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FAIRBANKS FIRST

New 2020 Iron Dog reverses direction, takes detour through Kotzebue

Schedule of events



Feb. 5: Recreational Class Tech Inspection, 5 p.m., Hatcher Pass Polaris (HPAK), Wasilla

Feb. 13: Recreational Class start, 10 a.m., Pike's Waterfront, Fairbanks

Feb. 14: Show & Shine / Pro Class Inspection, 1-7 p.m., Gottschalks building, Fairbanks

Feb. 15: Iron Dog Racers Draw, Hall of Fame, Calcutta, 6 p.m., Westmark Fairbanks Hotel and Conference Center, Fairbanks

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Feb. 22: Finish of the Pro Class Race, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. or so, Big Lake

Feb. 23: Iron Dog Awards Brunch, Time TBD, Mat-Su Resort, Wasilla

TOM STOKES

Team 25, Dietrich Nikolai and Nicholas Reader, depart from Deshka Landing during the 2019 Iron Dog. The new Iron Dog now starts in Fairbanks.

By Melissa DeVaughn

THIS YEAR'S IRON DOG HAS UNDERGONE A MAKEOVER LIKE NO OTHER. The 2020 race will now start in Fairbanks and include a roughly 375-mile loop around Kotzebue, before returning south to a finish in Big Lake.

"This year is really a history-making course for the Iron Dog," says Iron Dog's executive director John Woodbury. "It's never been run before. Now, this year's race is anyone's race to win."

The move comes after much consideration over a course that has been etched into the memories of veteran racers to the point that racing it is no longer the challenge it used to be, Woodbury said.

"The machines have gotten so efficient, and the riders have really become true athletes," he says. "The course had become overrun by technology and fitness, and so we needed to up the game to make the course challenge both of those components again."

The new course is sure to add renewed excitement to an already fast-paced and white-knuckled race. Leaping from approximately 2,050 miles to 2,395 miles, the course incorporates the Archie Ferguson/Willie Goodwin Memorial Snowmachine Race course, a long-established trail well known among racers in rural Alaska. This added loop will be new territory for racers, restoring the adrenaline that goes with racing in the unknown.

"I'm definitely excited about the Kotzebue Archie Ferguson course," said 2019 champion Chris Olds, who visited the area for the first time last year. "The region in that area is very into racing and riding, and I think it will bring in more racers from that area if they continue to race through there."

The added loop also means racers will now spend a lot more time

in the saddle and less at rest checkpoints. Woodbury says he thinks while racers' sleds will essentially stay the same, the longer race format will change the way racers strategize:

"I think what will change is how they drive these machines and their parts list, and their attitude toward conserving energy, muscles, fuel and parts," Woodbury says.

One of the most talked about aspects of the changed race direction is the beginning of the race – and the end.

"It will be really interesting to see what happens at those gas pumps, where there's really only one in those areas outside of Fairbanks," said Danielle Levine, who completed her rookie race last year, with her father, Larry. "I think the teams will be stacking up at those gas pumps. I think it's going to add a whole other layer to the race, and it will be exciting for the people looking at it online."

The end of the race will now be one of the most traditionally rugged. The area between Rainy Pass and Skwentna has busted up a sled or two over the years – but as it was at the beginning of the race, most racers were at least fresh enough to tackle repairs and handle the rough and tumble terrain.

This year, that brutal section comes while weary racers – and battered sleds – are tiring out.



REBECCA CHARLES
Rainy Pass Lodge, 2019 Iron Dog

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

“I’ve done a lot of pretty extreme things in my life, so I don’t really care if it’s an eight-hour day or a 12-hour day,” said Bob Gilman, an Iron Dog Hall of Famer, and three-time former champion who is returning to the race after a nearly 20-year hiatus. “I can say, though, that the machines are going to have 2,200 miles on them by the time you get to that last part, so it will be interesting to see how they fare.”

Gilman’s game plan – to be prepared for mechanicals with more parts and tools than most racers carry these days – is tried and true. His racing experience is from the 1990s, when he and John Faeo, another Iron Dog Hall of Famer, dominated the races, winning in 1990, 1991 and 1996. He was injured during the 2000 race and did not finish, instead spending two years recuperating and then taking up mountaineering to fill the gap. He said he’s back this year to enjoy the race — although he admits, the competitive bug will likely catch once his sled is underway.

“Sleds were 100 pounds heavier and we had to make them last to the very end,” he said of his earlier racing days. “That’s different than now, where everyone has a plane waiting for them at checkpoints with parts.

“They are scrutinizing ounces, where we were scrutinizing pounds,” he added. “I’m hoping our strategy prevails. We are just approaching it a little bit different. We’re not going to be the fastest, but we will finish.”

Levine, likewise, said she hopes a strategy based on patience will prove successful. Last year, she and her father got wrapped up in the fast, competitive first few miles, she said, and she ended up crashing her machine. This year, they are vowing to stick to the plan.

“We will be following our game plan better,” she said. “We know our pace and where we can go faster, but it’s so easy to get caught up in the hype of the race. We’ve gotta do our own thing.”

Larry Levine, a three-time veteran of the race, agrees.

“There’s stuff that’s going to go wrong, but it’s how you handle it,” he said. “Dani’s going to have so much more confidence going in this year. I’m pretty sure we will do substantially better than last year.”

As defending champions, Olds and partner Mike Morgan know they have bulls-eyes on their backs, so they, too, will be trying to maintain their racing composure.

“I can look at the racers around us, and tell you I am far from the most-talented rider, but it’s just about putting it all together – putting the sleds together, the teamwork, and you have to be quick, but don’t ride over your head,” Olds said. “There’s a lot of good teams that could win this race, but a lot can happen, especially with the extended distance. A lot of people you may not consider as contenders could be in it. You really just have to be at the end to win the race.”

Plans continue to unfold for the 2020 Iron Dog Race – a new era in snow-machine racing for racers and spectators alike. Stay tuned to irondog.org for more updates as plans continue, or follow us on YouTube, Twitter or Facebook. ♦

INSIDE the Guide

7 Fairbanks First

It’s a new race and a new challenge — all beginning in Fairbanks

17 One for the Record Books

A look at Iron Dog 2019: Unprecedented challenges couldn’t derail the World’s Longest, Toughest Snowmobile Race

18 Complete Schedule

Plan your week, from beginning to end

21 Iron Dog Divorces

Who’s still together, and who has split?

24 2020 Course map

26 Communities and Checkpoints

28 Family Ties

Finding strength when racing together

31 Race in the garage

32 Tough Enough

Hale brothers chase their racing dreams

34 Champions corner

And other Iron Dog Facts and figures

35 Pro Class racer bios

43 Recreational Class bios

On the cover: Chris Olds and Mike Morgan cross the finish line in Fairbanks to win the 2019 Iron Dog race. The pair covered the 1,977-mile route with a course time of 34 hours, 27 minutes and 31 seconds. Photo by James Wicken

Iron Dog 37

OFFICIAL GUIDE

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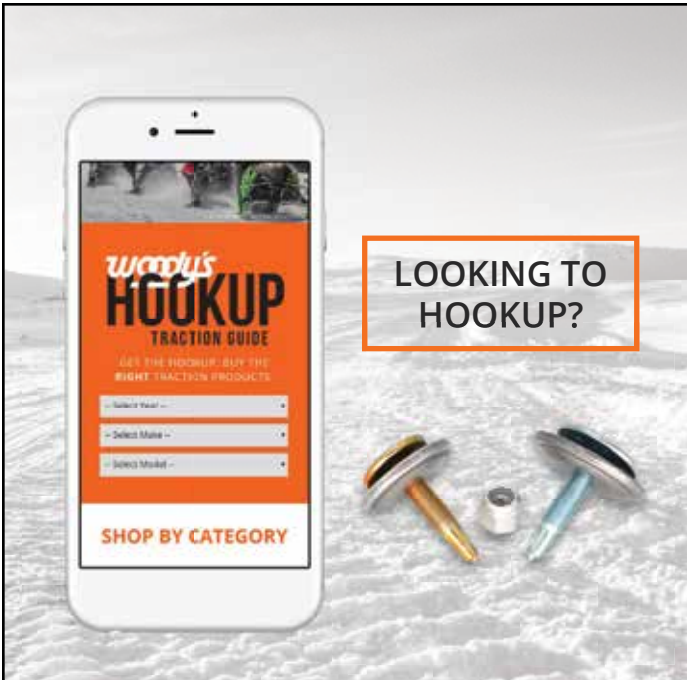
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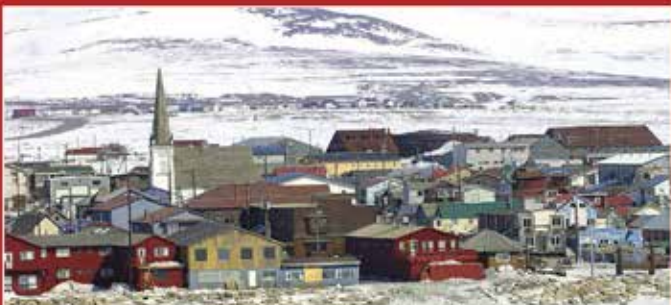
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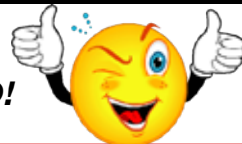
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MEGAN ROLINGER

Team 10, Mike Morgan and Chris Olds, celebrate in Fairbanks as they race to 2019 victory. It was the second win in a row for the longtime team.

FAST AND FURIOUS

2019 Iron Dog saw its share of challenges, both high and low

By Melissa DeV Vaughn

UNPREDICTABLE: THAT'S HOW LAST YEAR'S IRON DOG race could be described after an early winter earthquake shook up the planning and had organizers scrambling to get the race start restaged. After that, countless mechanical issues and injuries sidelined otherwise incredibly talented riders, giving the 2019 Iron Dog one of the highest scratch rates in the race's history.

Predictable, though, was how you'd describe last year's winning team because they pulled it off again – Team 10, Chris Olds and Mike Morgan, not only repeated as race champions, but their time of 34 hours, 27 minutes, 31 seconds technically makes it the fastest race, mile for mile, since the Iron Dog first started in 1984. It took the team 1.046 minutes to cover each mile, narrowly edging out the record set by Tyson Johnson and Tyler Aklestad in 2016, when they took 1.051 minutes to cover each mile.

"Getting first place is the ultimate goal, but getting the speed record is definitely an added bonus, for sure," said Morgan. He said he and Olds were fortunate in that their sleds gave them very few challenges and maneuvered well in the oftentimes heavy, parts-clogging snow.

"We haven't had any issues on our sleds, they have been really consistent, these Polaris, so that's a huge part of our success," Morgan said. "My great grandfather started the oldest Polaris dealership in Alaska in Nome, and it's all I've ever ridden. My grandfather is no longer around, but he would whoop my ass if he knew I was riding anything else."

While it may have been smooth sailing for Team 10, the 2019 race

indeed had its own challenges, said John Woodbury, Iron Dog's executive director – starting with the Nov. 30, 2019, earthquake that shook up more than just the terrain.

"Ahh... the earthquake," he said. "It was a gremlin throughout the ramp-up of the race from the minute it happened."

"One of our raffle prizes was a chunk of land near Point MacKenzie, and I was excited about launching the raffle because I thought the land and tiny house as a grand prize was a pretty skookum deal.

"Turns out, the epicenter of the quake was exactly on that piece of raffle land. Not a mile away – smack dab in the middle of the lot. How do you market that? To make matters worse, the raffle tickets were printing at the time of the quake and got jammed in the presses. All you could do was laugh."

Also, he added, the Woody's Rookie Workshop had been slated for the next day at South Anchorage High School, but all the schools closed while the Anchorage School District inspected each building for safety. Woodbury said they scrambled, successfully, to relocate at the Iron Dog HQ in Anchorage.

"Thanks to our top shelf volunteers, the South High media team and staff, it went off smoothly," he said.

The real challenge came a few months later, though, he added.

"There was now a potential of fractured ice and new hot spots at Big Lake," he said. "We waited as long as we could, and we were mapping out three different start venues, but finally made the call to

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 18**

2020 RACE SCHEDULE

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Feb. 23: Iron Dog Awards Brunch, Time TBD, Mat-Su Resort, Wasilla

REC CLASS RACE-DAY EVENTS

WHEN: Thursday, Feb. 13

WHERE: Pike's Waterfront Lodge, 1850 Hoselton Road, Fairbanks (907-456-4500, www.pikeslodge.com)

10 a.m.: Recreational riders depart for the trail to Nome, via the Kotzebue Loop.

PRO CLASS RACE-DAY EVENTS

WHEN: Sunday, Feb. 16

WHERE: Pike's Waterfront Lodge, 1850 Hoselton Road, Fairbanks (907-456-4500, www.pikeslodge.com)

8:30 a.m.: Racers check in

8:30-9:30 a.m.: Sponsors set up

10 a.m.: Marshal's meeting

11 a.m.: Teams leave in four-minute intervals

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

move the start to Deshka Landing. Again, thanks to volunteers, and the Deshka Landing folks going above and beyond with accommodating us, the start went smoothly."

It wasn't just Mother Nature that shook up the race, though. As any racer can attest, it takes more than superb riding skill to earn an Iron Dog victory. Mechanical breakdowns can derail the best-laid plans, as can accidents and injuries.

Within the first half hour after their departure from the Iron Dog race chute in Willow last year, Team 29, Danielle Levine and her father, Larry, encountered their first mishap – a mistake that would haunt them the rest of the trip.

"I had a wreck," Dani said. "We kind of tucked in behind a team and smashed into a little hole. It messed up the cowling and we had to do a Frankenstein fix in Skwentna. The sled looked like that the rest of the race."



MEGAN ROLINGER

Dr. Larry Levine and his daughter, Danielle, became the first father-daughter team to successfully complete the Iron Dog Pro Class. They are back again for the 2020 race.

Still, the father-daughter duo toughed it out, going on to be one of only 13 teams to complete last year's race among a field of 24 teams. With 11 scratches, Danielle said she feels fortunate to have survived her rookie year.

"It was not a guaranteed finish year," said Levine, 25, who returns with her father this year for Iron Dog 37. "Even though the weather was pretty OK, the snow was good, there were a lot of mechanicals. There were so many teams that were so strong and didn't finish."

Olds credits patience, few mechanical complications and experience for surging Team 10 to victory.

