



Iditarod Trail Committee

2100 South Knik Goose Bay Road • Wasilla, Alaska 99654

907.376.5155 (voice) • 907.373.6998 (facsimile)

www.iditarod.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Iditarod XLIV special award recipients honored at annual banquet in Nome

Nome, Alaska – The 2016 special awards bestowed to mushers during and after Iditarod XLIV were presented at the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race awards banquet in Nome on Sunday, March 20.

The awards, in entirety, are listed below:

PenAir Spirit of Alaska Award

- The PenAir Spirit of Alaska award has been presented since 2000 to the first musher to reach the McGrath checkpoint.
- Musher receives:
 - An original “spirit mask,” crafted by renowned Alaska artist Orville Lind
 - \$500 credit on PenAir towards travel or freight shipments
- Winner: Dallas Seavey

First Musher to Ophir Award

- A new award for this year, this award is in memory of Rodger Roberts, “the Loafer from Ophir.” Roberts brought together the rich traditions of mining for gold and mushing dogs in Alaska.
- Musher receives:
 - one ounce of gold nuggets
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: Brent Sass

GCI Dorothy G. Page Halfway Award

- Presented by GCI since 1994, this award is given to the first musher to the Cripple checkpoint for even year races.
- Musher receives:
 - \$3,000 in gold nuggets
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: Dallas Seavey

The Lakefront Anchorage First Musher to the Yukon Award

- Presented since 1983 in Ruby for even years and Anvik for odd years
- Musher receives:
 - A five course, gourmet dinner prepared at the checkpoint by The Lakefront Anchorage executive chef Roberto Sidro
 - \$3,500 in one-dollar bills served in a commemorative gold pan
- Winner: Jeff King

Bristol Bay Native Corporation Fish First Award

- This award has been presented by Bristol Bay Native Corporation since 2014 to the first musher to reach Kaltag.
- Musher receives:
 - \$2,000 check
 - a certificate for 25 pounds of Bristol Bay salmon
- Winner: Mitch Seavey

Wells Fargo Gold Coast Award

- This award has been presented by Wells Fargo since 1993 to the first musher to the Unalakleet checkpoint.
- Musher receives:
 - \$3,500 worth of gold nuggets
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: Brent Sass

Nome Kennel Club Fastest Time from Safety to Nome

- Presented by the Nome Kennel Club since 1973, this award goes to the musher with the fastest time from the Safety checkpoint to Nome.
- Musher receives:
 - \$500 check
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: Nicolas Petit, with a time of two hours and 25 minutes between the two checkpoints.

Jerry Austin Memorial Rookie of the Year Award

- Presented in memoriam of Jerry Austin, this award has been presented since 1980 to the top-placing rookie.
- Musher receives:
 - \$2,000 check
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: Geir Idar Hjelvik, who placed 26th overall with a time of 9 days, 17 hours, 24 minutes and 10 seconds.

Anchorage Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Official Truck Award

- This award has been presented to the Iditarod champion since 1991.
- Musher receives:
 - 2016 Dodge Ram 1500 4X4 valued at \$40,000
- Winner: Dallas Seavey

Matson Most Improved Musher Award

- This award is present to the musher who bettered his/her previous finish by the most places.
- Musher receives:
 - \$2,000 check
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: Noah Burmeister, who improved 44 places since his last race in 2006. Burmeister placed 55th in 2006 and placed 11th in this year's race.

Donlin Gold Sportsmanship Award

- Presented since 1977 to the musher demonstrating sportsmanship, the recipient of the Donlin Gold Sportsmanship Award is chosen by fellow mushers.
- Musher receives:
 - \$3,500 check
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: John Baker

Most Inspirational Musher Award

- Presented since 2010 to the most inspirational musher, the recipient of the Most Inspirational Musher Award is chosen by fellow mushers.
- Musher receives:
 - \$1,049 check
- Winner: Matt Failor

Northern Air Cargo Herbie Nayokpuk Memorial Award

- The Northern Air Cargo Herbie Nayokpuk Memorial Award has been presented since 2007 to the person who emulates "Herbie: The Shishmaref Cannon Ball" in his/her attitude on the trail. The recipient is chosen by race staff and officials.
- Musher receives:
 - \$1,049 in "pocket change" inside a Northern Air Cargo jacket
- Winner: Ralph Johannessen

Golden Clipboard Award

- Presented since 2001 to the most outstanding checkpoint, this award is chosen by the competing mushers.
- The checkpoint receives:
 - a commemorative plaque
- Winner: Nulato

Alaska Airlines Leonhard Seppala Humanitarian Award

- Presented since 1982 to a musher that demonstrates outstanding dog care while remaining competitive throughout the race, the recipient of the Alaska Airlines Leonhard Seppala Humanitarian Award is chosen by the veterinary team.
- Musher receives:
 - two roundtrip Alaska Airlines tickets
 - a commemorative trophy
- Winner: Aliy Zirkle

City of Nome Lolly Medley Memorial Golden Harness Award

- Originally presented by the late Lolly Medley, a Wasilla harness maker and one of two women to run the second Iditarod in 1974, the recipient is chosen by mushers and is awarded to the most outstanding lead dog.
- Musher receives:
 - Embroidered gold-colored harness
- Winner: Reef, Dallas Seavey's 4-year-old lead dog, who led Seavey to another Iditarod championship in the record time of eight days, 11 hours, 20 minutes and 16 seconds.

Red Lantern Award

- Presented since 1973, the Red Lantern Award is given to the final finisher of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.
- Musher receives:
 - Red lantern trophy
- Winner: Mary Helwig

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Media contact:

Bri Kelly, Thompson & Co. Public Relations

Email: media@iditarod.com

Phone: 907.903.9350