

Interviewing Nicole Forto – the first musher registered for the 2014 Junior Iditarod!

3A: How old are you?

Nicole: I'm 16

3A: What grade are you in?

Nicole: I'm in 11th grade so I'm a junior in high school.

3A: Is the Junior Iditarod your first race?

Nicole: The Junior Iditarod will be actually my third. Last year I ran the Willow 100 and this year I will be running the Willow 100 again before the Junior Iditarod.

3A: Do you want to run the Iditarod when you are older?

Nicole: Actually when I'm older I want to be a marine biologist and work with studying marine mammals, so whales and dolphins!

3A: How many dogs do you have?

Nicole: As of right now my kennel has 39 dogs. Six of them are puppies so they won't be able to run until next season, but they will be my dad's dogs for the actual Iditarod!

3A: Do you own a kennel or do you have to borrow dogs for the race?

Nicole: My family and I own Team Ineka mushing kennels.

3A: Who taught you to mush?

Nicole: My dad taught me how to mush.

3A: Who are you training with?

Nicole: I'm training with my dad, mom, and my brother Tyler.

3A: Did you have to get a musher to say you were ready to run the race? (We read about that in the rules, but we aren't really clear how that works).

Nicole: Two experienced mushers have to sign off that you have the ability and training for what it takes to run the Junior Iditarod.

3A: Did you build your own sled?

Nicole: I didn't build my sled but something cool about my sled is that it is made out of hockey sticks so it's super light and I go really fast!

3A: What is your hometown?

Nicole: I was born and raised in Littleton, CO. [Editor's Note: Her kennel is in Wasilla, Alaska]

3A: How is training going?

Nicole: Training is going great all the dogs are doing really well learning how to overnight camp.

3A: What are you doing to get ready for the race?

Nicole: I'm running 20-30 mile training runs ten days a month as well as going on camping practices.

3A: Are you having fun training?

Nicole: I'm having loads of fun training!

3A: Have you had any snow?

Nicole: It has snowed about a foot here.