"That's part of the reason why we did as well as we did because it was uneventful," said Olds, who is back this year with Morgan to see if they can do a three-peat. "Other than some minor maintenance, that's really what kind of won us the race."

Olds said he and Morgan approached the 2019 race as they have become accustomed to doing – sticking to their own game plan, being willing to adjust to unforeseen circumstances and being able to communicate throughout the race, despite being exhausted and cold.

"We kind of know each others' strengths and weaknesses and can help each other out – we have similar riding styles and that helps too," Olds said. "We know what we're going to do for training and what we're going to do for building sleds; it feels like we really have those things dialed in."

All of those routines over so many years have paid off, giving Olds his fourth victory – the first two were with Tyler Huntington in 2010 and 2011 – and Morgan his second, both with Olds, last year and in 2018.

Olds also credits Morgan with keeping the race positive – when he started fretting over heavy snow bogging down their machines, Mike was the cheerleader, keeping the focus on the positive. That's a vital element to a successful race, Olds said, and Morgan delivered.

"Mike was very positive most of the race last year, when I was being negative, and it's usually the other way around," he said. "That ended up being a really good thing, to help us to the win."

Woodbury, looking back over last year's race and eyeing this year's event, said once again, Iron Dog delivered – earthquakes, injuries and breakdowns be damned.

"It's good to know we can react effectively and overcome sizable obstacles; that's part of being an Iron Dogger," he said. "But no more earthquakes, Mother Nature, OK?" ♦

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IRON DOG DIVORCES:

By Melissa DeVaughn

THIS YEAR'S IRON DOG RACE FEATURES MOST OF THE SAME well-known names to which fans have grown accustomed, yet not in the same order as in past years. The new pairings are all over the place. Iron Dog jokingly refers to these as the "Iron Dog divorces;" however, there is a lot more going on behind the scenes that tell a more complete story. Changing sponsorship, training scheduling conflicts, finances and, yes, sometimes personality conflicts – all play a role in how racers decide to pair up.

Notable this year:

Team 8, Tyler Aklestad and Tyson Johnson, are no longer. The pair raced together for years, winning the race in 2016.

Likewise, Powerhouse Team 16, Todd Minnick and Nick Olstad, who won the race together in 2009 and 2014, have parted ways.

Last year, Team 8 scratched following a crash in which Minnick and Aklestad collided just outside of the McGrath checkpoint. Aklestad and Johnson were able to limp along for a few hundred miles before scratching just outside of White Mountain, but Minnick was seriously injured and was airlifted from McGrath to a hospital in Anchorage for treatment. He and Oldstad scratched on the spot.

This year, the pot has been stirred, as Aklestad teams up with Olstad as Team 7, while Johnson races with Brad George as Team 6. Meanwhile, Minnick has had an astounding recovery from his leg injury, and is back on Team 16, this time with veteran racer Daniel Thibault. All three teams are riding Ski-Doo.

Also notable this year: Team 17 pairs longtime racers Tyler Huntington and Todd Palin – neither men raced last year, but both are no strangers to the win – Huntington in 2010 and 2011, and Palin in 1995, 2000, 2002 and 2007.

Bob Gillman, an Iron Dog Hall of Famer and 1990, 1991 and 1996 victor with his then-partner John Faeo, returns to the racing circuit this year, with Cody Moen, a 35-year-old rookie from Cle Elum, Wash., who now lives in Nome.

Both teams will be racing on Polaris sleds.

"I was going to race with my daughter, but the timing didn't work out," said Gilman, who has never raced with Moen before and knows from experience that the chemistry between racing partners can make or break a race. He and Faeo were a force in the 1990s, and their friendship remains today. In mid-December, he was in Faeo's shop, working on parts tweaks on his racing sled, and he considered what this year's race might be like with a new partner.

"This will be a little different this year," he said. "I've been there, done that. This year, running with a rookie, I have to tell myself we're just going to do this for the fun of it ... even though I know that competitive part starts to inch in. There's nothing you can do about it – it's there and doesn't go away. As soon as the first engine starts, everybody's off to the races."

Still happily paired though, are current defending champions Chris Olds and Mike Morgan, a powerhouse team that has raced together since 2012, and won back-to-back Iron Dogs in 2018 and last year. Olds said a three-peat would be special, putting he and Morgan in the history books alongside the likes of Iron Dog legends Scott Davis and Mark Carr who dominated from 1997 to 1999, and John Faeo and Dan Zipay, who won three in a row from 1986 through 1988.

"For both of us, honestly we are pretty even keel – we don't get too high or too low on any circumstance," said Morgan. "I'm very opinionated and so is he, but that's the beauty: We don't insist we are always right."

Breaking up is hard, but sometimes necessary, to do



PHOTOS BY JAMES WICKEN

Team 16, at top, Nick Oldstad and Todd Minnick, separated after last year's race and have new partners this year. Team 8, Tyson Johnson and Tyler Aklestad, above, also have new partners this year.

"It's a lot for all of the racers to try and keep things together," Olds said. "Mike and I fight a lot in the race, too, but we don't direct anything negative to each other; at the end of the day we make mistakes and we are all human; it's part of racing. We just put everything behind us and focus on that."

Jeremiah Vanderpool from McGrath will represent Team 27 with his brother, Jerad. He thinks having a sibling as partner will lessen the potential for conflict on the trail. After all, the two rookies perfected the art of sibling bickering decades ago.

"These racers switch partners pretty frequently," Vanderpool said. "That's one of the things I hear a lot from them is that under the stress and fatigue of the race, being able to cooperate and communicate without getting frustrated is difficult."

Olds, with Team 10, says he thinks this year's new lineups will be interesting to watch in action.

"All the guys have mixed things up, but they are all still riding with the top riders," he said. "It's good and bad: It could potentially put together teams that are even stronger than before."

On the other end, he said, it's a new marriage of personalities – not just talent – and how those relationships will survive the brutal miles ahead is still to be determined. ♦



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KALTAG

WHITE MOUNTAIN

SHAKTOOLIK

NOME

UNALAKLEET

Yukon River

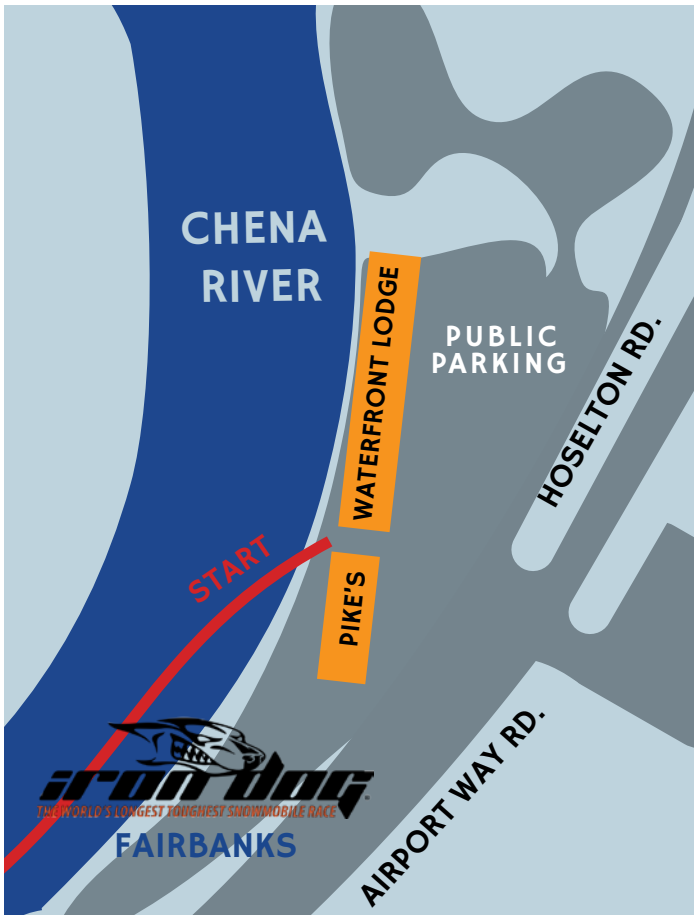
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FROM HERE TO THERE: RACE COURSE MILEAGE

IRON DOG'S COMMUNITIES AND CHECKPOINTS

Northbound to Nome

Fairbanks to Nenana.....	57
Nenana to Manley.....	99
Manley to Tanana.....	65
Tanana to Ruby.....	118
Ruby to Galena	52
Galena to Kaltag	98
Kaltag to Unalakleet	95
Unalakleet to Shaktoolik.....	41
Shaktoolik to Koyuk.....	62
Koyuk to Buckland.....	73
Buckland to Kotzebue.....	95
Kotzebue to Noorvik.....	65
Noorvik to Kiana.....	21
Kiana to Selawik.....	38
Selawik to Buckland.....	68
Buckland to Koyuk.....	87
Koyuk to White Mountain.....	94
White Mountain to Nome.....	75
Northbound Mileage	1,303

Southbound to Willow

Nome to White Mountain	75
White Mtn to Koyuk.....	94
Koyuk to Shaktoolik.....	62
Shaktoolik to Unalakleet.....	41
Unalakleet to Kaltag.....	95
Kaltag to Galena.....	98
Galena to Ruby	52
Ruby to Poorman	57
Poorman to Ophir.....	99
Ophir to McGrath.....	63
McGrath to Nikolai	54
Nikolai to Rohn.....	74
Rohn to Puntilla.....	75
Puntilla to Shell Lake.....	55
Shell Lake to Skwentna.....	17
Skwentna to finish.....	81
Southbound Mileage.....	1,092

Total Mileage: 2,395

FAIRBANKS

Since 1998, Fairbanks has been the official finish of the race, and this year, it becomes the official start! Fairbanks serves as the launching point for Recreational and Pro Class racers, as they head west and north, toward Nome. The racers start at Pike's Waterfront Lodge, and head toward Nome, first adding on the new Kotzebue Loop before reaching the halfway ceremonies and some time in the garage. Fairbanks is Alaska's second largest city and home to more than 50,000.

KOTZEBUE

Kotzebue has a population 3,266, is the seat of the Northwest Arctic Borough and an important transportation hub. 2020 marks the first year that the Iron Dog will pass through this snowmachine-loving community. This year's course will encompass the 375-mile Archie Ferguson/Willie Goodwin Memorial snowmachine race course, a long-established trail well known among racers in rural Alaska.

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, and this year the finish will be in Willow. 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 Recreational Riders finish, numerous support efforts and crews, lodging and banquets for Recreational Riders and Pro Racers, and a race restart. Nome is on the coast of the Bering Sea, some of the most challenging racing on the course, due to ice shelves and open-water conditions.

BIG LAKE

The 2020 Iron Dog race finishes this year in Big Lake, in front of the Southport Marina.

Come watch as the Pro racers make their way back to Southcentral Alaska. Big Lake is in the Mat-Su Borough and has a population of about 3,600. There is ample parking at and plenty of space to cheer the Pro racers in at the end of their race.

Smaller communities and checkpoints

NENANA, population 365 (as of 2017), located on Mile 305 of the George Parks Highway, is 57 miles from the start.

MANLEY HOT SPRINGS, population 89 (as of 2010), is 156 miles from the start.

TANANA, population 255 (as of 2017), located on the Yukon River, is 221 miles from the start.

RUBY, population 170 (as of 2013), is located along the Yukon River. Pro racers pass through Ruby twice – first 339 miles from the start on the way to Nome and again 1,820 miles into the race.

GALENA, population 479 (as of 2013), is an Athabascan village in the Interior, 391 miles from the start on the way to Nome and 1,768 miles from the start on the return route to Willow.

KALTAG, population 194 (as of 2013), located near the windy coast of Norton Sound, is 489 miles from the start on the way to Nome and 1,670 miles from the start on the return route to Willow.

UNALAKLEET, population 712 (as of 2013), on the coast of Norton Sound north of the Unalakleet River, is 584 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,575 miles from the start on the return route to Willow.

SHAKTOOLIK, population 260 (as of 2013), is on a point jutting into Norton Sound, 625



FILE PHOTO

A crowd of youngsters in McGrath gather to cheer on the racers. Iron Dog 2020 passes through 28 communities, including a new loop near Kotzebue, and inspires future racers from across the state.

miles from the start and 1,534 miles from the start on the return route to Willow.

KOYUK, population 472 (as of 2017), located on the coast, is 687 miles from the start on the way to Nome and racers pass through again 1,134 miles in. It is 1,472 miles from the start on the return route to Willow.

BUCKLAND, population 426 (as of 2018) is in the Northwest Arctic Borough along the Buckland River. It is 760 miles away from the start. Racers pass through Buckland again 1,047 miles into the race.

NOORVIK has a population of about 683 residents. It is located on the right bank of the Nazuruk Channel of the Kobuk River and a short stop before Selawik. It is 920 miles into the race.

KIANA is a village of located “where three rivers meet”: the Squirrel River, Kobuk River, and big/small channel rivers. Kiana has an

estimated population of 339 and is 941 miles into the race.

SELAWIK, the “place of sheefish,” has a population of about 850 (as of 2017). It is 979 miles from the start of the race.

WHITE MOUNTAIN, population 197 (as of 2013), located in the mountains on the Fish River, is 1,228 miles from the start on the way to Nome and is 1,378 miles from the start on the return route to Willow.

POORMAN, population zero (as of 2013), located in a flatland region after Ruby, is 518 miles from the finish.

OPHIR, population zero (as of 2013), is 419 miles from the finish. It is located on the Innoko River.

McGRATH, population 354 (as of 2013), is also located on the Innoko River, and is 356 miles away from the finish.

NIKOLAI, population 96 (as of 2013), is 302 miles out from the finish on the south fork of the Kuskokwim River.

ROHN, population zero (as of 2012), is located at a small roadhouse where two rivers join, and is 228 miles away from the finish.

PUNTILLA, population two (as of 2013), is located on Puntilla Lake near a breathtaking mountain pass. Puntilla is 153 miles away from the finish.

SKWENTNA, population 38 (as of July 2015), is located on mostly flat land in South-central Alaska on the Skwentna River. It is just 81 miles from the finish.

