 30 / FROM: Nulato

**STATUS:** Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Switchback XCR

**RACE HISTORY:** 2018: DNS

**BIO:** I’m George Mountain from Nulato, Alaska, always been a fan of the Iron Dog race and am happy to be here. Had a lot of fun last year racing in AF/WG, Nome-Golovin, Yukon Draajik and Tanana. Let’s give this another go and see what happens this time.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** None listed.

Personal Sponsors: Randy Kangas, Kelly Sommern, Vanessa Mountain, and numerous friends and family members.

**KELLY SOMMER**

**AGE:** 31 / FROM: Nulato

**STATUS:** Veteran / RIDING: Polaris Switchback

**RACE HISTORY:** 2012: Finished

**BIO:** I like to race snowmachines, and I grew up in Nulato and have lived in Galena and Fairbanks. I had a lot of fun racing last year in Iron Dog and Tanana 140 and Kotz AF/WG. This will be my third Iron Dog. Thanks to Randy Kangas, Troy and Bobby for all the advice, Marvin for all the help, and George Demoski for help in the garage.

**RACING EXPERIENCE:** Tanana 140 finished, Kotz AF/WG finished.

Personal Sponsors: Randy Kangas, George Demoski, Cozy Mountain.
Michael Oliver

**Age:** 32 / **From:** Nome

**Status:** Rookie / **Riding:** Polaris Indy XC 600

**Race History:** None

**Bio:** I was born and raised in Nome and for the last 12 years I have been racing as a Diesel Mechanic for Chevorlet of South Anchorage. In my free time, I enjoy fishing, hunting, camping and spending time with my friends, family, and son, Lincoln.

**Racing Experience:** None listed.

**Personal Sponsors:** Jerry Oliver, Shea Oliver, Jeri Ann Oliver, Porter and Leslie Kamun, Debert and Candy Hutchinson, Matt Tomter.

Jerrod Vaughn

**Age:** 35 / **From:** Anchorage

**Status:** Veteran / **Riding:** Polaris Indy XC


**Bio:** I’ve lived in Alaska for over 20 years and have been racing Iron Dog since 2013. Looking forward to another year of racing. Thankful my wife and kids support me doing this each year.

**Racing Experience:** None listed.

**Personal Sponsors:** Jennifer, Kenna, Austin, Rylee, Mark, & Lynne Vaughn, Damill & Shelli Knozzi, Geoff Cruise, Sarah Miller.

Shane Barber

**Age:** 44 / **From:** Willow

**Status:** Veteran / **Riding:** Polaris Indy XC


**Bio:** I am a born and raised Alaskan. I live in Willow Alaska where my wife, Tammy, and I have raised a family and learned to enjoy many aspects of what life has to offer. I enjoy the outdoors and spending time with my family and friends. I truly have been blessed and try not to take that for granted. I thank God for these things.

**Racing Experience:** Finished third three times, seventh three times, K-400 champion and never finished outside the Top 10 in Iron Dog. I have a 60-percent completion rate for Iron Dog races.

**Personal Sponsors:** My Spain family, Mom and Dad and the support from all my other friends and family. Special thanks to Ivanoffs and the West family.

Amos Cruise

**Age:** 29 / **From:** McGrath

**Status:** Rookie / **Riding:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS 600r

**Race History:** None

**Bio:** I’m a lifelong Alaskan and a longtime volunteer of the Iron Dog in McGrath and Rohn. I’ve been a gold miner for several years in Nome, but these days I’m a member of the Local 302 in Anchorage. I love everything Alaska, camping, hunting, fishing, riding and racing, but my greatest times come from time spent with my two sons, Rohn and Hayden. I’d like to thank my family and friends for all their support.

**Racing Experience:** Raced the Nome Golovin 200 nine times.

**Personal Sponsors:** Chris Cruise, Ryan and Jessica Tonseth, Jordan Miller, Joe and Terry Miller, Charley and Jennifer Reader, Misty Reader, Steve and Christine Pomrenke, Jeff and Peggy Darling, Johnny Bahnke, Dennis Bahnke, Freda Beasley, Perry Buras, Louie Stang Will Gamar, John John Schaefter, Danny Gueco, Big Joe Fullwood, Stacey Green and all the Iron Dog volunteers and staff.

