



Iditarod Trail Committee, Inc.

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Dear Iditarod Musher,

Congratulations on your decision to participate in the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race! There are thousands of fans who will follow your trip up the Iditarod Trail through the Iditarod website that share the same excitement and enthusiasm as the many volunteers you will meet during the picnic, and around race time. Not only are you admired for your ability to face the unknown on the trail, but more importantly for your love and training of the fine athletic dogs that take you on your adventure.

As the popularity of this race grows, so do the events built around it and the piles of paperwork. I hope you will take a few minutes from your busy schedule to acquaint yourself with a program that has become very popular with the sponsors, and fans of the Iditarod, the Idita-Rider Musher Auction. The "Idita-Rider" auction provides winning bidders the opportunity to ride in the sled of an Iditarod musher for the first 11 miles of the race. The numerous individuals from all corners of the world who have participated as "Idita-Rider's" over the past eleven years are many of the very best ambassadors for the race. Additionally, the auction has raised over half a million dollars. Proceeds are regularly distributed to the mushers who finish out of the top 30 money positions. Monies are also used to fund other race expenses, including the prize purse. Besides the ride in the sled, the Idita-Riders that have arrived by Thursday are offered the opportunity to meet and have pizza lunch with their mushers. This takes place during your lunch break at the Millennium the day of your mandatory Musher meeting. Also, if you request, they can be seated at your table for the Musher Drawing banquet. They receive a unique Idita-Rider patch, opportunity to buy professional photos taken with you the musher at the banquet as well as candid shots taken on Fourth Ave. while they watch, (and help if you like) prepare for the ride in your sled.

The reason I bring all of this to your attention is to be sure you are aware of the program and will know what to expect, but even more so, so you can share the information with your sponsors, family and friends who might want to bid on your sled. Should your sponsor wish to capitalize on this special opportunity, we ask to be notified as soon as possible. Requests by sponsors to lock a bid will be

handled on a first come, first served basis beginning October 1st. Race sponsors are allowed to lock a bid beginning September 1st. Please be aware that beginning on November 1st, the public at-large will also have the opportunity to do so. The price to "lock a bid" will remain the same as last year, \$7,500. The auction takes place on line and can be linked to through the Iditarod website, www.iditarod.com. The minimum bid required is \$500, and the average bid of a sled last year was \$1950. The auction will close on January 21, 2011.

As the auction grows near closing, generally within a week, the Iditarod will remove an undisclosed number of mushers from the auction who do not have bids on them at that time. The number removed will be based on an estimated number of mushers who may choose to withdraw prior to the Race Start. This is to ensure every Idita-Rider a sled in case of "their ride" not leaving the Start line. If you are one of the mushers removed, please know it is for no other reason than what has been stated.

In the past, some mushers have contacted the office requesting contact information for their rider. After the auction has closed this year, an email will be sent out with the information, if it is available, along with your riders' height and weight. However, we don't always receive this information if they have received the ride as a prize in a contest or gift.

This program is not only a proven fund raiser for the Iditarod Trail Committee, but has also become a great source of contact for you the musher. If you have any questions regarding the Idita-Rider Musher Auction, please contact myself via email at deby.trosper@iditarod.com, or contact the Iditarod office at 1-800-566-7533.

Good Luck!