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

—Melissa DeVaughn



COURTESY ZACHARY CIZMOWSKI

Healy racers Zachary and Kazimir Cizmowski grew up snowmachining under the tutelage of their father, Jeff, who raced in the 2002 Iron Dog.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Iron Dog 2020 features multiple family connections

By Melissa DeVaughn

ZACHARY AND KAZIMIR CIZMOWSKI, LIKE MANY ALASKANS, have been snowmachining for as long as they can remember. The 24- and 26-year-old brothers from Healy grew up in a place with wide-open spaces and plenty of land to explore – and with a father who raced Iron Dog in 2002, giving the men loads of expertise at their disposal.

This year, the two brothers are Team 21, a pair of rookies with thousands of miles of riding under their belts and one of four teams of brothers racing.

“We got the funds together and decided to give it a shot,” said

Zachary. “Being brothers, in our case I think it will be beneficial because we are pretty close and pretty good about speaking our minds like brothers do. I think it will be beneficial, because we work together and we get along. We don’t get offended if someone has something else to say.”

This is a common refrain among the sibling pairings in this year’s races. One of the most underappreciated aspects of racing Iron Dog is keeping one’s cool under pressure. Racing speeds are diabolical, sleep deprivation cruel and the wear-and-tear on sled and bodies unending. Add to the mix volatile personalities, and a race can quickly go awry.

“Jeremiah has been wanting to do Iron Dog for years, and it’s been

Team 21: Brothers

Kazimir and Zachary Cizmowski



Team 4: Father-son

Robert and Forest Strick



Team 12: Brothers

Kruz and Kenneth Kleewein





Recreational Class riders are also keeping the competition in the family. Husband-wife duo Paul and Mary Sindorf are part of Recreational Class Team 71, and brothers Joseph and Israel Hale make up Team 77. Paul Sindorf is a Pro Class racer taking a break for a more leisurely pace this year, while the Hale brothers are using this rookie run as practice for a future Pro Class entrance.

on my mind, too," said Jerad Vanderpool, 35, the other half of Team 27. The Vanderpool brothers from McGrath, like the Cizmowskis, grew up riding and felt like their sibling connection could give them some advantages where it relates to team cohesiveness.

"It will definitely help because we've known each other our whole lives, so we can even communicate without words," Jerad said. "We have a good working relationship, and all the rapport has already been made."

Furthermore, the Vanderpools said, their rural riding experience could be a plus.

"We're used to the backcountry, wild and rutted trails and stuff," Jerad said. "The only place that will be unusual is the ice."

"After riding with him, I don't know if there's that much that intimidates Jerad," Jeremiah said. "It's going to be a wild ride."

The family connection extends beyond the Vanderpools as well. Jeremiah said they have a sister in the Valley, a brother in Anchorage, and family in McGrath and beyond who are all spread out along the trail and willing to help.

"That moral support will help too," he added.

A husband-wife duo is paring up to tackle Iron Dog. Longtime Pro racer Paul Sindorf is taking a reprieve this year to take on the Recreational Class ride with his wife, Mary, and two other riders, Pro Class veteran Stan James and rookie Gregory Strohmeier.

Will their marriage survive more than 1,000 miles on a sled? Neither seem too concerned.

"I learned early on in my snowmachining career that the best way to get out of a bad situation is to stop," she said. "So he knows how I operate, he will figure it out."

"It's going to be more relaxed, and we will be able to dawdle and enjoy more," Paul said. "I'm excited to share that with Mary."

Father-daughter duo Larry Levine and Danielle Levine are another family connection in this year's Iron Dog. The pair made news last year as the first father-daughter team to compete together and complete the race. They were one of only 13 teams to make it across the finish line in a race that was littered with injuries, mechanicals and scratches.

"I think we were nervous about the whole getting-along thing last year," Larry Levine said. "But it was a matter of switching hats. My goal is to finish the race and to be friends with the people I'm racing with when we're done. There are so many people who are not talking to each other after the race, and I want to avoid that – especially



Team 12, Kruz and Kenneth Kleewein, above, have raced together before. Father-son duo Robert and Forest Strick (Team 4), right, are racing together for the first time. Forest Strick is taking a leave from where he is stationed in the Air Force, for the race.



because I'm riding with my daughter."

Danielle said if anything, riding with her father made communication easier. After all, he knows her better than anyone, and as a rookie, she depended on his experience to help make decisions at critical times. This year, with the rookie experience behind her, she feels more confident that she will be a stronger partner for her father.

"I think you have to be fluid no matter what, in terms of your game plan," she said. "It's important to be able to roll with it if the weather changes or the trail changes. My dad and I learned a lot about communication last year, and we were able to communicate fairly well, and hopefully we will be even better at it this year." ♦

Team 29: Father-daughter
Larry and Danielle Levine



Team 27: Brothers
Jeremiah and Jerad Vanderpool



Team 24: Father-Son
Konrad and Luke Schruf





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Nome rest stop allows racers to perform much-needed maintenance on their sleds

IRON DOG RACE MARSHAL BRIAN WEBB SAYS watching racers work on their sleds in the Nome garage is akin to viewing a NASCAR pit-crew in action. Not only to Iron Dog racers have to be tough enough for the conditions, but they also need to be able to make repairs at the halfway point with precision and speed.

“We’ve seen it all,” Webb says. “We’ve had engines rebuilt, we’ve had an S-module replaced; it’s amazing what these guys can do and how fast they can do it in.”

Indeed, one of the most exciting parts of Iron Dog takes place indoors, during this critical halfway point, where racers have a chance to check over their sleds, do any needed maintenance or repairs, and even receive outside assistance. Officials carefully monitor and time the racers as they work fast to try and improve their standings.

“It’s pretty impressive to watch,” Webb says. “What would take you or I five or six hours to repair, these guys can fix in just a couple of hours. Last year I timed a guy who did a ski change-out and a couple other minor things, and it was like four minutes – it was amazing.”

As racers reach Nome, they choose a repair time slot in the Nome garage, which includes a special viewing section for spectators to watch the pros wrench. Webb says most riders choose to let their sleds thaw overnight, get some rest and hit the shop first thing in the morning.

In the shop, 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.



AARON BROWN

Team 5, Andy Gocke and Zack Weisz, wrench in the garage in Nome during the 2018 Iron Dog.

Meanwhile, South Anchorage High School media and communications students film and livestream the action for those who can’t be there.

“They will usually have someone writing, taking notes, keeping a running list of what’s going where,” Webb says. “It’s an organized process and they might just need to tighten belts or swap out new skis, but they go fast.”

In all his years in the garage, Webb says he sees a similar pattern: the front-runners tend to stay that way, and the newcomers tend to be a bit slower. After all, he said, when it comes to the Iron Dog there is no substitute for experience.

“If you’re not in the Top 10 to Nome, the chances of you winning are pretty slim,” he said. “The top teams, they just have it down.”

To watch the South High livestream coverage, go to www.irondog.org/race/watch. ♦

—Melissa DeV Vaughn

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A BROTHER'S LOVE



PHOTOS COURTESY JOSEPH HALE

Joseph, left, and Israel Hale on a practice ride in December 2019. Israel had his legs amputated above the knee after being hit by a driver in 2012.

IRON DOG 2020

Accident may have taken Israel Hale's legs, but not his can-do spirit

By Melissa DeVaughn

WHEN ISRAEL AND JOSEPH HALE SET OUT ON THE 2020 RECREATIONAL Class Iron Dog on Feb. 13, 2020, the two brothers will push their limits. Yes, they know that the Recreational Class is not a race, but they're still going to go fast and try to finish first. They are considering it a dry run for the real thing.

"I think it would be a real motivation to win," said older brother Jo-

seph, 43. "We know a ton about snowmachining and not a ton about racing, so this is a good place to start."

If all goes well, the two brothers from a close-knit family will toe the line in 2021 as Pro Class competitors – and history makers. Since its inception in 1984, no amputee has ever competed in the Iron Dog – much less a double amputee without prosthetics.

Israel Hale lost both of his legs above the knees following an accident in September 2012. After picking up building supplies in

Anchorage, he and his wife, Cori, stopped on the side of the road to adjust his heavily loaded trailer. As he was inspecting it, another driver crashed into him, essentially severing Hale's legs upon impact. That moment changed his life forever.

"In the hospital, to my wife, the first words out of my mouth were, 'Don't worry about it, I'll figure out how to walk; as long as I'm not paralyzed,'" Israel said.

That was more than seven years ago, and Hale has done just that. Not only does he manage to get around on short prosthetics he calls "stubbies," he also owns a tool repair and sled/ATV rental business, is raising two small children, and training for a 1,000-plus-mile snowmachine expedition that would challenge even the most able-bodied of riders.

"If I did have legs, I'd already be running the Iron Dog (race); I think I'd be in the top 10," said Israel, 33, who despite his loss of limbs remains an athletic, self-professed highly competitive man. Barrel-chested with oak-tree biceps and forearms the size of most people's legs, it is clear he has accommodated his new reality. He relies on his upper body strength to keep himself on his sled, and adjusts his hand and arm positioning to absorb the shock of a fast-moving machine over less-than-forgiving terrain. After long rides on the sled, Israel's back and shoulders scream from the added strain, he said, but he's learned to adapt, and thrive.

"My biggest challenge is going to be staying warm," Israel said. "Because of the lack of circulation, I basically have to heat my seat to stay warm enough."

Unlike most riders, who can stand on their sled as they travel and move around as needed to stay warm or adjust the sled's direction, Israel uses only his arms and hands to hold onto the sled and his thighs to grip the seat, like a rider on a horse. On the trail, he doesn't use his stubbies, which exacerbate the cold and wouldn't reach to the running boards anyway. Because he can't stand on his sled, or adjust his body to rise out of the seat at all, he gets cold more quickly and loses circulation faster.

"From wool to heated pants and different layers of equipment, I think I pretty much have it down, but I'll be paying attention to that," he added.

Iron Dog executive director John Woodbury said the Hale brothers' entry in this year's recreational class will highlight just how tough one must be – no matter his or her physical challenges – to complete the course.

"The Hale brothers' trip up the Rec Class trail is going to be one to watch," Woodbury said. "That route is full of obstacles, but none are as daunting as the ones Israel has already faced – and overcome – in his life.

"I think he and his capable crew exemplify the tenacious spirit of Iron Dog," Woodbury added. "Israel is a driven man who has proven



PHOTOS COURTESY JOSEPH HALE

Israel Hale relies on his exceptional upper-body strength to stay on his sled. He and his brother, Joseph, will race the Recreational Class this year.

himself in many endeavors. The board reviewed his application, made some pointed inquiries, then did not hesitate to approve him and his team."

Iron Dog veteran Stan James echoes the board's sentiments. A four-time Pro Class racer, James has seen his share of challenges, and this year is mentoring the Hales so they know what to expect on the trail.

"With Israel's background, wow, it's going to be extra special," said James, who is taking a break from the Pro Class this year to also ride in the Recreational Class. "I'm very excited to help them because I just love to see their faces, how excited they are for it. ... I would say without a doubt they will finish this year, barring any mechanical failures, which can happen to anybody."

The Hale family grew up on a remote parcel of land, off the grid outside of McCarthy, and they learned early on how to be com-

fortable and competent in the wilderness. Israel jokes that he never relied on a GPS growing up, but on the Iron Dog trail will be required to have it. In many ways, being on the Iron Dog course will not be all that daunting for men whose self-sufficient upbringing is so strong.

"We grew up in the outdoors, it's what we know and are comfortable with," Joseph said. "As a result, all my siblings are really strong, and Israel's really, really strong. There's a lot of stamina built into our bodies."

Still, he added, he is taking the risks seriously and not underestimating the unpredictability of the Iron Dog trail.

"Honestly the biggest risk he takes is getting stuck in the water – he can swim, but it's not easy, so we will probably be going around water at all costs," Joseph said. "Still, I feel like Israel is really capable to take care of himself; he just needed someone he can trust to see him through. We make a good team because we are family."

James said he expects the brothers will make a good team. While Joseph may feel a responsibility to keep his younger brother safe, James said the real challenge might be convincing Israel to take it slow.

"That guy's incredible," James said of Israel. "He'll reach down and grab a snowmachine ski and pick it up off the ground. He's that strong."

Woodbury, with Iron Dog, said there are countless supporters who will be cheering the Hales on come Feb. 13. He, for one, will be one of the loudest in the crowd.

"Israel will certainly be surrounded by qualified riders, including a cadre of Iron Dog veterans, in case there are some issues along the trail," Woodbury said. "But Israel is the source of inspiration for that crew, and I feel all us can reflect upon his determination and maybe learn a little more about ourselves.

"I'm glad he is joining us this year in the Rec Class, and am hopeful he will return in a run for the money next year, too." ♦

IRON DOG HALL OF CHAMPIONS

THE IRON DOG'S CURRENT RECORD time is 34:27:31, set last year by Chris Old and Mike Morgan on their Polaris sleds.

Their time was set on the 1,977-mile course, but it topped leading times for the previous 1,971-mile and 2,000-mile courses. Compared to the first Iron Dog at 1,049 miles and a winning time of 23:50, Olds and Morgan's 2019 race was nearly double the length, yet only took 1.5 times longer to complete.

YEAR	CHAMPIONS	BRAND	TRAIL TIME
2019	Chris Olds & Mike Morgan	Polaris	34:27:31
2018	Chris Olds & Mike Morgan	Polaris	36:54:49
2017	Cory Davis & Ryan Simons	Arctic Cat	40:58:01
2016	Tyson Johnson & Tyler Aklestad	Ski-Doo	35:35:22
2015	Scott Faeo & Eric Quam	Polaris	41:46:52
2014	Todd Minnick & Nick Olstad	Polaris	36:58:37
2013	Marc McKenna & Dusty VanMeter	Ski-Doo	36:58:54
2012	Marc McKenna & Dusty VanMeter	Ski-Doo	35:39:56
2011	Chris Olds & Tyler Huntington	Polaris	37:38:09
2010	Chris Olds & Tyler Huntington	Polaris	41:04:09
2009	Todd Minnick & Nick Olstad	Polaris	37:19:08
2008	Eric Quam & Marc McKenna	Arctic Cat	42:33
2007	Scott Davis & Todd Palin	Arctic Cat	38:07
2006	Dwayne Drake & Andy George	Arctic Cat	35:48
2005	Marc McKenna & Nick Olstad	Arctic Cat	52:59
2004	Mark Carr & Dusty VanMeter	Ski-Doo	39:03
2003	RACE CANCELLED	—	—
2002	Todd Palin & Dusty Van Meter	Arctic Cat	38:41
2001	Tracey Brassard & Ken Lee	Polaris	38:44
2000	Todd Palin & Dusty Van Meter	Arctic Cat	41:10
1999	Scott Davis & Mark Carr	Arctic Cat	38:30
1998	Scott Davis & Mark Carr	Arctic Cat	44:47
1997	Scott Davis & Mark Carr	Arctic Cat	61:08
1996	John Faeo & Bob Gilman	Polaris	38:44
1995	Todd Palin & Dwayne Drake	Polaris	58:24
1994	Dan Zipay & Evan Booth	Polaris	71:38
1993	Scott Davis & Bill Long	Arctic Cat	58:36
1992	Dan Zipay & Evan Booth	Polaris	29:58
1991	John Faeo & Bob Gilman	Polaris	30:10
1990	John Faeo & Bob Gilman	Yamaha	40:12
1989	Scott Davis & Mark Torkelson	Yamaha	40:12
1988	John Faeo & Dan Zipay	Polaris	—
1987	John Faeo & Dan Zipay	Polaris	51:00
1986	John Faeo & Dan Zipay	Polaris	47:00
1985	Scott Davis & Gary Eoff	Yamaha	38:00
1984	John Faeo & Rod Frank	Polaris	23:50



JAMES WICKEN

The top three 2019 finishing teams, Adam Drinkhouse and Brad George (second place), Mike Morgan and Chris Olds (first), and Casey Boylan and Bryan Leslie (third), celebrate in Fairbanks.

