

## January Interview with Monica!

### Drop Bags

We know you are probably getting ready to fill your drop bags....

3A: What are you going to put in the dropbags?

Monica: Lots of things! Dog food, meat, fat, Red Paw, salmon, chicken, other stuff! People food that I have made up at home (lasagna, stir fries, etc). I will also add some pizza, cookies and sweets and lots of trail mix and granola bars in addition to a boat load of juice, tea, water, orange juice and other beverages to keep me hydrated. Staying hydrated is very important! Then I will put the socks from you guys, spare gloves, neck gator, BOOTIES!, runner plastic, foot medicine, liniment oils, Carmen, other medicines for dogs, face wash towel, spare dog coats, and other gear.

3A: What are you going to eat on the trail?

Monica: I will eat all the stuff I send out: pasta casseroles, chicken, cheesecake, cookies, dried fruit. I will eat lots of calories, maybe 4,000-5,000 per day. Maybe I will get some food at checkpoints too, it depends if it looks fresh or not.

3A: How will your drop bags get from your house to the different checkpoints?

Monica: We will put them all together at home, haul them to Anchorage and then fly them out to the different checkpoints.

3A: How many drop bags do you have?

Monica: About 50-55.

3A: How much do they weigh?

Monica: About 40-50 pounds each, so about a ton total!

3A: Is Petchup giving you condiments for you drop bags?

Monica: Yes! In packets so far!

3A: How does shipping your extra sleds work? Does it work the same as a dropbag?

Monica: Not exactly. We ship them ourselves and have to take them directly to the airport.

3A: Did you remember to put our socks in your drop bags? :)

Monica: They are in the pile to assemble. We have three weeks to get them done and to Anchorage. It is going to get interesting as we are leaving till the conditions improve, which could take a while!

## **Race Strategy**

3A: Do you think living in Alaska makes it easier for you to run the Iditarod?

Monica: Slightly. It would be much more difficult, especially as a rookie, to be a foreigner. And it may be more difficult for those coming from lower 48 since travel is hard on dogs and people. However, this winter it is no joy to be an Alaskan musher. We have to travel more than 500 miles just to find a freezing temperature! Our trails are ruined and we would risk injury to run at home, so we must travel ourselves and thus are not able to leisurely work on food drops at home while training...you wouldn't be any worse off being in Minnesota this winter and hauling everything up to Alaska.

3A: Have you decided where you will take your mandatory layovers?

Monica: Probably McGrath, but it could change.

3A: How many dogs have you narrowed it down to at this point?

Monica: We are headed north with 27 dogs. Any of them could make the team yet. Hopefully we will know more after Denali Doubles where we will run the top 20 dogs.

## **Knik 200**

3A: How did you feel the race went?

Monica: We think the dogs did very well. We went the wrong direction a few times, but we weren't the only mushers to do so.

3A: How did the dogs do?

Monica: They were great, we were proud of all of them. They got lots of rest and moved fast down the trail. We only dropped one, SIRRACHA, and only because she was in heat.

3A: Did Tim have fun too?

Monica: Oh yea! He had a great time! Almost too much fun! We were among many friends.