Jarvis Miller

**Age:** 27 / **From:** Nome

**Status:** Rookie / **Riding:** Ski-Doo XRS

**Race History:** None

**Bio:** I was born and raised in Nome, where I reside with my girlfriend, Hattie, and daughter Kaia. I enjoy the outdoors including fishing, hunting, boating and racing snowmachines. I work for the State of Alaska Department of Transportation as a heavy equipment operator.

**Racing Experience:** First place Overall 2018 Nome-Golovin 200, second place 2018 Kotzebue Archie Ferguson Willie Goodwin Memorial Race; third place 2015 Nome-Golovin 200; second place 2013 Kotzebue Archie Ferguson Willie Goodwin Memorial Race; first place Open Class 2011 Nome-Golovin 200 and Rookie of the Year; and third place 2010 Nome-Golovin 200.

**Personal Sponsors:** Wilderness Ski-Doo, Johnny Bahnke RR, O Tracking, Charley and Jennifer Reader, KUM, Studboy, Jeff and Peggy Darling, VFW Nome Post # 9539, Gueco Racing, Danny Gueco, Joe and Terry Miller, Hattie Kelleer and Kaia Miller, Louie Stang, Will Gamar, Jordan Miller and Chelsea Reader, Lucas Bauman, John and Kathy Bahnke, Jerry Miller, NorthWest Gold Diggers, Misty Reader.
MICHAEL LILLEY
AGE: 34 / FROM: Tanana
STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Arctic Cat ZR 6000R XC
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: I grew up in Tanana, so it was cool to be able to watch the Iron Dog come through when I was a kid, and now to be a part of the race is awesome for me. I’ve helped good friends race in past years and always had a good time, now it’s my turn in the saddle. I’m a heavy Equipment Mechanic that works all over the state as a member of the Local 302, when I’m not working (which is rare, ha!) I like to be outside riding, hiking, fishing, hunting, hanging out with my buddies, and relaxing at home alone is nice too.
RACING EXPERIENCE: None

BARNEY ANSELMEN
AGE: 43 / FROM: Takotna
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: P Ski-Doo MXZ-XRS
BIO: I am Alaska born and raised, and live in Takotna with my wife, Misty, and our three kids, Alana, Kaden and Kainoa. I’m the owner and pilot of Magnuson Airways.
Personal Sponsors: My god, my wife, Misty, and our kids Sabrina, Alana, Kaden and Kainoa, my father and mother, and Matt Shelbourn.

THOMAS BAUMGARTNER
AGE: 39 / FROM: McGrath
STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Ski-Doo MXZ-XRS
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: I’m Alaska born and raised, and McGrath is my home. I work seasonally for DNR Forestry in McGrath and Middle Kuskokwim Electric Cooperative in the villages of Stony River, Sleetmute, Red Devil, Crooked Creek and Chuathbaluk. Outdoor adventure is in my blood.
RACING EXPERIENCE: None
Personal Sponsors: My parents, Ernie and Natalie, sister Jennifer Vanderpool (Hotel McGrath), Tamara Vanderpool, Justin and Kaelen Rosander.

ANDREW GUMLEY
AGE: 38 / FROM: Wasilla
STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC
RACE HISTORY: None
BIO: Andrew lives in Wasilla with his wife, Anne-Renee, and two children, Kailee and Jamison. The Gumley family owns a small business in Wasilla and they are grateful to be part of a growing community. Andrew endeavors to do his best in all that he does as for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is his hope that Christ will demonstrate and extend grace to others through his effort and participation in this great race.
RACING EXPERIENCE: The 2019 Iron Dog will be my first race ever.
Personal Sponsors: My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. My amazing wife and kids along with family and friends - thank you for your continued prayer and support! Walker Manufacturing, Pioneer Peak Orthopedics, Rulien + Associates, Jon Melot, Thomas Causea, and Slater Strategies.

