



NEW ENGLAND SLED DOG

RACES

& WINTER FESTIVAL 2013

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***Wishing all the mushers, sled dogs, spectators, volunteers
and organizers a weekend of perfect, snowy weather!
—True North Gallery***

RACES & WINTER FESTIVAL 2012

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The holder of this program, and/or all attendees, assumes any and all risk of personal injury and property damage in connection with attendance at the New England Sled Dog Races and any and all associated activity on all private and public properties used for the New England Sled Dog Races, including but not limited to injuries caused by or contributed to by contact with race participants, dogs, horses, equipment and other items at the New England Sled Dog Races or otherwise on the grounds of property of all land contributors to the the New England Sled Dog Races.

The Friends of the New England Sled Dog Races, Inc. assumes absolutely no liability for injury or damage to any attendee or personal property.



*Best of luck to all who are competing this weekend!
- Doug Minster, former NESDC musher*

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Dear NESDR Attendees:

Welcome to the New England Sled Dog Races. This is the third year of an event that was first run in 1967 and was then resurrected in 2010 on a warm January day in which teams raced against the thaw as well as one another. So many people turned out to watch the races and show their support for this exciting event that, in 2011, we happily took another chance with New England's fickle winter weather.

As I am writing this in anticipation of the 2013 races, I find myself hoping that what began as another unusually warm winter will have changed into perfect snowy weather for mushing.

When we first started this event, our primary mission was to bring an exciting winter sporting event to the North Shore, to highlight the need for the preservation and conservation of the open spaces interspersed throughout Essex County, and to donate proceeds from the event to the MSPCA, Trustees of Reservations, Essex County Greenbelt, and Essex County Trail Association.

This year, we have added yet another aspect to our mission, which relates to calling attention to the quality of the relationship between the mushers and the sled dogs. Regardless of where I meet mushers—here in New England, Alaska, or elsewhere—I am always deeply moved by the quality of care the mushers provide for their dogs, as well as the deep bond that exists between the dogs and the mushers. Of course the dogs love to run, but it is the relationship between the dogs and the people who work with them that makes dogsled racing so special. I hope you are as touched by this as I am.

Enjoy the races!



Susanna Colloredo-Mansfeld
Chairman of The Friends of the New England Sled Dog Races, Inc.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all those who have made the New England Sled Dog Races possible, especially the landowners—public and private—whose properties will be traversed: Essex County Greenbelt, Pingree School, the Winthrop family, Phillip and Julie Lake, Robert and Sarah Gould, Ted and Kim Ober, James Cameron, Hugh and Elana Foster, Mark and Dee Thompson, and Tom and Carol Catalano. Special thanks to the Trustees of the Reservations, whose Appleton Farms property has become the base of operations for the Races.

Thanks to Shelley Gill, for being our featured speaker this year, and to the New England Biolabs Corporate Donations Committee for helping us fund Shelley's visit; to Erin McCollum for her contribution of snow machines for trail maintenance; Kate Rydstrom and Jerry Vanek for their veterinary services during the races; and the Hamilton Board of Selectman and Police Department for their support.

Finally, we wouldn't be able to have the races if it weren't for the dedicated work of so many Essex County Trails Association and REI volunteers. Thank-you, ECTA!

Special thanks to the New England Sled Dog Club for their on-going guidance and support!

The Friends of New England Sled Dogs Races, Inc.
www.newenglandsleddograces.com
45 Winthrop St, South Hamilton, MA 01982

Directors: Susanna Colloredo-Mansfeld, Deborah Hamilton, Robert Henrici, Doug Minster, Vanessa Stasiuk, Belinda Recio, Peggy Lynch, Frank Militello, and Cami Beckman