2019 IRON DOG TOP 10

PLACE	NAME	BRAND	TRAIL TIME
1st	Chris Olds & Mike Morgan	Polaris	34:27:31
2nd	Adam Drinkhouse & Brad George	Ski-Doo	34:48:50
3rd	Casey Boylan & Bryan Leslie	Ski-Doo	35:03:35
4th	Brett Lapham & Zack Weisz	Polaris	35:58:12
5th	Amos Cruise & Jarvis Miller	Ski-Doo	37:07:54
6th	Kenneth Kleewein & Kruz Kleewein	Polaris	38:28:54
7th	Andrew Gumley & Clinton VanWingerden	Polaris	39:44:29
8th	Kyle Connor & Blake Elder	Arctic Cat	40:01:48
9th	Cody Barber & Shane Barber	Polaris	41:56:08
10th	Steven Boney & Oliver Unruh	Arctic Cat	43:07:31

DID YOU KNOW? IRON DOG FACTS & FIGURES

FACT!

Girl power!

Jackie Page and Missy McClurg remain the only all-female team to have successfully finished the Iron Dog race. In February, 2001, they became the first women's team to finish the Pro-Class race, placing 15th in 60 hours and 23 minutes.

FACT!

Longest supporter

NORTHERN AIR CARGO has been providing continuous support to Iron Dog since the beginning. That's now 35-plus years of service!

FIGURE!

Wins by Brand

17 Wins on Polaris
11 Wins on Arctic Cat
4 Wins on Ski-Doo
3 Wins on Yamaha

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

2

ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Big State Mechanical, Team Arctic Alaska, Fox Racing Shox, Vision X Racing, Bales Construction, Neeser Construction, Independent Lift Truck, Alaska Hammer and Home, Cold Creek Extracts, F45 Gym Anchorage, Finline Interiors, Northern Explorer Adventures, Ferguson Enterprises, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Renton Coil Springs, Greatland Welding and Machine, Fly Racing, Trail Tank, Advanced Powder Coating, Morgan's Sales and Service, Nome Machine Works, Bikeman Performance, Gates Belts, Thunder Products, Elite Electrolytes, GU Sports



RYAN SOTTOSANTI

AGE: 42 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2010-2015, 2017-18: Finished

BIO: I have lived in Alaska for over 20 years. I am married to my beautiful wife, Heather, and have an 11-year-old-daughter named Faith. I really enjoy the vast variety of everything Alaska has to offer.

Rewards come one-tenth of a second at a time and only when I focus, train and truly strive can they be achieved.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2010 Iron Dog top rookie sixth place; 2008 Mayors Cup third place; 2009 Mayors cup second place; Trapper Creek 200 second place; K150 second, third & fifth place; Alyeska Cross Country first & fourth place; Arctic Man seventh, fifth & third place. Finished the Iron Dog in the Top 10 eight times. Two Iron Dog third-place finishes.

Personal Sponsors: Heather Sottosanti, Al Sottosanti, Faith Sottosanti, Luke Clement, Brant Smith, and everyone that has helped us along the way.

MICAH HUSS

AGE: 44 / **FROM:** Anchorage

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

RACE HISTORY: 2017-18: Finished

BIO: I've been racing cross country snowmachines for the past 26 years, winning numerous races throughout that time. 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, friends and my girlfriend, Iris.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Many first- through third-place finishes in Kotzebue region races throughout the years. Raced the I-500 in 2010 and 2011. Raced the Nome-Golovin race seven times as well as Arctic Man. Finished third in 2017 Iron Dog.

Personal Sponsors: Howard Gregg and family; Ronnie, Ayden and Kaitlin Huss; Iris Wieler; Tony and Lisa Haugen; Amos Cruise; George Greene and family; Cindy Kottke; Sarah and David Forbes.



IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

4

POLARIS

Sponsors: Chinook Printing, Motorfist, Grandma Strick, Donlin Gold, Eagle River Polaris and Arctic Cat, Uncle Fritz, 509 Inc, Beaver Mountain Boys, American Legion Post 35 SAL



FOREST STRICK

AGE: 24 / **FROM:** McGrath

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

BIO: I love my family and the outdoors – hiking, fishing and hunting. Thanks to all the volunteers along the trail; without all your help this race would not be possible!

Personal Sponsors: Mom, Grandma and Grandpa Strick, Grandma Sharron, Brett and Holly Gibbens. All the people who have bought raffle tickets, and showed up at our fundraisers, you are too many to name but you all are appreciated.

3

ARCTIC CAT

Sponsors: Arctic Cat, Arctic Cat, Anchorage Suzuki Arctic Cat, Team Arctic Alaska, Prop Shop, Inc., Efficiency Consulting, Donlin Gold, Fine Line Interiors, Klim Technical Riding Gear



OLIVER UNRUH

AGE: 50 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Arctic Cat ZR 6000 R XC

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 I am relatively new to sled racing.

RACING EXPERIENCE: I have participated in K150, K200, K400 and Mayor's Cup.

Personal Sponsors: Big thanks to the guys at Anchorage Yamaha, Doug and the Crew at Finline, Steve Spence, Bill Buck, Repairs Unlimited LLC, and, of course my wife, Shelly



STEVE BONEY

AGE: 39 / **FROM:** Bethel

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

RACE HISTORY: 2012-15: Finished; 2019: Finished

BIO: Born and raised in Bethel and have been a Yamaha snowmachine mechanic for 23 years. I've been a private pilot for 12 years. I have a loving and supportive wife, Dolly, and three awesome girls, Brittney, 21; Payton, 14; and Riley, 10. I enjoy being with my family, jet boating, hunting, and riding snowmachines. My father and I own and operate the Prop Shop, a full-line powersports dealer.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog 2012-16th place, Iron Dog 2013-15th place, Iron Dog 2014-14th place, Iron Dog 2015-11th place, Iron Dog 2016-DNF, Iron Dog 2019-10th place

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Dolly, and kids, Brittney, Payton & Riley. My father, Craig. Oliver Unruh, Blaine Elliot, Ozzie, Doug Dixon, Keith Manternach, Andrew Smith, and all the others who help along the way. I thank you guys.



ROBERT STRICK

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** McGrath

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris INDY XCR

RACE HISTORY: Finished in 2013 and 2015.

BIO: I was born in Alaska and have lived here my whole life. I enjoy spending time with my family; wife Noel and children, hunting, snowmachining and some fishing. Thank you everyone who has helped me race this great race. A huge

thank-you to all of the volunteers along the trail; without all of your help this race would not be possible!

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog 2013-12th, Iron Dog 2015-9th

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

5

POLARIS

Sponsors: Three Bears Alaska INC., Polaris Industries, Crowley Fuels, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Walker Evans Racing, Prism Design and Construction, Unleashed HP, Alaska Directional LLC, Palmer Dental Center, Lone Pine Fabrication, Nodak Electric and Construction, Alaska Solar Supply, Jennifer Byers ANP LLC, Glenn Marlin- State Farm, Vermeer Northwest, Trijet Manufacturing, KLIM, Stud Boy Traction Products, Fine Line Interiors



BRETT LAPHAM

AGE: 27 / **FROM:** Willow

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

RACE HISTORY: 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2019: 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 fourth Iron Dog race.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Mayors Cup: 2012- Semipro first place; Mayors Cup: 2014- Pro fourth place; Mayors Cup: 2019- 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.



ZACK WEISZ

AGE: 26 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2018-19: Finished

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: Iron Dog 2019- fourth place; Iron Dog 2018- 11th place, Top 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 Mayors Cup- first place Semi-Pro; 2014 Alyeska Motor Madness XC- first place

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

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

6

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Skidoo, Team CC, Global Fuel, Sheet Metal Inc, KLIM, Hydrate Alaska, Kanady Chiropractic, Hybrid Color, Howdi Inc., Bread & Brew, Western Construction, Specialty Truck & Auto, Northwoods Lodge, Alaska Fast Cash, Stud Boy Traction Products, RPM Composites, SCS Unlimited, TrailTank, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Enderson Concrete, Crazy Moose Subs, Finline Interiors, Barney's Sports Chalet, XPS Lubricants, Tri Jet Manufacturing, B&B Automatic Transmission, MGM Vehicle Services, Unleashed HP, Criterion General, Hard Rock Plumbing, Workman Racing, Calm n Collective, Algone, Chepos, TCI, Cruz Construction



TYSON JOHNSON

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

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

RACE HISTORY: 1997: Finished, 1999-2002: Finished, 2007: Finished, 2009: Finished, 2012: Finished, 2013: Finished, 2016: first place, 2017: Finished

BIO: I have been racing Iron Dog since I was 17 years old with this year's race being my 22nd entry. I work for Sheetmetal Inc., as a journeyman sheet metal fabricator. I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, welding, hanging out with my wife, Alexis, and children Rowan and Elliott, and pretty much anything that involves the outdoors.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

7

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team CC, Ski-Doo, Global Fuel, Cruz Construction, MTA, RPM Composites, Stud Boy Traction, QSI Pile Driving, IBEW Local 1547, Camso, Grip n Rip Racing, XPS Lubricants, Specialty Truck & Auto, Valley Upright Imaging, The Alaska Club, McKenna Brothers Paving, Finline Interiors



TYLER AKLESTAD

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** Palmer

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

RACE HISTORY: 2007: Finished, 2009: Finished, 2012-13: 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 OSP Engineer

RACING EXPERIENCE: Arctic Man: 2014-first place; 2013-first place; 2012-first place; 2011-first place; 2008-first place, 2019 Nome Golovin- first place, 2019 Alyeska x-country- first place

Personal Sponsors: My wife Erin; kids Liam and Finn; Corey and Barbara Cronquist, Keith Manternach and Steve Spence, Marc McKenna, Jenny Duax, Mike Vasser and all our family and friends who help



NICK OLSTAD

AGE: 37 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2005, 2009, 2014: first place; 2011: Finished, 2016-18: Finished

BIO: Nick is a longtime Alaskan who enjoys the outdoors. When not working as a Marathon Construction lead, he's spending time with his wife, Brianne; and 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 15th year racing Iron Dog.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2019 Kotzebue 220- first place; 2019 Nome Golovin- third place; Mayor's Cup 2005 and 2006- first place, 2011- third place; K-150 2005 and 2006- first place.

Personal Sponsors: Brianne, Kaia and Jackson Olstad

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog: three second-place finishes and one championship; Arctic Man: five men's ski wins, and three men's snowboard wins; Mayors Cup: three wins; K150: four wins, and many other wins and top 3's in all venues of sled racing.

Personal Sponsors: Special thanks to my wife Alexis, children Rowan and Ellie, Corey & Barb Cronquist, Eric and Shan Johnson, Andy George, Hank Swan, Keith Mantenach, Steve Spence, Johnny "Thunder," and all of our other friends and family who help support us.



BRAD GEORGE

AGE: 25 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2013-16: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Wasilla. 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; Larry Heal 2012-13, second; 2014, first; Nome-Golovin, 2013, first; 2014, fourth; Mayor's Cup, 2015, second; Ice Cross, 2015, second.

Personal Sponsors: Corey Cronquist, Hank Swan, Zuger Shocks, Unch Racing, Vision-X, Blue Sky Design, AK Goldstar, Nite Shift Janitorial, Dan Trotter, Hiltop Recycling, B-Original Signs, Alaska Cab Valley, Tommy Kriska, Chris Kuhn, Steve Becker, Wasilla Arctic Cat, Tre West, Board of Trade Saloon, Design Graphics, Skwentna Road House, Alaska Frontier Fabrication, Six Roblees, Kenny Hughes, Weld Air, Extreme Fun Center, American Dream Construction, Alaska DTS/Dave Kane, Yentna Station, Alaskan Auto Inc, Inlet Petroleum, Criterion, Roadside Inn, Wasilla Dental Center, Alaska Pacific Rentals, E-Z Rents, Larson Chiropractics, Lucas Chiropractics, Alaska Spine Institute, AK Nails, Oakley, Snap-On, Tom Simpson, ACLS, Pacific Plumbing, Spenard Builder Supply, Kibe Lucas, Dry Out Systems, Black Ice Graphics, Floyd Hernandez, Yukon Equipment, Alaska Fast Cash, Howdie, Q.A.P, Advanced Family Dentistry, SafeLite Autoglass, Better Health Chiropractic, Enderson Concrete, Jackovich, Wolf Eye Center, Play It Again Sports, Kevin Keene, Brett Keene, Tasha's Techniques, Team Schachle, Roger McCarty Sr. Hillside Highcrops, KGB Investment, Western Construction and Equipment, Paul Light and Alex Fuller Lucas, Black Ice Graphics, Alaska Fast Cash

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

8

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team CC Ski Doo , BRP , Fox Racing Shox, ASRC Energy Services, Stud Boy Traction Products



CHAD GUECO

AGE: 35 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2012: Finished, 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2017: Finished

BIO: I am a lifelong Alaskan who loves everything our state has to offer. I spend every chance I get traveling, riding, hunting, fishing and anything that involves a good time! I am a father of three children, Allie (12), Ella (9) and Haiden (6) with my beautiful wife, Jayme Gueco. This will be my eighth Iron Dog – nothing short of another great competitive experience.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2017 Iron Dog- second place; 2016 Iron Dog- sixth place; 2015 Iron Dog- sixth place; 2013 Alyeska Motor Madness XC- first place; 2013 Valdez Mayors Cup XC- third place; 2012 Eureka 100 XC- first place; 2012 Iron Dog- sixth place; 2011 Valdez Mayors Cup- first place; 2011 Eureka 100 XC- second place, 2009 Ada, Minn., 100 XC- sixth place; 2009 Red Lake 500 Minn., XC- sixth place; 2008 Valdez Mayors Cup- third place; 2008 Big Lake 500 Grand Prix- first place; 2008 Thunder Bay 200 Enduro Mich.,- first place; 2008 Alpena 300 Enduro Mich.,- first place; 2004-2010 Soo I-500 Mich-1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 12th place

2007 Eagle River World Championship-1st place "

Personal Sponsors: ASRC Arctic Slope Resource Corp., Alaska Spine Institute, Bill's Distributing, Projekt 907,Klim, Fox Shox, Trail Tank, Well Solutions Inc., StudBoy Traction, Gueco Racing, Rip N Grip, Fine Line Interiors, RPM Composites, Independent Lift Truck, Rain Proof Roofing and My Family. 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.



