

The Jr. Iditarod



In 1975 Eric Beeman, Rome Gilman, Mark Couch, Susan Wagon, Clint Mayeur, Carl Clawson and Jesse Reynolds had a dream of starting a competitive race and providing a training ground for young mushers like themselves interested in distance racing. During the next two years other young people joined them and turned this dream from extended camping trips into the beginnings of the premiere race we know today.

Joe Redington Sr. after discussing the idea with these young people, advised them to “go for it” and that was the beginning of the Jr. Iditarod.

This dedicated group of young mushers, with the help of their parents and other interested adults, worked very hard and saw their dream realized when the first Jr. Iditarod Trail Race took place in March of 1978. From then on, the race has grown in stature and professionalism to an event of approximately 160 miles in length. It is held annually on the weekend immediately preceding the start of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and it draws young mushers from all over Alaska and from outside the state; as well as Europe with Thomas Krejci of Czechoslovakia being the first international entrant in 1992.

Age Range of Mushers: 14 to 17 years of age the day the race begins.

First Lady to Win : Christine Delia from Skwentna, Alaska in 1981.

Possible Temperature Extremes During Race: Extreme temperatures reported have been mid 50's above in 1981, making the trail conditions punchy and very wet, to -50° at Pt. McKenzie in 1979.

Teams: A musher must have at least 7, & up to 10 dogs at the starting line, and must cross the finish line with at least 5 dogs on the tow line.

Mandatory Rest: All mushers are required to take a mandatory 10 hour layover at the Yentna Station (where they sleep in the open) before returning to Wasilla on the second day.



Mark Ruzicka at the starting line of the 2005 Junior Iditarod Sled Dog Race--- Wasilla, Alaska



Learn more about the Jr. Iditarod:

[Dashing Through the Snow – The Story of the Jr. Iditarod](#) by Sherry Shanahan

[Iditarod Dream – Dusty and His Sled Dogs Compete in Alaska's Jr. Iditarod](#) by Ted Wood

www.iditarod.com/jr

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