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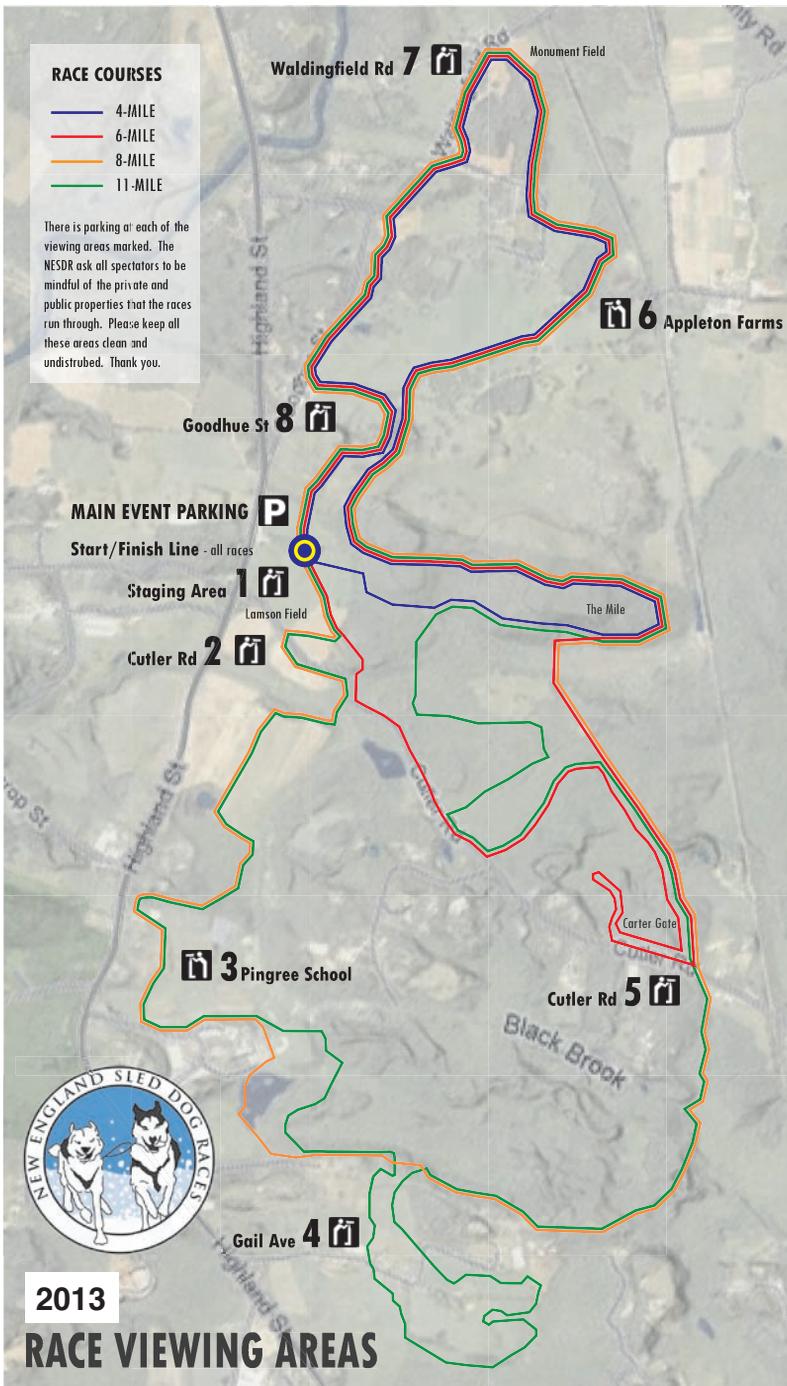
4-DOG PROFESSIONAL

4-DOG SPORTSMAN

RACE COURSES

- 4-MILE
- 6-MILE
- 8-MILE
- 11-MILE

There is parking at each of the viewing areas marked. The NESDR ask all spectators to be mindful of the private and public properties that the races run through. Please keep all these areas clean and undisturbed. Thank you.



2013

RACE VIEWING AREAS

SPECTATOR ETIQUETTE

RACE OFFICIALS

Race officials are identified by badges. Please direct any questions to them. They will be happy to answer your questions.

NO PETS, PLEASE!

A sled dog race may seem like a fun event to share with your dog, but the sled dogs are professional athletes and cannot be distracted by other dogs! So please do not bring your dogs (or other pets) to the race site, or you will be asked to leave.

START AND FINISH LINES

All racing teams need complete access to get to and from the start and finish lines and they always have the right of way.

TRAILS

Do not block the trails at any point. Do not walk on or across the trails. A person's tracks crossing the trail can distract the teams and can cause disruption.

DURING A RACE

When a race is in progress, please stay clear of the trail, and try to stay in the same position until all teams have passed. If you move around too much or move too close to the trail, it could distract the teams.

WATCH YOUNG CHILDREN

Children love watching sled dog races, but please make sure they are following these safety and etiquette rules!

PHOTOGRAPHY

Feel free to take all the photos you want, but please be sure your position and movements do not startle the dogs or interfere with the race.

SPECTATOR ETIQUETTE

CONSIDER OTHERS

Remember, it's easier for everyone to have a good view of the race if everyone stands back a bit.

APPROACHING SLED DOGS WHEN NOT RACING

Please ask before you approach a dog. Although most sled dogs are friendly, you need to ask the musher for permission before approaching. Please do NOT offer a dog treats. Remember that these dogs are athletes and they have a special diet.

TRASH AND RECYCLING

Please use the trash and recycling bins! The races are hosted by Appleton Farms, a Trustees of the Reservations property. Please show your appreciation to the Trustees for hosting the races by respecting this environmentally preserved property.

HELPING

If a musher asks you to help get their team to the starting chute, and if you want to help, please make sure you show up at the identified time and listen carefully to instructions.

