

# DOGSLEDDING on the beach?



It was another perfect day on the Oregon coast. The morning sun stretched its warm light across sparkling sand dunes, and seagulls cried overhead. The 60-degree weather was just right for surfing, beachcombing, picknicking, and . . . dogsledding?

Yes, even Alaskan-style dogsledding proved to be a favorite beach sport for the seven "dune mushers" participating in Oregon's own eighth annual Dune Mushers Mail Run, held last weekend.

Mushers from various parts of the Northwest gathered at Horsefall Beach State Park early Saturday to begin their two-day, 72-mile quest from North Bend to Florence. As drivers and their crews began assembling their teams at 7 a.m., the anxious Siberian and Alaskan Huskies moved about impatiently. The dogs seemed poised to take off at any moment, and many times the crews had to put up a struggle just to keep the fiery-eyed animals in one place. The tremendous energy level building up in the dogs was finally released as the mushers departed on their long dune trek.

Dogsledding on the sand-covered beach seemed rather odd, but according to the dune mushers, the location is ideal. "This (the coast) is much more fun than snow," said Charles Wilson, a veteran Mail Run musher. "The scenery is prettier — the sand sculptures, the ocean, and the dunes are never the same."

Story and photos  
by Ross Martin



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