KLINTON VANWINGERDEN
AGE: 38 / FROM: Big Lake
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC
BIO: I do my best to live my life on purpose, committed to my beautiful bride, Calli, my daughter Reese, my son Miles, family and friends, my job, but most importantly my Savior Jesus Christ. It is my desire to do my best in all I do as if doing it unto my Lord, Jesus Christ. It is a daily battle but I strive to stay focused on what I believe to be the most important matter in life: Remember the life Jesus Christ lived and demonstrated on earth, as documented in the bible, and strive hard to model my life after his example. It is my hope Christ will extend his grace through this team, our efforts and participation in this great race. We have an amazing team supporting us. Thank you to all who’ve taken an interest in our team and a very special thanks to all that have either supported and/or joined Team SonsofThunder! Please connect with us on Facebook: Iron Dog Team #49, Instagram: @sonsofthunderracing, or mewe.
RACING EXPERIENCE: Fourth place 2017 Iron Dog, second place Larry Healy Memorial.
Personal Sponsors: My beautiful wife and best friend, Calli; my children Reese and Miles for pushing me to be better, family and friends, for your continued prayers and support.

Jared Gower
Alaska Manager
O: (907) 277-4662 M: (509) 551-7390
jared@true surveysupply.com

IRON DOG 2019 / 43
### KIM BERGERON
- **Age:** 49
- **From:** Dublin, N.H.
- **Status:** Veteran
- **Riding:** Polaris Switchback Assault
- **Race History:** 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished
- **Bio:** I’m a small-business owner who volunteers at the local, state and international level to protect our rights to ride. I’m an avid wheeled enthusiast – races, hares, scrambles – and proud to be a future Alaska resident.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Bergeron Mechanical Systems, Hatcher Pass Polaris.

### DENNIS FALDDORF
- **Age:** 63
- **From:** Ketchikan
- **Status:** Veteran
- **Riding:** Polaris
- **Bio:** The 2019 run will be my seventh Trail Class ride and second ride to Nome with teammates Kim Bergeron and Rebecca Charles. The team will run with the number 60 designation. Every February the Iron Dog calls, we must answer. The 2019 run will celebrate my 55th year riding the snowmobile.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Lead Dog Helmet Light, EMC Engineering, Falddorf’s Snow and Sand Adventures, Curt’s Pit Stop.

### REBECCA CHARLES
- **Age:** 38
- **From:** Wasilla
- **Status:** Veteran
- **Riding:** Polaris Switchback XCR 600
- **Race History:** Trail Class Finishes in 2014, 2015, 2016
- **Bio:** I am looking forward to riding with two great teammates, seeing old friends along the way, and to encountering more memorable challenges on the way to Nome.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Kim, Big Lake Powersports, friends and family.

### BRAYDEN BAHNKE
- **Age:** 18
- **From:** Nome
- **Status:** Rookie
- **Riding:** Ski-Doo MXZ
- **Race History:** None
- **Bio:** Brayden is from Nome and attends Mount Edgecumbe High School. He is appreciative of his family: John Bahnke (father), Nancy Bahnke (mother), David Reese Bahnke (brother), Audrey Bahnke (sister), and Sarah Bahnke (sister). On the trail class he is looking forward to spending time with his father and snowmachining through Alaska.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Dad

### JOHN BAHNKE
- **Age:** 46
- **From:** Nome
- **Status:** Veteran
- **Riding:** Ski-Doo Renegade X
- **Bio:** I was born and raised in Nome, own and operate Wilderness Ski-doo. Married to wife, Nancy, for 18 years, and we have four kids – Brayden, 18; Reese, 15; Audrey and Sarah, 12.
- **Racing Experience:** Nome-Golovin: Racing cross-country in Nome and Kotzebue since 1994 with mixed finishes (some good/some DNF).
- **Personal Sponsors:** Wife, Nancy; Brayden, Reese, Audrey and Sarah; Mom and Dad