SLED DOG COMMANDS

Gee: Turn right!

Haw: Turn left!

Gee over: Run along the right side of the trail!

Hike: Go ahead!

Line out: Pull tight on the tail lines.

Trail: Request from a driver to the driver of the team ahead to stop to be passed.

Go on by: Pass another team or other distraction.

Whoa: Stop!

A New England Tradition

Spectators at the New England Sled Dog Races will be treated to a bit of living history when they watch the teams and sleds leave the starting line at this year's races at Appleton Farms. Starting in the 1920's and 30's, New England sled dogs, along with their breeders and drivers, have been gathering to compete on trails from Maine to Massachusetts. Among the illustrious first-generation mushers, local legends Norman Vaughan, Arthur Walden, Milton and "Short" Seeley, and Doc Roland Lombard are remembered as some of the greats.

Chinook Kennels in Wonalancet, New Hampshire, bred dogs that were used in Arctic and Antarctic expeditions under Admiral Byrd. Later, under the ownership of the Seeleys, Chinook Kennels led in the development of the modern Siberian Husky and Alaskan Malamute, using stock imported from Alaska and Russia after the famous 1925 Diphtheria "Race Against Death" Nome serum run.



Norman Vaughan, center, with his sister, Janice V. Snow, right, and Robert Henrici, New England Sled Dog Races "Trail Boss," left.



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Sled Dog Racing: An Introduction

By Deb Hamilton, ECTA Director, and former NESDC Musher

The traditional Northern breeds that one would expect to see at a sled dog race are often in the minority as competitive mushers have spent years creating a leaner, faster, racing dog. Some competitors still use the Spitz type northern breeds, with their wide chests, pointed ears, foxy faces and heavy coats. Siberian Huskies, Samoyeds and Malamutes are breeds that were bred to pull heavy loads long distances at a trot or slow lope. But these breeds have given way to hybrid Alaskan Huskies, Hound and Pointer crosses with deeper chests, flopping ears, longer legs and shorter coats who consistently win both the sprint races (8-20 miles) and the longer distance races in Canada and Alaska.

Teams can be composed of males and/or females, often with the smartest and quickest dogs up front. Leaders can weigh as little as 35 pounds. The wheel dogs, those closest to the sled, are usually the biggest on the team, and may weigh up to 60 pounds. They do the most physical work, powering the sled around curves and corners.

Some dogs wear booties to protect their feet, and each dog is carefully fitted with a padded harness that enables them to pull with their back, hips and shoulders and not their necks.

Sleds can be made of lashed ash wood or may have lighter, high-tech components made of UHMW (ultra-high molecular weight polyethelene) or even carbon fiber. A sled must be flexible enough to rack from side to side so that sled runners can bite into the snow along their edges in order to turn. Required equipment includes a drag brake, a snow hook, and a bag in the basket of the sled where extra gear or a lame dog can be carried.

The polyethelene gangline attaches to a bridle under the sled and divides into a tail line and a neck line for each dog up to the leaders, who only have tail lines.

A driver's only control is through his/her voice, so leaders and some team dogs are "gee/haw" trained, i.e. to turn right or left on command, "go ahead" to pass another team, "easy now" to slow down. Each musher communicates through his/her own vocabulary of chirps, words and whistles, but nobody yells "Mush!"

Sled dogs are the super athletes of the canine world. They are often very lean, and may even appear under weight. However, like human athletes, they are well fed, frequently vetted, and in top condition for the job they do. Their drivers and handlers will be happy to answer questions unless they are busy tending to their dogs or getting to the starting line. While noise and commotion at the starting line is the norm, out on the trail the dogs settle into their work noiselessly and happily. Take time to find a spot out on the trail where you can watch them do their thing.



Deb Hamilton and her five-dog team in Gardner, Massachusetts, in 1979

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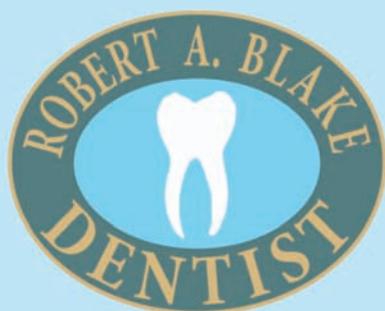
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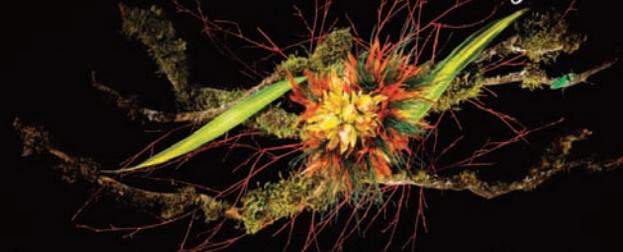


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SLED DOG TECH & TERMS

Basket Sled: Elevated sled on stanchions and runners.