ANDREW ZWINK

AGE: 30 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS

RACE HISTORY: 2011: Finished, 2012: Finished, 2013: Finished, 2015: Finished

BIO: Andrew is no stranger to the hard work and dedication needed to race the Iron Dog. Racing in his 11th race, he has experienced success and hardship on the trail. His dedication and hard work extends off the trail as well. As a decorated Eagle Scout he enjoys exploring, taking time to adventure to third-world countries just to get a selfie, and tracking through the backwoods of Alaska. When Andrew isn't out having fun, he works vigorously in the excavation field. With all his work and play, he finds that the best time to relax is with his family and close circle of friends.

RACING EXPERIENCE: This will be Andrew's 11th year racing Iron Dog with top finishes in 2011-5th; 2012-3rd; 2013 and 2015-6th.

Personal Sponsors: Friends and family, Team CC, Alaska Plumbing and Heating, Klim, Grip N Rip, RPM Composites ASRC Energy & Rain Proof Roofing, Dirtworks

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

9

POLARIS

Sponsors: Palmer Elks Lodge #1842, Laker Electric, Inc., Criterion General, Inc.



GREGG DEACON

AGE: 61 / **FROM:** Reno, Texas

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

RACE HISTORY: None

BIO: My love for Alaska began in the 1970s when I was stationed at Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks. Since then, I have worked and lived around the globe as a Fire Fighting Helicopter Pilot. Competition has shaped my life in many ways, including over 30 years on the professional rodeo circuit as a Saddle Bronc Rider. Having made the decision to trade-in my Bronc saddle for a seat on a Polaris XCR, I feel that I'm right where I was always meant to be. The Iron Dog Race has been a vision of mine for several years and I am beyond fortunate to have the opportunity to compete in what is no doubt considered the pinnacle of cross-country endurance races, with the

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

10

POLARIS

Sponsors: Polaris Industries, Klim , Eagle River Polaris/AC, Walker Evans Racing, Polaris Engineered Lubricants, Northern Air Cargo, Q-Trucking, Northern Powerline Constructors Inc., Anchorage Sheet Metal, Stud Boy Traction Products, Arctic FX Graphics, Rugged Radios, Stan Morgan, UA Local 367 Plumbers & Pipefitters Union, Total Truck & Accessories, Able Body Shop, Auto Armor of Alaska, Alaska Industrial X-Ray, PowerMadd, Bering Air, Fine Line Interiors, Starting Line Products, Velocity Sled Performance, Ice Age Performance, Morgan Enterprises, Northern Solutions LLC, Tri-jet Manufacturing Services LLC, Indy Specialty, Nitro Trailers, Ginny Emmons, Christine Olds, Micah Straughn, Jeremy Hanson, Christy Hedrick



MIKE MORGAN

AGE: 34 / **FROM:** Nome

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC 137

RACE HISTORY: 2009: Finished, 2012: Finished, 2013: Finished, 2014: Finished, 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2018: first place, 2019: first place

BIO: I was born and raised in Nome and currently reside in Anchorage, having spent all of my 34 years in Alaska. I enjoy hiking, hunting, fishing, traveling, biking, riding and racing snowmobiles and hanging out with friends and family. I work construction as a welder out of the UA Local 367 Plumbers & Pipefitters Union. This will be my 11th Iron Dog race and ninth with current teammate Chris Olds.

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

Personal Sponsors: Mom Ginny and Carl Emmons, Charley and Jennifer Reader, Manzy and Sweetpea (McGrath), Butch and Elizabeth Captain (Ruby), Aggie Katongan (Unalakleet), Tami and Andy Baker (Kotzebue)



CHRIS OLDS

AGE: 48 / **FROM:** Eagle River

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy XC 137

RACE HISTORY: 2000-02: Finished, 2006-09: Finished, 2010-11: first place, 2012-16: Finished, 2018-19: first place

BIO: I am a 37-year Alaskan married to Christine with two children, Haley and Mya. I work for UIC Construction as a project manager. I enjoy hunting, fishing, four-wheeling, dirt bikes, mountain bikes and hanging with family. I have been racing snowmachines since 1998.

RACING EXPERIENCE: First place K-400; Numerous Top-3 finishes in Hillclimb, Hillcross, Cross Country and Snowcross; 16 Top-10 and 14 Top-5 finishes in the Iron Dog.

best riders in world. My other passions are skydiving, wing-suiting, scuba diving and spending time with my two sons and their families, DJ & Dana, Cody & Janee and granddaughter, Nelly.

Personal Sponsors: Klim, Woody's Traction, Deck Tred, Hi-Res Graphics, EarthX Batteries, Lift-A-Sled, AK LED, My family, DJ, Dana, Cody, Janee, Nell and friends.



ERIC WELLMAN

AGE: 51 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

BIO: Born and raised in Idaho, soon after high school I joined the U.S. Air Force AMMO family. I was stationed in Alaska for eight years before being reassigned. I retired from the Air Force and returned to Idaho, but my heart was in Alaska. In 2016 I returned to Alaska and in February 2017 I

was watching the ceremonial Iron Dog start in Anchorage and knew this was something I wanted to do. I live in Wasilla with my wife, Cindy.

Personal Sponsors: My amazing wife, Cindy; Steve and Steven Jaronitzky, and Ronaldo Mendez Salon.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

11

POLARIS

Sponsors: Alaska Artisan Coffee, Galcier Auto Body, Ride 208, Valley Machine, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Woody's Traction Products, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Ray's Aircraft Service, Z Broz Racing, Carney & Associates, LLC, Hatcher Pass Polaris, KLIM, Walker Evans Racing, Dan Bush / Bush Construction Surveys, Inc., Jesse Atkinson, Kaleb Couse

ROGER BROWN

AGE: 41 / **FROM:** North Pole

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

RACE HISTORY: 2013: Finished

BIO: Roger loves spending time with his beautiful wife Megan and three awesome children, Emily, Alyson, and Alan.

DAVID WAGNER

AGE: 50 / **FROM:** Arnold, Calif.

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

BIO: Beginning at age 2, David grew up riding sleds in Wyoming. His Dad owned a snowmachine and motorcycle shop and was very active in racing. David said the first time he rode 100 mph across Lake Viva Naughton, he knew he was hooked! David's favorite place to ride is "The Sinks" in

Logan Canyon. It has incredibly diverse terrain and the best powder he has found. Riding there for sure, takes him back to his childhood. David married the love of his life, Melissa, 26 years ago. They have two children together, David Austin, 25, and Brooklyn Kellie, 16. His kids mean the world to him. After family, his favorite pastimes are riding snowmachines, hunting and fishing. He is grateful to have met so many amazing people in Alaska. The culture there is definitely something he wants to be a big part of. He is thankful for his partner Pat Daniels for all of his help, information, experience, and enthusiasm.

Personal Sponsors: California Custom Trailers & Powersports, K. Reed Roofing, Auburn Powersports, Action Realty, Simmons Skis, Starting Line Performance, Tim & Lisa Mutterties, Leland & Linda Payton, Dave & Mary Wagner, Melissa Wagner

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

14

POLARIS

Sponsors: Polaris Racing, AK Frost, Walker Evans Racing, Klim, A2D Motorsport, Anchorage Yamaha, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Bill Bishop, Boylan Boyz Racing, Leslie Racing

CASEY BOYLAN

AGE: 25 / **FROM:** Anchorage

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

RACE HISTORY: 2017-19: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Anchorage. I have been racing snowmachines for 13 years, five of those years have been out of state at a national level.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2010 ISOC National Sport Super Stock-first, second & 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 Mayors Cup Cross Country pro class win; 2017 Iron Dog-sixth place finish rookie year; 2017 Mayors Cup-third place pro class; 2017 Skwetena 200-second place; 2018 Iron Dog-fifth place; 2018 Mayors Cup-first place; 2019 Iron Dog-third place

Personal Sponsors: General Constructors, Big Dream Transport, Rebound Sports Physical Therapy, C&A pro skis, Grip n Rip Racing, Stud Boy, Baileys Rental

BRYAN LESLIE

AGE: 26 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2017-19: Finished

BIO: I love to ride or be in or on anything with a motor. I have raced quads and dirt bikes 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; 2015 Arctic Man Ice-X-first; Iron Dog 2017-sixth; Iron Dog 2018- fifth; Iron Dog 2019-third

Personal Sponsors: Stan James, Statewide Door and Glass, Carlile, Big State Concrete Coating LLC, Lonepine Fabricators, New Horizons Telecom, IBEW 1547, Alaska Snowmobile Salvage, Alaska LED, Alaska House of Yamaha, Boehmer services, JJ's Lounge, Jon McDonald, Ben Cruz, Eric Wansor, friends and family

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

12

POLARIS

Sponsors: Northern Powerline Constructors Inc., Polaris Industries, Polaris Engineered Lubricants, NPC Energy Services LLC, Taylor Fire Protection Services, Robinson Millwork, Frontier Dental Care, Law Offices of Royce & Brain, Electric Power Constructors (EPC), DuClos Orthodontics, Charter College, Distinctive Ride, Valley Auto Body, Hatcher Pass Polaris, KLIM, Walker Evans Racing, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Woody's Traction Products, Taylor Designs, Renton Coil Springs, B Original Signs, Randy Jones & Sara Jansen, Capstone Clinic, Polaris Racing, Trijet Manufacturing, Upangle

KENNETH KLEWEIN

AGE: 29 / **FROM:** Willow

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

RACE HISTORY: 2018-19: Finished

BIO: Kenny Klewein II is a lifelong Alaskan and has spent most of his life riding anything with a motor. Racing has been a huge part of his life growing up racing four-wheelers and then racing snowmachines with Alaska Motor Musers Club (AMMC). He is a second-generation racer after his dad Kenny Klewein. Kenny loves spending family time with his beautiful wife, Kirsten, son Kenny 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; Iron Dog: 2018-13th place; Iron Dog 2019-sixth place

Personal Sponsors: Special thank-you to my amazing wife, Kirsten, son and daughter, and for Kirsten, who supports our family during the long nights and weekends preparing for this great race. Also, a special thank-you to my mom and my dad for not only being very supportive, but also helping with preparations. I am very grateful for my dad and his wealth of knowledge of the Iron Dog.

KRUZ KLEWEIN

AGE: 24 / **FROM:** Willow

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

RACE HISTORY: 2018: Finished, 2019: Finished

BIO: Kruz is a born and raised Alaskan from the small town of Willow. He has always shared a love of anything with a motor such as snowmachines, 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. Kruz works as an apprentice power lineman 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: I'd like to thank 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.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

15

POLARIS

Sponsors: Current River Electric, Precision Maintenance and Fabricating, Inc., Canyon Lake Lodge AK, Hatcher Pass Polaris, KLIM, Arctic Sea Mining, Coho Contractors LLC, Sound Trench, Jeff and Peggy Darling, Subway of Nome, Stud Boy Traction, PowerMadd, Rugged Radios, Pro-West Leasing, Fimon Trucking, SSS Commercial Real Estate, Gold Buyers of Alaska, AU American, Eroica Gold Mining, NorthWest Gold Diggers



BOB GILMAN

AGE: 57 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris XCR

RACE HISTORY: 1990: first place, 1991: first place, 1996: first place

BIO: I had planned for this inaugural 2,400 mile race to be a beautiful ride with my daughter, but when circumstances would not allow, I was cut-off from returning to the

bench by my bear-hunting partner Cody. I am supported in this venture by my daughters, Kris and Albie, son Garrett, six grandchildren (so far) and my fiancé, Sarah. My hobbies include mountaineering and world travel to more than 60 countries. I look forward to racing in the Kobuk region again and would like to acknowledge my trapping, riding and racing mentors, Lorry Scheurch, who first showed me a long day on a sled while

running trap-lines out of Kiana in the late 70s; and Vince 'The Kiana Kid' Scheurch, my first sponsor in 1980. I am honored to be included in the Iron Dog Hall of Fame. I've enjoyed many years racing in Northwest Alaska.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 1990: first place, 1991: first place, 1996: first place

Personal Sponsors: Thanks to John Faeo for his first-class help and support in getting us updated and to Vicki for her support as well. Manzie Magnuson - McGrath, Aviator Brett Brown, Middy Johnson and family (Unalakleet), Jake Hannon (Koyuk)



CODY MOEN

AGE: 35 / **FROM:** Cle Elum, Wash. / Nome

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

BIO: I grew up in the Cascade Mountains in eastern Washington. I spent my younger years racing motocross. I've always had a passion for racing and a love for everything outdoors. I now live in Nome, Alaska, where I work in gold mining on the Bering Sea. I guide steelhead fishing in the winters on the Olympic Peninsula

in Washington state.