### TREVOR HELWIG
- **Age:** 21
- **From:** Anchorage
- **Status:** Rookie
- **Riding:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000
- **Race History:** None
- **Bio:** I am a lifelong Alaskan who was raised in a powersports family. My hobbies include almost any outdoor activity, with riding sleds being my passion. I enjoy many weekends spent at our cabin with family and friends, who are my biggest supporters. I am employed with Sea Star Stevedoring through the 302 Operating Engineers.
- **Racing Experience:** 2018 Alyeska MotorMadness semi pro XC, second place.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Anchorage Suzuki/Arcitc Cat, Grandma Deb and Doug, Eric Quam, Geoff Crouse.

### ARCTIC CAT
- **From:** Anchorage
- **Status:** Rookie
- **Riding:** Arctic Cat
- **Race History:** None
- **Bio:** I grew up in upstate New York and have lived in Alaska for nearly 25 years. I currently live in Wasilla with the love of my life Trisha Kolegar-Redifer and son Timothy. Hobbies include snowmachining, guitar player and dog training.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Howl-A-Day Inn Boarding & Training LLC, Big Lake Arctic Cat, Alaska Better Built Homes & More LLC

### ANTHONY BOCKELMAN
- **Age:** 36
- **From:** Streator, Ill.
- **Status:** Rookie
- **Riding:** Arctic Cat F6
- **Race History:** None
- **Bio:** Your average Dad/thrill seeker. Trying to check off another bucket list item.
- **Personal Sponsors:** AK Better Built Homes & More LLC

### ROY REDIFER
- **Age:** 56
- **From:** Wasilla
- **Status:** Rookie
- **Riding:** Arctic Cat Crossfire 600
- **Race History:** None
- **Bio:** I grew up in upstate New York and have lived in Alaska for nearly 25 years. I currently live in Wasilla with the love of my life Trisha Kolegar-Redifer and son Timothy. Hobbies include snowmachining, guitar player and dog training.
- **Personal Sponsors:** Howl-A-Day Inn Boarding & Training