Brake: Retractable toothed pedal that bites into the snow and slows the sled.

Bridle: Rigging on the sled to which the gangline is attached.

Brush Bow: Curved front of the sled that deflects off trees, and other objects.

Chute: The fenced or roped off area at start and finish line that separates teams from spectators.

Dog Box: Divided box on truck or trailer with hay or shavings lined compartments for each dog, large enough to turn around but small so they don't hurt themselves while traveling. May contain more than one dog if they get along. **(Note: Most sled dogs love their dog boxes!)**

Gangline or Towline: Multi-dog arrangement of center line, tail lines, and necklines connecting the dogs to the sled and to one another.

Handle Bow or Drive Bow: Upright handle on the back of the sled that driver holds onto while standing, pedaling, or running behind the sled.

Handler: Helpers who harness and hold dogs at the start of a race.

Holding Area: Location where dogs are tied out, organized and harnessed prior to racing.

SLED DOG TECH & TERMS

Husky Hopping: Controlling dogs by raising their collars so they walk only on their hind feet while getting them to the starting line.

Musher: Sled dog team driver that rarely, if ever, says “Mush!”

Pedaling: When the driver helps the team by kicking with one foot to lighten the load.

Skijoring: Running with sled dog(s) pulling while on skis instead of a sled.

Snow hook: Forked device for holding a stopped sled.

Tie-out: A cable or chain attached between the dog truck and the dog's collar that permits a dog to be taken out of its box, stretch its legs, eat, drink, and relieve itself.





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—Cheryl and George Wickers***

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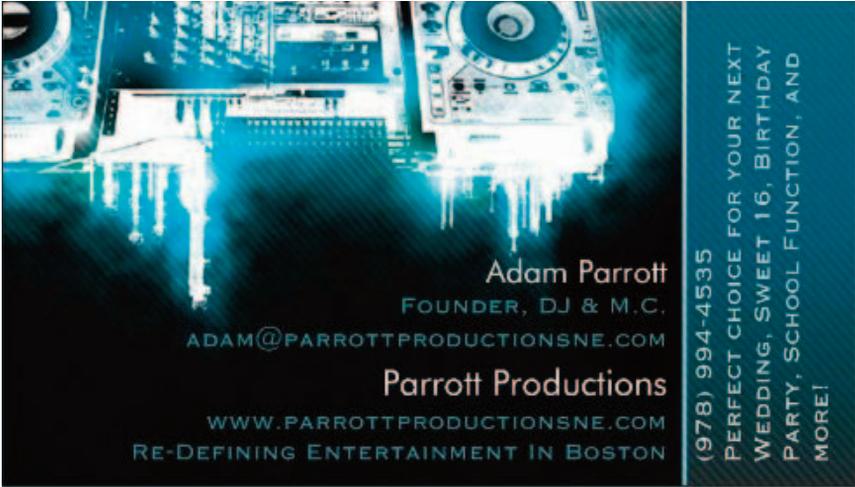
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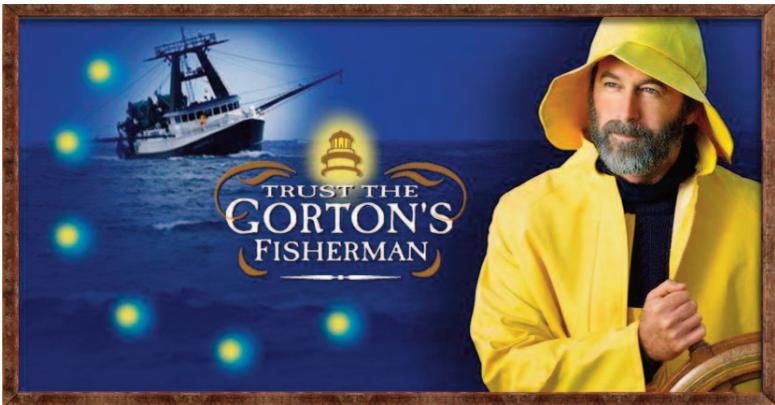
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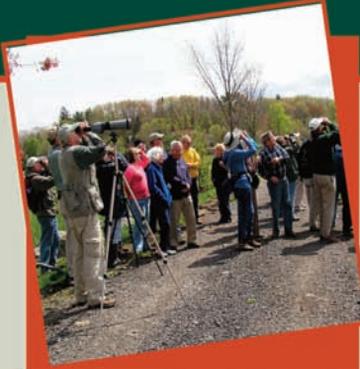
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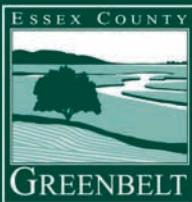
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