Personal Sponsors: Shawn Pomrenke, John Faeo, WHR Motorsports, Mike Morgan, Stephanie Sampson, Carla Sweet, Trevor Miller, Jerry Miller, Troy Miller, Ray & Trisha Parker, Bill Moen Construction, JM Construction, C.E.I Excavating, Wildlife Obsession Taxidermy, Liberty Cafe

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

16

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team CC Ski Doo, skidoo, XPS, Fox Racing Shocks, Edge Fitness, Big Dipper Construction, KLIM, Perk Up Espresso, Grip n Rip Racing, Woody's Traction Products, Trijet Manufacturing, Quam Tech, Palma Tech, Maidis Brothers Concrete, Pioneer Peak Asphalt, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Smokehouse BBQ, Valley Imaging, Arctic FX Graphics, Fine Line Interiors, B Original Signs, VFW Post 9365, Canyon Lake Lodge, Electric Power Constructors (EPC), RPM Composites, Hotel McGrath.



TODD MINNICK

AGE: 40 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2002: Finished, 2004-08: Finished, 2009: first place, 2010-13: Finished, 2014: first place, 2015-18: Finished

BIO: Todd was born and raised in Alaska. He is a foreman at Big Dipper Construction and has

been racing snowmachines most of his life. Todd has a beautiful wife, Sharilyn, and 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.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Cross Country Championships including Valdez Mayor's Cup, K-150, K-400, Archie Ferguson Memorial & Alyeska

Personal Sponsors: Sharilyn Minnick, Emma & Canyon Minnick, Paul & Diane Minnick, Eric Quam, Ken Lee, Rod & Arden Miller, Mike & Jayne Koskovich, Gilbert Perez, Al Palma, Sam and Nita Towarek, Hazel Esmailka, Justin Esmailka, Daniel Hayden, Paul Iyatunguk, Sharon Heiny

DANIEL THIBAUT

AGE: 36 / **FROM:** Anchorage

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

RACE HISTORY: 2007: Finished, 2016: Finished

BIO: I've lived in Alaska my entire life. My wife, Katie, and I have two children Ashlyn, 15, and Ellie, 12. I enjoy spending time with my friends and family riding RZR's all over our great state

every summer and snowmachining with the family in Petersville during the winter.

RACING EXPERIENCE: K150 | K200 | Mayors Cup | Trapper Creek 200-first place | Arctic Man-10th Men's Ski; Iron Dog 2007-Finished; Iron Dog 2016-Finished

Personal Sponsors: My wife, kids and Team 16 for helping us this season. I would also like to thank Bobby Frankson and his wife for all of their hospitality in Galena.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

17

POLARIS / SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Polaris Racing, Klim Technical Riding Gear, Jim Binkley, Hatcher Pass Polaris, McKinley Polaris, Stud Boy Traction Products, R & D Electronics, Ice Age Performance, Eagle River Arctic Cat and Polaris



TROY CONLON

AGE: 29 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo Renegade 600

RACE HISTORY: 2016-2017: Finished, 2019

BIO: I was born and raised in Fairbanks, where I work as a welder/machinist for Fort Knox Gold Mine. I have been riding snowmachines since I was 2, riding in the mountains most of my life until in 2013 I entered my first race. What started out as a hobby has grown into a

full-out passion, which someday I'd like to share with my son Carver. I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, hockey, and boating in my free time. My wife Chloe and I have been married for five years, and she is the backbone behind my race career, always sacrificing to make schedules and race days work.

TODD PALIN

AGE: 55 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Assault

RACE HISTORY: 1993: Finished, 1995: first place, 1997-98: Finished, 2000: first place, 2001: Finished, 2002: first place, 2004-06: Finished, 2007: first place, 2008-09: Finished, 2011-13: Finished, 2015: Finished

BIO: This is Todd's 26th Iron Dog! He's enjoyed four victories, four runner-ups and several Top-10 finishes. Todd is a life long Alaskan, a commercial fisherman, former BP Alaska employee, and is Alaska's first First Gentleman. Todd's heart is for those in rural Alaska who work hard, respect God's creation, love the Last Frontier, and assist the Iron Dog! Todd and partner Tyler Huntington dedicate their race to rural Alaskans as they live out Philipians 4:13. Todd is married to Sarah and is the proud dad of five great kids and seven perfect grandkids: Track, Bristol, Willow, Piper Indi Grace, Trig, Tripp, Kyla Grace, Sailor Grace, Charlie, Atlee Bay, Blaise Indi, and Banks. The family enjoys fishing, hunting, flying, Baja Razor riding, snowmachines, and commercial fishing in Bristol Bay.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog: 2007, 2002, 2000 and 1995-first; 2011, 2006, 2005 and 2004- second; 2008,1997- fourth; 2013, 2012- fifth; 2009- sixth, 2018- ninth

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Sarah, and family; Alaskans on the trail making this race happen! R&D Electronics; Klim; Hatcher Pass Polaris; Studboy; Polaris Racing; IceAge Performance; L & M Supplies; Zugger Shocks; Anchorage Drag Bike; Tracks USA; sarahpalin.com; Bristol Palin Realtor/Ben Kinney Team, Austin, Eagle River Arctic Cat and Polaris, U.S Chrome

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2016

19

POLARIS

Sponsors: KLIM, Walker Evans Racing, Stud Boy Traction, Merika Group, All American Oilfield, Northern Oil Solutions, Steelhead Industrial, Pollard Wireline, SLP, Peninsula Power Sports, Alaska Sure Seal, Bright Minds Learning Center, Yellow Jacket, Spain Excavating



DAVID SPAIN

AGE: 35 / FROM: Willow

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris XCR

BIO: I am a third-generation Alaskan. I'm 35 years old and have been running heavy equipment almost all my life. I have been an avid snowmachiner since the age of 5 and have been riding most of my life. I have participated in quite a few races, including the K150,

K200, K400, Mayor's Cup, and Iron Dog. My family and I are looking forward to this year's race season

RACING EXPERIENCE: Mayors Cup, K150, K200, K400, Ice Racing

Personal Sponsors: Klim, Stud Boy and the support and dedication of my lovely wife of 16 years, Kerrie Spain, and our three children, Brayden, Dawson and Taylor.



TRAVIS TEMPLE

AGE: 31 / FROM: Soldotna

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Indy XCR

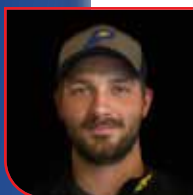
BIO: I was born and raised in Soldotna, hunting, fishing, riding sleds and dirt biking. It has always been a dream of mine, since I was a little kid, to race the Iron Dog. I love spending time with my wife, Crystal, and my son, Riley.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

21

POLARIS

Sponsors: McKinley Polaris, Usibelli Coal Mine, Alaska Teamsters Local 959, Bowker Mechanical, Alpine Creek Lodge, Alaskan Creations-Stacy & Ike Isaacson, 49th State Brewing Company, Zack's Towing Cantwell AK, Denali Mountain Works, Phillipe Log Homes, Alaska Correctional Officers Association, 139 Designs, Woody's Traction Products, Klim Technical Riding Gear, Mobius Braces, Rugged Radios, Grip N Rip



KAZIMIR CIZMOWSKI

AGE: 26 / FROM: Healy

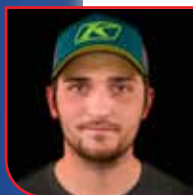
STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC

BIO: I was born and raised in Healy, where I still live with my wife, Mylinda. I work as a heavy equipment mechanic at Usibelli Coal Mine. I enjoy hunting, fishing, playing and coaching hockey, riding sleds and SxS's, traveling, and hanging out with friends and

family. I'm looking forward to racing with my brother, Zach this year.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2017 Skwentna 200; 2018 Mayors Cup; 2019 Mayors Cup, Iron Dog 2013 DNF

Personal Sponsors: All of our family and friends who have supported u



ZACHARY CIZMOWSKI

AGE: 24 / FROM: Healy

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Indy

BIO: I was born and raised in Healy, where I still live with my wife, Zabrina. I enjoy a variety of activities including hunting, fishing, riding, racing, or just spending time with friends and family. I currently work for Usibelli Coal Mine as a heavy equipment

mechanic. This will be my first Iron Dog and I will be racing with my brother, Kaz.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Valdez Mayor's Cup: 2019, Pro-Class 11th Place; Valdez Mayor's Cup: 2018, Semi-Pro second place; Skwentna 200: 2017, sixth place

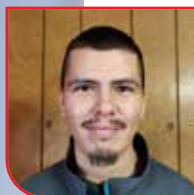
Personal Sponsors: Special thank-you to my wife, Zabrina, parents, Jeff and Debbie, sister-in-law, Mylinda, and good friend, Ethan Graham for all of the support that I have received.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

22

POLARIS

Sponsors: Hatcher Pass Polaris Willow, Borealis Broadband, Klim, Satellite Alaska, Woody's Traction Products, Alaska Commercial Company McGrath, Alaska Air Transit, Donlin Gold



JONATHAN EGRASS

AGE: 29 / FROM: McGrath

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC 600 137

BIO: I'm a lifelong Alaskan, who grew up in McGrath watching and volunteering for the Iron dog. Joining the race has been a goal for a long time! I couldn't do it without the support of my wife, Pauline, and daughters, McKayla and Emerie! Always enjoy being outdoors whether it's winter snowmachining, or riding four-wheelers, or going out boating.

Personal Sponsors: My wife Pauline Egrass, Gary and Rosalie Egrass, Renae Egrass, Dietrich Nikolai, Debby Hartman, Community of McGrath and Randy at Willow Hatcher Pass Polaris



TYLER SAMUELSON

AGE: 27 / FROM: McGrath

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC 137

BIO: I'm Alaska Native born and raised on the Kuskokwim River. I work for the State of Alaska Division of Forestry. In the summertime you can find me in my boat either hunting or fishing and enjoying time on the land. In the winter, if I'm not wrenching on a machine, I'm usually out riding in the Interior.

After being a volunteer for the Iron Dog in McGrath and Rohn for over half my life, and helping many friends over the years prepare for the race, I've decided to go for a ride myself. My race partner and childhood friend and I look forward to joining a long list of Iron Dog alum from our community.

Personal Sponsors: Randy at Hatcher Pass Polaris Willow, Community of McGrath, friends and family up and down the Kuskokwim River

anything that gets me outdoors and am looking forward to entering my first Iron Dog race with my son.

Personal Sponsors: I appreciate all of the support from my friends, family and other racers. Special thanks to Shane Barber for all the help and encouragement. Heather, Opa, Rydell & Siegie Reints

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

24

POLARIS

Sponsors: HDR Marine, KLIM, Woody's, Seacor Tours, Zuggger Shocks, Anchorage Sheet Metal, Bridge Creek Outfitters, Hatcher Pass Polaris



KONRAD SCHRUF

AGE: 50 / FROM: Wasilla

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris XCR600

BIO: I'm a lifelong Alaskan and live in Wasilla. I have two great kids, Hannah and Luke, and an amazing wife, Heather. I enjoy



LUKE SCHRUF

AGE: 23 / FROM: Wasilla

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris Indy XCR

BIO: I am a lifelong Alaskan, currently living in Wasilla and working in Prudhoe Bay. I enjoy hunting, fishing, riding and anything that gets me into the outdoors with friends and family. This is my first Iron Dog.

Personal Sponsors: Rydell and Siegie Reints, Opa, Devona Marshall, Brett Keene

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2016

27

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: KLIM, Curve Skis, Grip-N-Rip Racing Products, Woody's Traction Products, Hotel McGrath B&B, Iron Dog Outfitters and Kenneth Harding



JERAD VANDERPOOL

AGE: 35 / **FROM:** McGrath

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS

BIO: I was born and raised in Interior Alaska where I have spent half my life. I work for Doyon Drilling half of the year, spending the other half capitalizing on all that Alaska has to offer. I would like to thank all of my family, friends and co-workers who have helped me throughout the year to make competing in the Iron

Dog a reality.

Personal Sponsors: Curve Industries, Carlisle / Timken Belts, Grip-n-Rip Racing, Woody Traction, KLIM



JEREMIAH VANDERPOOL

AGE: 43 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

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

BIO: I was born and raised in Alaska, growing up in McGrath and currently residing in Fairbanks. My family is completed by my wonderful wife, Gail, and our three amazing kids, Jazlin, Aralin and Maxim. From boats, motorcycles and snowmachines to kayaking and hiking, I enjoy everything the great Alaska outdoors has to offer throughout every season. I'd like to thank my wife and family, brothers and sister, the awesome company I work for, my small circle of good friends, and all sponsors/volunteers who made this possible.

Personal Sponsors: Maxim Consulting, Zeb Vanderpool, Tonya V. Bell, Troy Conlon, Shane Barber, TK Sweetsir, Billy John Sports, Darby's

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2016

29

POLARIS

Sponsors: Alaska Spine Institute, DHT Trucking, Hatcher's Pass Polaris, Northern Solutions LLC, KLIM, Spernak and Son, Custom Crafts Unltd, Complete Concepts Automotive, White Spruce Trailers, Woodys, Alward Construction Services, Articom



DANIELLE LEVINE

AGE: 25 / **FROM:** Anchorage

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

RACE HISTORY: 2019: Finished

BIO: I grew up in Anchorage and am a recent graduate from the University of Nevada, Reno, with an undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering. I started riding snowmachines around the age of 6 and began racing Arctic Man and AMMC cross-country races at 14. Last year, I was finally able to accomplish my dream of competing in the Iron Dog and was lucky enough to do so with my dad. We learned about a million things last year, and I am looking forward to using them all in the 2020 race.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2012 Arctic Man: first place women's snowboard, second place women's ski; 2011 Arctic Man: second place women's snowboard; 2012 AMMC Cross Country Series Overall: Women Pro first place, Men Semi Pro second place



LARRY LEVINE

AGE: 56 / **FROM:** Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy

RACE HISTORY: 2016: Finished, 2018: Finished, 2019: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Anchorage, and am a physician at Alaska Spine Institute. I started riding snowmachines to keep up with my friends and daughter. I have had opportunity to have some great Iron Dog partners and riders including Stan English, Jerry Alward,

Tim Kanady, Mathew Spernak, Dave Hausbeck, and in 2019 my daughter, Dani Levine.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2013-2017 Arctic Man

Personal Sponsors: Karen Levine, Dave Hausbeck, Jerry Alward, Mathew Spernak, Stan English, Rick Rodgers, Kim Black and Doug Anderson

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

32

POLARIS

Sponsors: Hatcher Pass Polaris, McKinley Polaris, Northern Power



DOUGLAS PATSY

AGE: 43 / **FROM:** Nulato

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

BIO: I, along with my wife, Gloria, children, Jocelyn, Brendan, Thomas and Bode, make our home in Nulato. I work through the Local 302 in Clear, AK for Wolf Creek. I enjoy everything outdoors, hunting, trapping, fishing, boating and the best yet: snowmachining.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Tanana 140: 2018-third place

Personal Sponsors: Patsy Enterprises, Nulato Tribal Council, T.C.C., Gana Aa'Yoo, Gloria Patsy, Myra Ambrose, Austin and Donna Esmailka and family, Baby Oz, Mary and Harlen Nickolii and numerous friends and family.



