



2026 IDITAROD EXPEDITION CLASS

Expedition Mushing Class

2026 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race®

The Expedition Mushing Class allows participants to travel the official Iditarod Trail and cross the ceremonial finish line in Nome — while operating under a different structure than the competitive race teams. They are not included in the official race standings and are not eligible for prize winnings. Expedition Musher's are not subject to the competitive race rules; however, they must adhere to exemplary dog care standards at all times, are required to strictly avoid interfering in any way with the competitive field and will be under the jurisdiction of race officials. Upon successful completion, Expedition Musher's receive a special edition of the iconic Finisher's Belt Buckle in recognition of their journey.

The competitive race remains unchanged; the Expedition Class is a clearly defined, non-competitive category that preserves the integrity of the Iditarod while offering an alternative way to travel the historic trail.

Here's what makes the Expedition Class unique:

Expedition Class – What's Different?

Three mushers — **Kjell Inge Røkke, Thomas Wærner, and Steve Curtis** — will participate in the 2026 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race® under a designated **Expedition Class**.

They will travel the official Iditarod Trail during the race, but under a separate, non-competitive structure.

Here's what's different:

Not Part of the Competitive Standings

- Not eligible for finishing positions
- Not eligible for prize money
- Not eligible for Special or ancillary awards
- Recognized separately from competitive teams

Dog Team Flexibility

- Not subject to standard minimum/maximum dog number rules
 - May swap dogs in and out during the race
 - All dogs must pass standard pre-race veterinary exams
 - All dogs must meet Iditarod health and safety standards
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Rest Requirements

- Not bound by the competitive race's mandatory layover schedule
 - Must take sufficient rest for the health and welfare of their dogs
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Outside Assistance

- May receive outside assistance in any form
 - Assistance must not interfere with or provide advantage to competitive teams
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Veterinary Oversight

- Each Expedition team will have an experienced veterinarian traveling with them
 - Their veterinarian works in cooperation with official Iditarod veterinarians
 - Official Iditarod veterinarians have final authority on dog health decisions
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Race Official Authority

- Expedition plans are approved by Race Officials
- Must follow directions from Race Officials at all times
- Race Officials may alter plans to protect the integrity of the competitive race
- Must not interfere with competitive teams

What Remains the Same

- Expedition teams will travel the official Iditarod Trail
 - Expedition teams must adhere to exemplary dog care standards
 - Expedition teams must follow conduct and sportsmanship expectations
 - Expedition teams operate under the authority of Race Officials
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Bottom Line

The competitive race remains unchanged.

The Expedition Class is a separate, non-competitive designation operating alongside the race — with clear boundaries to protect the integrity of competition and the welfare of the dogs.