### JOSHUA NEILSON
- **Age:** 92
- **From:** Nome
- **Status:** Rookie
- **Riding:** Arctic Cat
- **Race History:** None
- **Bio:** None
- **Personal Sponsors:** None
## 2019 CONTINGENCY PRIZES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIZE DETAILS</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>SPONSOR</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Woody’s Gear Bags to the 3rd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Nome. Product.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Woody’s Traction Products*</td>
<td>$102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Woody’s Gear Bags and two Woody’s Sled Hats to the 3rd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Fairbanks. Product.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Woody’s Traction Products*</td>
<td>$132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Fastest All-Rookie Team into Galena Southbound. Gift Cards.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Holiday Stationstores</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Fastest All-Rookie Team into Galena Southbound. Gift Cards.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Holiday Stationstores</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Pro Team into Fairbanks, LEAD-DOG helmet lights. Product Certificate</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>LEAD-DOG Helmet Lights</td>
<td>$230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*</td>
<td>$240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monster Energy prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Fairbanks. Prize package includes Monster gear. ($240 product value for each team)</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*</td>
<td>$240</td>
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<td>$240</td>
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<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*</td>
<td>$240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two $200 Woody’s Product Certificates to the 2nd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Nome. Product.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Woody’s Traction Products* (Official Traction Supplier)</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two $200 Woody’s Product Certificates and two Woody’s Sled Hats to the 2nd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Fairbanks. Product.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Woody’s Traction Products* (Official Traction Supplier)</td>
<td>$430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-Rookie Team that has never run the Iron Dog before, with the Fastest time to Skwentna. Credit at Roadhouse.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Skwentna Roadhouse</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 product certificate for First Place Overall Finish in Fairbanks</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Amsoil</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Perseverance Award to any Pro Class team that Finishes in Fairbanks and overcame the most adversity. Voted by ballot at the Finish Awards by 2015 Pro Class racers. Credit at Roadhouse.</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Skwentna Roadhouse</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Place All-Rookie Team on Arctic Cat to Finish in Fairbanks. Cash.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Anchorage Suzuki/Arctic Cat</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>SBS Handyman Award</em> Fastest All-Rookie Team into Poorman. Two powertools from SBS. Product.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Spenard Builders Supply*</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MarkGyver Award $500</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Mark Torkelson Memorial Foundation</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Notch Accessories Award: First rookie team to Fairbanks. $500 gift card</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Top Notch Accessories</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Notch Accessories Award: First Pro team to Fairbanks. $500 gift card</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Top Notch Accessories</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Red Lantern Award</em> to the last team that makes it into Fairbanks - $1,000 worth of Iron Dog specific goods ($500 from each sponsor). Product certificate.</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Fine Line Interiors* and Anchorage Sheetmetal and Custom Fabricators*</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIZE DETAILS</td>
<td>CATEGORY</td>
<td>SPONSOR</td>
<td>AMOUNT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Make Traxxas Award&quot; by Monster Energy for the 5th Place overall finish for an All-Rookie team. (One Monster Energy Traxxas RC car per racer, $300 value each)</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Monster Energy Drink - Distributed by Coca-Cola of Alaska*</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Beaver hats for Fastest Team from Unalakleet to Kaltag</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Justin Esmailka</td>
<td>$700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 in the form of two $500 Shell gift cards awarded to the Fastest Rookie Team to the Crowley Checkpoint at Nenana</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Crowley Fuels</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Eighth is Great Award&quot;, for the 8th Place team to Finish in Fairbanks. Gift cards for each racer valued at $500 each. Product certificate.</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Alaska Industrial Hardware*</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Place Finish in Fairbanks on Polaris snowmobiles by an All-Rookie Team. Cash.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Big Lake Power Sports</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 for first team to scratch after starting flag drop</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Tom Germany/Tri-State Disposal Inc</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastest All-Rookie Team Nome – Two $550 Woody’s Product Certificates and two Woody’s Gear Bags</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Woody’s Traction Products*</td>
<td>$1,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastest All-Rookie Team into &quot;Checkpoint KLIM&quot; in McGrath. $750 Product Certificate for each racer. Product certificate.</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Klim USA*</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,500 in store credit to 1st Place Finish in Fairbanks on Polaris snowmobiles. Product certificate.</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Big Lake Power Sports*</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastest All-Rookie Team to Fairbanks – Two $550 Woody’s Product Certificates and two Woody’s Pit Coats</td>
<td>Rookies</td>
<td>Woody’s Traction Products*</td>
<td>$1,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACS We’ve Got Your Back award for the team with the most time given back by the race marshals for time lost rendering aid along the trail.</td>
<td>All Teams</td>
<td>ACS</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,000 for the Second Fastest team and $1,000 for the Third Fastest team to Nome. Cash.</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>City of Nome</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 for team with most mileage at finish line in Fairbanks</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Tom Germany/Tri-State Disposal Inc</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastest team from White Mountain to Nome (Northbound). Cash</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Bering Sea Lions Club in Nome</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Place overall Finish on Polaris snowmobile.</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Polaris Industries</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Place overall $10,000 ($5,000 each racer) on Ski-Doo snowmobiles</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>BRP/Ski-Doo</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donlin Gold’s, Gold Rush Prize awarded to the 1st Fastest team to arrive in Nome. Gold Coins</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Donlin Gold</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Place $10,000 overall. Second Place $5,000 overall. Third Place $3,000 overall on an Arctic Cat snowmobile. Cash.</td>
<td>All Pro Class</td>
<td>Arctic Cat</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Contingency Prizes for 2019: $80,746

*denotes product or service value/ not cash. Award Details will be received by Race Participants prior to the Race Event Start.
**certificate is based on the individual, is non-transferable and only valid for the 2018 event. All other entry requirements and deadlines still apply. Not all dollar amounts represent a cash prize. Visit www.irondog.org/prizes for details on these contingency awards.
Note: Cancellation from Sponsor does not bind Iron Dog, Inc. for award payout. Iron Dog reserves the right to cancel or alter program at any time.
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