



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Reigning Champion, Jessie Holmes, wins the 54th Running of The Last Great Race on Earth®

Nome, Alaska – Veteran musher and 2025 Iditarod Champion, Jessie Holmes (bib # 7), of Brushkana, Alaska, emerged victorious in the 2026 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race®, securing his second consecutive Iditarod championship, a feat only five others have accomplished in Iditarod history. Holmes crossed the finish line of the 54th running of the Iditarod in Nome at 9:32 p.m. today with 12 dogs in harness. After more than nine days of demanding travel across Alaska’s frozen wilderness, Holmes once again rose to the top, capping off a journey defined by grit, determination, and years of hard work. He could not have completed the 975-mile trek from Willow to Nome without the strength, heart, and teamwork of his remarkable dog team.

Throughout the race, Jessie Holmes demonstrated sharp strategy and strong decision-making, skillfully navigating the ever-changing challenges the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race® is known for. His ability to strike the right balance between speed and caution helped him stay out front for much of the race, while his team delivered outstanding endurance and cohesion on the trail.

Since making his debut in 2018, Holmes has raced the Iditarod every year, earning six Top 10 finishes—including two championships in just his ninth year of competition.

Winning the 54th Iditarod comes with the largest percentage of the \$650,000 purse for the 2026 race. On his charge to Nome, Holmes also won every [special award](#) on the trail, which includes: Alaska Air Transit Spirit of Iditarod Award, GCI Dorothy G. Page Halfway Award, First to the Yukon Award, Bristol Bay Native Corporation Fish First Award, Ryan Air Gold Coast Award and the Northrim Bank Achieve More Award. His winnings from those awards total \$5,500 in cash, \$4,500 in gold nuggets.

“With his second victory, Jessie Holmes has moved from Iditarod Champion to legacy builder. What he demonstrated on the trail - discipline, resilience, and emotional connectivity with his dogs- is the very essence of the Iditarod. Congratulations Jessie!” said Rob Urbach, Iditarod CEO.

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Mushers still out on the Iditarod Trail will continue their journey toward Nome. The race officially concludes when the final musher crosses the finish line, earning the “Committed to the Last Mile” Red Lantern Award—a cherished Iditarod tradition that honors perseverance— sponsored by Iditarod partner, Lynden.

For more information or to follow the race, visit www.iditarod.com.

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