KELLY SOMMER

AGE: 32 / **FROM:** Nulato

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Polaris Indy

RACE HISTORY: 2012: Finished, 2019: Finished

BIO: I like to race snowmachines. I grew up in Nulato and I have lived in Galena and Fairbanks. I had a lot of fun racing last year. This will be my fourth Iron Dog. Thanks to Randy Kangas, Brad Mountain, Marvin Mountain, and George Demoski for help in the garage.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2018 Tanana 140- fifth, Kotz AF/WG finished, 2019 Mayors Cup finished, Fort Yukon- second

Personal Sponsors: Randy Kangas, George Demoski, Cozy Mountain, Earl and Joyce Sommer

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2016

34

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: NW Electric, Wilderness Skidoo



CHRISTOPHER COLLINS

AGE: 38 / **FROM:** Kotzebue

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo Renegade

RACE HISTORY: 2013: Finished, 2016: Finished

BIO: I am a lifelong resident of Kotzebue. I am married to the most beautiful woman, Jana Collins. I am also a new father, having my first child, Braelynn. I love to be outdoors doing activities such as hunting, fishing, commercial fishing and most of all CAMPING! The new race course runs through my hometown, and I am more than excited to participate and hopefully have some fun along the way.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Multiple races in Northwest Alaska completed

Personal Sponsors: Jana and Braelynn Collins, Lawrence and Gladys Jones, Kyle and Dawn Erbeck, LEXIN Moto USA, John Bahnke and Family, Howard & Freda Beasley, Ryan Air - Robert Lucas, Grip and Rip Racing Products, Woodys Traction Products, Dicki Moto Jr, Brad Reich Sr., Marvin Barr, Fine Line Interiors, Susan Collins, Ryan Air, Guy Adams



JESSE CRUMBLEY

AGE: 31 / **FROM:** Kotzebue

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo Renegade

BIO: I am from Kotzebue, and I enjoy working, the outdoors and doing some wrenching in my spare time.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Archie Ferguson 2008-third place; and other small races in the Kotzebue area

Personal Sponsors: Woodys Traction, Grip-n-Rip Racing, Susan Collins, Ryan Air, Lawrence and Gladys Jones, Kyle and Dawn Erbeck, LEXIN Moto USA, John Bahnke and Family, Howard & Freda Beasley, Robert Lucas, Dicki Moto Jr., Brad Reich Sr., Marvin Barr and Fine Line Interiors, Guy Adams

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

35

POLARIS

Sponsors: Lexin, Eagle River Polaris Arctic Cat, Fly Racing, Alaska Mechanical Contractors Association/ SMACNA, Q Trucking, Matanuska Brewing Company, Auntie, Ingersoll Sheet Metal, Trail Tech, Big Dipper Clothing, Adventures in Eye Care, Edward Jones - Al Biss, JMarkAK, Shea Oliver, Preferred Care at Home, Opus Memoria, Quality Auto Parts Nome, Tomas Kallie Mary Paniataaq, Denali Dental Care, Jenny O'Connor, Jerry Oliver, Alaskad



MICHAEL OLIVER

AGE: 33 / FROM: Nome

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris INDY XC 600

BIO: I was born and raised in Nome, and for the last 15 years I have been working as a diesel mechanic for Chevrolet of South Anchorage. In my free time, I enjoy fishing, hunting, camping, and spending time with my friends, family, and son, Lincoln.

Personal Sponsors: Jerry Oliver, Shea Oliver, Jeri Ann Erickson, Porter and Leslie Karmun, Delbert and Candy Hutchinson and Matt Tomter



JERROD VAUGHAN

AGE: 36 / FROM: Anchorage

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Polaris Indy XC

RACE HISTORY: 2013: Finished, 2014: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I've lived in Alaska for over 20 years and have been racing Iron Dog since 2013. I am looking forward to another year of racing. Thanks to God for blessing me with

the opportunity to keep racing, and thank you to my wife and kids for supporting me in this race each year!

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog 2013-2018

Personal Sponsors: Jennifer, Kenna, Austin, Rylee, Mark, & Lynne Vaughn, Crouse House, Simon Muller, Team SOT

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

36

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: BRP, Wilderness Ski-Doo



DANIEL STANG

AGE: 29 / FROM: Nome

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Ski-Doo XRS

BIO: I was born and raised in Nome, where I currently reside with my wife, Stephanie Stang, our dog and our son. I'm an electrician at Norton Sound Health Corp. In my free time I enjoy going on adventures with my wife, camping, hunting and riding as much as I can.

Sponsors: Stang Dental, PK Electric, Board of Trade Inc., M-W Drilling, Highmark Marine, West Coast Electric, Subway, Ragchew Amateur Radio, Electrical Power Construction, Grizzly Building Supply, Northern Air Cargo, Alaska Marine Excavation and STG Inc., TSR, Grip and Rip Racing, Bering Pacific Construction, Danny Gucco, Team CC, Stang Family, Kineen Family, Stephanie Stang, Maggie and Simon Kineen, Leo Pitts



TRE WEST

AGE: 34 / FROM: Nome

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Ski-Doo XRS

RACE HISTORY: 2008: Finished, 2009: Finished, 2012: Finished

BIO: I was born and raised in Nome, and work for Board of Trade as a crusher operator. I enjoy hunting, fishing, camping and spending time with the family, Raenelle, Kiyler, and Chanel.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Four Overall Nome/Golovin wins; 2012 Iron Dog-second place; two overall Archie Ferguson Memorial Kotzebue Race wins

Personal Sponsors: Board of Trade Inc., M-W Drilling, Team CC, Stang Dental, Stud Boy, Grip and Rip Racing, Bering Pacific Construction, Ragchew Amateur Radio, RPM Composites, Dave & Annette Smulick, Knik Construction, Subway, EverGreen Tractor and Trailer, Simon & Maggie Kineen, Raven Cuts, Alaska Marine Excavation and STG Inc.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

37

POLARIS

Sponsors: Headingley Sport Shop



MARK FOSTY

AGE: 34 / FROM: Thalberg, Manitoba

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris XCR

BIO: Born in rural Manitoba on our family grain and oilseed farm. Our main entertainment was motor sports of any kind. I grew up racing motocross cross and fishing in the summer when we weren't busy, playing hockey, hunting and snowmobiling in the winter. We still enjoy all these things today. I'm married to my wife of five years, Kandace. We have two boys, Maxton, 4, and Logan, 21 months. We currently own and operate our own grain and oilseed farm in Thalberg MB.

RACING EXPERIENCE: First place in Semi Pro 600 and Improved, Rock Maple Cross Country Racing



BEN HILDEBRAND

AGE: 32 / FROM: Stead, Manitoba

STATUS: Rookie / RIDING: Polaris XCR

BIO: I grew up in rural Manitoba on a family farm located in a place surrounded by great riding areas, summer or winter, so naturally I spend as much of my winter as I can on a sled. In the summer, the sled gets parked and the bikes come out although I've also raced ice bikes at our local CPTC ice oval track.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

39

POLARIS

Sponsors: Aurora Drilling and Consulting, Polaris Racing, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Penn Jersey Drilling, Perfect Start Espresso, IBEW Local 1547, N.E.S, Stud Boy Traction Products, Alaska Line Builders, Veit & Veit, GMC Contracting, Criterion General, General Constructors LLC, Projekt 907



CODY BARBER

AGE: 26 / FROM: Willow

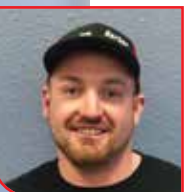
STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Polaris Indy XCR

RACE HISTORY: 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2019: Finished

BIO: I grew up in Willow, riding snowmachines and enjoying the outdoors any chance that I had. I now do this with four little kids and my beautiful wife, in the same small town I grew up in.

RACING EXPERIENCE: 2011 X-C Semi-Pro State Champion; 2011 first place Valdez Mayor's Cup Semi-Pro; 2012 second place Valdez Mayor's Cup Pro; 2019 third place Valdez Mayor's Cup Pro-Class

Personal Sponsors: My Iron Dog partner, Robby and his family, for giving him up for these past few months, My wife, Brandi Barber, all of my kiddos, Mom and Dad, Shana and Evan, Grandpa Mike, Grandpa Jack, the rest of my family as well.



ROBBY SCHACHLE

AGE: 32 / FROM: Big Lake

STATUS: Veteran / RIDING: Polaris XCR

RACE HISTORY: 2016: Finished, 2018: Finished, 2019: Finished

BIO: I have an amazing wife and son that I love sharing the outdoors with. I've been racing competitively for 15 years. I currently work for Alaska Line Builders As an IBEW power lineman.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Iron Dog 2016- third, 2018-second, Mayors Cup-first, Larry Heal-second

Personal Sponsors: Hatcher's pass Polaris, Penn Jersey Drilling, Perfect start, Barber Family, MOM, Klim, N.E.S, Sign Works, CF and Hope, Veit and Viet, Workman Motorsports, Criterion, Alaska Pacific Rental, Road Side, Prism, Alaska Line Builders, Spenard Builders Supply, Wasilla Dental, Easy Rent, Steve Foster, IBEW local 1547, A1 Signs Schachle Family, Chepos, 907 diesel, Blue sky design, Hill top recycling, Alaska cab, Weld Air, John Icher (Lone Pine Fab), Projekt, Wesco, Enderson Concrete, GMC, Long Branch Saloon, Cadescence Contracting, Frontier Frost, STUD BOY Ben Cruz, NAPA, Snow Capped Gardens

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

45

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Team CC, Q Trucking, Klim, Stud Boy Traction Products, Alaska Safety Inc., Pomrenke Mining, Donlin Gold, Doctor James Huges



BARNEY ANSELMANT

AGE: 44 / **FROM:** Takotna

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

RACE HISTORY: 2017: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I am Alaska born and raised and live in Takotna with my wife, Misty, and our three kids, Alana, Kaden and Kainoa. Owner and pilot of Magnuson Airways.

Personal Sponsors: My God, wife Misty and our kids, Sabrina, Alana, Kaden, and Kainoa, My father and mother Matt Shelborne



AMOS CRUISE

AGE: 30 / **FROM:** McGrath

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

RACE HISTORY: 2019: Finished fifth place

BIO: I'm a lifelong Alaskan and a longtime volunteer for the Iron Dog checkpoints McGrath and Rohn. I'm a member of the Local 302 in Anchorage. My girlfriend, Misty, and I have two boys, Rohn, 7, and Hayden, 5, and two dogs, Lokie and Homie. I enjoy everything about Alaska and the outdoors.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Raced The Nome Golovin 200 11 times and Archie Ferguson four times

Personal Sponsors: I can't thank my family and friends enough for all their help and support. TR Baumgartner, Chris Cruise Ryan and Jessica Tonseth Jordan and Chelsea Miller, Charley and Jennifer Reader, Freda Beasley, Perry Burass, Tony Ferreira, JohnJohn Schaeffer, Danny Gucco and all the Iron Dog volunteers and staff, thanks!

IRON DOG REC CLASS 2020

63

SKI-DOO



ARLAN BUCKMEIER

AGE: 58 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS 600

BIO: Born in N.D., I've lived in Fairbanks for 35 years. I feel my best, when I am out playing in our great state. Snowmachining, flying and four-wheeling all sound good to me. I have many miles on a sled, having done the Tok To Dawson run 25 times, also

having completed the Trail class in 2014. Mountain riding is also very enjoyable. I look forward to this year's ride, meeting new people, and seeing new country.

Personal Sponsors: Buckmeier Enterprise Inc., Delta Powersports, Darbys Performance Machine



BRAD DIETRICH

AGE: 62 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo XRS

BIO: Brad is a 37 year resident of Alaska. He is a retired auto repair shop owner turned farmer who also works at the Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum. He has two children, Lucas and Adriana, and a grandson Owen. He enjoys boating, hiking, fishing and snowmachining. He's looking forward to his fifth start down the Iron Dog trail.

IRON DOG PRO CLASS 2020

49

POLARIS

Sponsors: Walker Manufacturing, FXR Racing, Pioneer Peak Orthopedics, Rulein + Associates, Special Events Alaska, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, JD Steel Company, Doug's Machine Shop, Anchorage Well and Pump Service, Summit Coffee Co, Arctic Fox Steel Buildings, Hatcher Pass Polaris, Gorilla Fireworks, Diversified Tire, Donebysaturday, Alaska Safety Wasilla, Alaska Fireplace & Accessories, Inc., Shaklee Resource Center, Mat-Su Landscaping and Lawn Maintenance, Mat-Su Miners, Earth X Batteries



ANDREW GUMLEY

AGE: 39 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

RACE HISTORY: 2019: Finished

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: Iron Dog 2019: Finished

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! Special thanks to the team at Walker Manufacturing, Pioneer Peak Orthopedics, Rulien + Associates, Larry Levine, Jon Melot, Galloway Designs and Thomas Causa.



KLINTON VANWINGERDEN

AGE: 39 / **FROM:** Big Lake

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

RACE HISTORY: 2014: Finished, 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2017: Finished, 2018: Finished, 2019: Finished

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 matters 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.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Fourth place 2017 Iron Dog, second place Larry Heal Memorial vet class

Personal Sponsors: Thank you to all who've either supported and/or joined Team SonsofThunder! Please connect with us on Facebook: Iron Dog Team #49, Instagram: @sonsofthunderracing, or mewe. My beautiful wife and best friend, Calli; my awesome kids: Reese and Miles that push me to be better; family and friends, for your continued prayers and support!

Personal Sponsors: Bender Mountain Farm, Darby's Performance Machine, Delta Powersports



PETER LANGWORTHY

AGE: 28 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

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

BIO: Born and raised in Fairbanks, I enjoy being in the outdoors. I work on the North Slope for BP. The only racing I have done was kitty cats with the Lions Club when I was a kid.



RONALD REITANO

AGE: 57 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

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

BIO: Self employed, owner of Moonlighting Construction, Inc. I've never raced before, but did the trail class in 2014 and enjoyed the ride and adventure. I wanted to have the experience of completing the new course addition. I am doing this ride with three friends, let's hope all our sleds make it in one piece and no one gets hurt. This journey should provide many stories for my

kids and someday grandkids.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Moonlighting Construction Inc., Delta Power Sports Darby's Performance Machine

IRON DOG REC CLASS 2020

68

POLARIS



JAMES SEARS

AGE: 54 / **FROM:** Kotzebue

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Polaris 600 Switchback PRO-S

BIO: I was born in Fairbanks and am currently retired and living in Kotzebue. My sugar mama wife, Anne Marie, is my sponsor.

Personal Sponsors: Anne Marie Sears



NATHAN SHEETS

AGE: 51 / **FROM:** Fairbanks

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Polaris 600 Switchback PRO-S

BIO: I'm a lifelong Alaskan, usually the slowest rider in the group. I have multiple yard sale wrecks under my belt.

Personal Sponsors: My wife, Roxanne

IRON DOG REC CLASS 2020

69

SKI-DOO



BRET BOHN

AGE: 32 / **FROM:** Wasilla

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo Renegade

BIO: I am a born and raised Alaskan and registered hunting guide-outfitter operating BBB Alaska Outfitters & Guide Services. During my free time I enjoy hunting, trapping, flying, snowmachining, and spending time at my cabin. I am also involved in the hockey community, and I'm in my 20th year officiating with USA Hockey. I am looking forward to running the Iron Dog for the first time. As a lifelong Alaskan, I see it as an opportunity to test my outdoor skills in a different way, as well as to see more of this amazing state I call home.

Personal Sponsors: Tri State Disposal



TOMMY GERMANY

AGE: 62 / **FROM:** Palos Heights, Ill.

STATUS: Veteran / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS 600

RACE HISTORY: 2018: Finished, Red Lantern winner, 2018

BIO: Snowmachining is definitely in my blood. I have been riding since I was 13 years old. I especially enjoy cross-country riding in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. After hearing about the Iron Dog I had to give it a try. I wish I had heard about it 25 years earlier so I could have competed when I was in my 30s instead of being in my 60s, the first time out in 2018. After finishing the 2018 Iron Dog Pro Class, I said I would never do it again but I've missed the energy and camaraderie so I'm back and looking forward to participating in the Recreational Class this year.

IRON DOG REC CLASS 2020

71

SKI-DOO

Sponsors: Academy Mortgage Corporation, Wilderness Skidoo, Alaska Foot & Ankle Specialists, Palmer Chevron, KLIM, Pioneer Peak Orthopedics, Valley Imaging Center, Stud Boy Traction Products, Alaska Imaging, Northern Lights Imaging



STAN JAMES

AGE: 43 / **FROM:** Palmer

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

RACE HISTORY: 2014: Finished, 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I'm pretty good at Connect Four, I enjoy long walks on the beach, Kenny G and romantic movies.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Extreme Fun Center Go Carts first place last Thursday night 2019. Won \$50 bucks at chuck a puck at an Aces game. I'm pretty good at Mario Cart.

Personal Sponsors: Klim, Stud Boy, Valley Imaging Center, Alaska Foot & Ankle Specialists, Pioneer Peak Orthopedics, Alaska Imaging, Harold and Heidi Cable, Northern Lights Imaging, Alaska Tool Doctor, Palmer Chevron, Visa, MasterCard.



MARY SINDORF

AGE: 54 / **FROM:** Palmer

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo Renegade

BIO: I came to Alaska in 1970 when my father was transferred to Elmendorf Air Force Base, and have never considered anywhere else to be "home." My husband, Paul, and I live in Palmer with our two dogs, and enjoy everything Valley living has to offer.

Personal Sponsors: Paul Sindorf, Jr., Leon McKean, David Harris, Paul (Sr.) and Vivian Sindorf, Steve McKean Sr., Heather and Josh Morrow, Peach and Rimi Morrow, Kristofer Sindorf, Jonathan Sindorf, Melanie Sindorf and JT Hughes



PAUL SINDORF

AGE: 56 / **FROM:** Palmer

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

RACE HISTORY: 1998: Finished, 2000: Finished, 2001: Finished, 2002: Finished, 2004: Finished, 2006: Finished, 2009: Finished, 2015: Finished, 2016: Finished, 2018: Finished

BIO: I am a lifelong Alaskan who enjoys living and playing in the outdoors. I enjoy hiking, mountain bike riding, skiing and motorsports of all types. I am looking forward to a very successful 14th Iron Dog!

Personal Sponsors: Mary Sindorf, Leon McKean, David Harris, Roy Bloodworth, Katherine Devine, Paul & Vivian Sindorf, Heather & Josh Morrow, Melanie Sindorf, Kristofer Sindorf, Steve McKean, Diane & James Pankowski, JT Hughes, Ed Paulus, Jonathan Sindorf, Peach Morrow and Rimi Morrow



GREGORY STROHMEIER

AGE: 35 / **FROM:** Wasilla

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

BIO: I was born and raised in Alaska. I enjoy hunting, fishing, flying, and spending time with my wife, Cindy, and our children Carter, Andy and Riley.

Personal Sponsors: Special thanks to my wife, Cindy.

New MarkGyver Award for creative fixes

The Mark Torkelson Memorial Foundation is awarding \$500 and a plaque to the finishing Pro Class team who faces and overcomes on the trail issues with an innovative fix that gets them to the next checkpoint or even the finish. Racers do not have to finish with the repairs made on the trail, but have to finish to qualify.

Submit your story via email by Sunday March 8, 2020, to torkslegend1989@gmail.com. Stories will be reviewed and voted on by Mark's family, and the winning team will be chosen and will receive the award along with a custom hat from the Mark Torkelson Memorial Foundation.



ISRAEL HALE

AGE: 33 / **FROM:** Palmer

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ

BIO: I first want to give credit to my lovely wife, Cori, whom I've been married to for the past seven years. She is a huge supporter and the love of my life. I have two kids, my daughter, Greta who is 5 years old and my son, Levi who is 2 and loves to do everything Daddy does. I've never been someone to give up easily. I know it is this part of me that has taken me this far in life, even through the worst of accidents.

In 2012, on a trip in Anchorage, I had a collapsed trailer spring and found myself broke down on the side of the road. I thought that was going to be the worst part of my already hectic day. While working, I was hit at 50 mph by a car driven by a young girl. My body was slammed into the back of my trailer, instantly severing both of my legs. Five days later I woke up in Seattle where my lovely wife told me that both of my legs were missing, but I was alive.

I was facing down months of healing, physical therapy, an insecure job future, and learning to live again with a disability. It was a daunting prospect.

But the spark in me that drove me forward wouldn't let me give up. I was determined to walk and to work again. It took a lot of determination, but after fighting pain medication, pain, and trying to get prosthetics to walk again, the goal became a reality. I regained my mobility and found new strength through my disability.

The world didn't see things from this perspective. They only saw me as a guy with no legs. I couldn't get a job in the same line of work that had sustained me before. Lying awake one night, it occurred to me that, just like I didn't need my legs to move, I didn't need someone else to hire me to take care of my family. I could build my own dream and my own world. I was skilled in small engine tool repair and I knew this was a needed skill in Palmer and Wasilla. The next day, I set out, and with the help of my good friends at Alaska Pacific Rental, who referred business to me, I started Alaska Tool Doctor.

During the first few years, I saw a lot of ATVs and snowmachines come through my shop. I liked working on them; what's more, I learned to really

love riding them as they became my way of accessing the outdoors of Alaska. I wanted to give people this same joy if they were visiting Alaska, or needed to rent an off-road vehicle that accommodated physical disabilities. I started renting out four wheelers, side-by-sides, and snowmachines, eventually buying the business Alaska Toy Rentals. It was during this time that I took up snowmachining seriously. As a double-leg amputee, riding can be pretty challenging as I can't apply pressure on the running boards and rely heavily on my upper body strength.

This didn't stop me. I adapted and got fairly good at it, which led me to do my first race, the 2018 Mayors Cup in Valdez. I did not place, but I finished and learned valuable racing lessons about my body, my machine and about reading the terrain.

I want to push myself further, which is why my new goal is to be the first disabled person to finish the Iron Dog Trail class, and to finish Pro Class in 2021. I won't be doing this alone, with the support of my family, and with my brother Joseph out on the trail with me, I'll be taking my grit and determination onto the longest and hardest snowmachine race in the world. I know it won't be easy, but so much of life hasn't been. The only difference is that this time, it is a challenge I'm choosing for myself. I'm going to take my determination onto the trail this year, and hopefully, inspire disabled athletes and riders from across the state and the country. Follow my journey.

RACING EXPERIENCE: Mayors cup Valdez Alaska in March 2018: Finished
Personal Sponsors: Capstone Dr. Wade Erickson, DC 907 Diesel, Alaska Pacific Rental



JOSEPH HALE

AGE: 43 / **FROM:** Palmer

STATUS: Rookie / **RIDING:** Ski-Doo MXZ XRS

BIO: I've lived in Alaska for 20 years, and have always loved snowmachining for subsistence, and for fun. I'm excited about joining the Iron Dog with my younger brother, who is a double amputee. We're both expert snowmachine riders, and looking forward to winning

the Iron Dog one day. I'm also a local business owner here in Palmer, and am blessed to have a wife and six boys who will be supporting us on our ride.

Personal Sponsors: Pioneer Orthopedics

2020 Contingency Prizes

Two Woody's Gear Bags to the 3rd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Nome. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	\$102
Two Woody's Gear Bags and two Woody's Sled Hats to the 3rd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Willow. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	\$132
2 Fastest All-Rookie Team into Galena Southbound. Gift Cards.	Rookies	Holiday Stationstores	\$200
2 Fastest All-Rookie Team into Galena Southbound. Gift Cards.	Rookies	Holiday Stationstores	\$200
First Pro Team into Willow, LEAD-DOG helmet lights. Product Certificate	All Pro Class	LEAD-DOG Helmet Lights	\$230
Monster Energy/BodyArmor prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Willow. Prize package includes Monster gear. (\$240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink and BodyArmor	\$240
Monster Energy/BodyArmor prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Willow. Prize package includes Monster gear. (\$240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink and BodyArmor	\$240
Monster Energy/BodyArmor prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Willow. Prize package includes Monster gear. (\$240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink and BodyArmor	\$240
Monster Energy/BodyArmor prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Willow. Prize package includes Monster gear. (\$240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink and BodyArmor	\$240
Monster Energy/BodyArmor prize package for the fastest five teams to finish in Willow. Prize package includes Monster gear. (\$240 product value for each team)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink and BodyArmor	\$240

2020 Contingency Prizes

Two \$200 Woody's Product Certificates to the 2nd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Nome. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products* (Official Traction Supplier)	\$400
Two \$200 Woody's Product Certificates and two Woody's Sled Hats to the 2nd Fastest All-Rookie Team into Willow. Product.	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products* (Official Traction Supplier)	\$430
All-Rookie Team that has never run the Iron Dog before, with fastest time to Skwentna. Credit at Roadhouse.	Rookies	Skwentna Roadhouse	\$500
\$500 product certificate for First Place Overall Finish in Willow	All Pro Class	Hale's Technical Service/VP	\$500
The Perseverance Award to any Pro Class team that Finishes in Willow and overcame the most adversity. Voted by ballot at the Finish Awards by 2020 Pro Class racers. Credit at Roadhouse.	All Pro Class	Skwentna Roadhouse	\$500
"SBS Handyman Award" Fastest All-Rookie Team into Poorman. Two powertools from SBS. Product.	Rookies	Spenard Builders Supply*	\$500
MarkGyver Award for the finishing Pro Class team who faces and overcomes on the trail issues with an innovative fix that gets them to the next checkpoint or finish.	All Pro Class	Mark Torkelson Mem.Foundation	\$500
Fastest time from Fairbanks to Nenana	Any Team	DRS Electric LLC Energizing Alaska	\$500
"Make Traxxas Award" by Monster Energy/BodyArmor for the 5th Place overall finish for an All-Rookie team. (One Monster Energy Traxxas RC car per racer, \$300 value each)	All Pro Class	Monster Energy Drink and BodyArmor	\$600
"Red Lantern Award" to the last team that makes it into Willow - \$1,000 worth of Iron Dog specific goods (\$500 from each sponsor). Product certificate.	All Pro Class	Fine Line Interiors* and Anchorage Sheetmetal and Custom Fabricators*	\$1,000
\$1000 in the form of two \$500 Shell gift cards awarded to the Fastest Rookie Team to the Willow finish.	Rookies	Crowley Fuels	\$1,000
"Eighth is Great Award", for the 8th Place team to Finish in Willow. Gift cards for each racer valued at \$500 each. Product certificate.	All Pro Class	Alaska Industrial Hardware*	\$1,000
\$1,000 for first team to scratch after starting flag drop	All Pro Class	Tom Germany/Tri-State Disposal Inc	\$1,000
Fastest All-Rookie Team Nome – Two \$550 Woody's Product Certificates and two Woody's Gear Bags	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	\$1,202
Fastest All-Rookie Team into "Checkpoint KLIM" in McGrath. \$750 Product Certificate for each racer. Product certificate.	Rookies	Klim USA*	\$1,500
Fastest All-Rookie Team to Fairbanks – Two \$550 Woody's Product Certificates and two Woody's Pit Coats	Rookies	Woody's Traction Products*	\$1,850
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.	All Teams	ACS	\$2,000
\$5,000 for the Fastest Pro team to Nome. Cash	All Pro Class	City of Nome	\$5,000
\$500 each to the first 10 fastest teams to Nome (Northbound). Cash.	All Pro Class	Bering Sea Lions Club in Nome	\$5,000
First Place overall finish on Polaris snowmobile.	All Pro Class	Polaris Industries	\$10,000
First Place overall \$10,000 (\$5,000 each racer) on Ski-Doo snowmobiles.	All Pro Class	BRP/Ski-Doo	\$10,000
First Place \$10,000 overall, Second Place \$5,000 overall, Third Place \$3,000 overall on an Arctic Cat snowmobile. Cash.	All Pro Class	Arctic Cat	\$18,000
Total Contingency Prizes for 2020	\$65,046		



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