

Eagle Cap: Dog sled teams include seven competitors in the Iditarod-qualifying 200-mile race

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"We are interested in covering several stories in addition to the race as a whole," he said. "They include the two, father-son teams of Brett Bruggeman and his son Spencer, and also the high percentage of women in the race. We tend to associate sled dog racing with hardy frontiersmen with beards. But there are a lot of up and coming, very capable young women athletes as well as more experienced women racers in the ECX. And there will be some unanticipated stories that we will find as well."

Many of the racers are returning veterans, including crowd favorites Clayton Perry, Gabe Dunham and previous winner Brett Bruggeman in the 200-mile event. April Cox, Hugo Antonucci and Rex Mumford return for the 100-miler. Local favorites Morgan Anderson of Enterprise and George Garcia of LaGrande and last year's winner Jane Devlin of Bend, will run the 2-day mid-distance race.

The dogs used in sled dog racing come in many varieties. Most teams consist of Alaskan Huskies—a mix of Siberian Husky, hounds, German shorthaired pointer, and other breeds that bring sight, stamina, speed and strength to the team. Alaskan Huskies are generally very good with other dogs and gentle with people. Musher David Hassilev's team includes Chinook dogs—an American breed with Mastiff lineage. Connie Star will run her team of registered Siberian Huskies in the 2-day mid-distance race.

The Eagle Cap Extreme kicks off with an opportunity for the public to meet the mushers and their teams at the Vet Checks on Jan. 23, from 9-11 a.m. on Main Street in Joseph, and 1-3 p.m. on Main Street in



Ellen Morris Bishop

Students from Elgin enjoy getting to know sled dogs at Ferguson Ridge in 2018, just before the race starts.

Enterprise. There will also be a sled dog team or two at the vet check event in Wallowa from 9-11 a.m. At the vet checks, dogs are secured to the musher's trucks or trailers, and undergo brief exams by a team of sled-dog specialty veterinarians led by Yukon Quest Head Veterinarian Kathleen McGill—to ensure that the dogs are in tip-top condition. Visitors can meet the canine athletes—and the equally friendly, enthusiastic mushers and veterinarians. More than 30 high school FFA members will be on hand to help at the vet checks.

At each vet check, a musher will provide a presentation about their dogs, sled, and dog sled racing to students and adult visitors. Schools, including Enterprise and Joseph Elementary, Cove, and La Grande schools, learn about the mushers and dogs in his-

tory and geography classes, then bring students to the vet check events. Elgin Elementary School often brings its 4th-grade students to meet and cheer on their favorite mushers and dogs at the race's start.

The potluck dinner at the Joseph Community Center on Jan. 23 at 6:30 p.m. offers another opportunity to learn about the race if you can't make it to the vet check (or even if you can.) This is where mushers draw their numbers and the race starting order is determined. It's a great place to meet mushers, their families, and assistants. Kids' artwork from around the county is on display. The event is free and open to the public. Please bring a potluck dish to share.

The race begins at noon on Jan. 24 at Ferguson Ridge Ski Area, Tucker Down Road, Joseph. If you plan to

go, the ECX provides parking and beginning a shuttle service to the race start. It's best to come an hour or so early. Each team gets an individual start, and you can wish your favorite racers well as they mush down the start chute. Racers will be starting until about 2 p.m.

Racers finish at varying times. The 22-mile junior race concludes late Thursday afternoon. The 100 mile winner generally crosses the finish line on Friday afternoon. The 200 mile winners arrive at the finish around midnight Friday or very early Saturday morning.

The ECX concludes at the Eagle Cap Extreme Awards Banquet, Saturday evening at 6:30 p.m. at the Joseph Community Center. Mushers tell their stories of the race and accept their awards, and there is an auction of art, memorabilia and other donated items. Tick-

EAGLE CAP EXTREME HIGHLIGHTS SCHEDULE:

Race Central at the Joseph Community Center: Wednesday, Jan 23- 8 AM — 3 PM, Thursday, Friday 8 AM-10 PM, Saturday 8 AM-3 PM: Listen to radio updates on musher positions, learn about the teams and dogs. Kids Corner with activities, books and events.

Vet Checks: Wed. Jan. 23: 9-11, Joseph Main Street; 1-3 PM, Enterprise Main Street. 9-10, Wallowa School.

Musher Potluck: Wed, January 23 6:30, Joseph Community Center. Bring a dish. Free.

Race Start: Thursday, Jan 24, noon to about 2 PM, Ferguson Ridge Ski Area, Tucker Down Road, Joseph. Shuttle starts at 9:45. Arrive at parking area at least 1 hour early.

Awards Banquet: Saturday January 26, Doors open: 5:30. Dinner (Stangels buffalo!) served, 6:30. Tickets: \$20, available through the Eagle Cap Extreme website, www.eaglecapextreme.com

Website: www.eaglecapextreme.com

Listen to the race radio and track mushers on a map: www.eaglecapextreme.com/index.php/volunteers/amateur-radio

Baby: Joseph couple's child is county's first in 2019

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Adele, who won the 2015 and 2016 "Best Cowgirl" award at the ranch rodeo, can't wait to get back in the saddle.

An unexpected surprise during Schott's pregnancy was the support she got throughout.

"So many people, strangers and friends alike, congratulated me, gave me best wishes and told me how beautiful I looked, even when I was feeling less than glowing," she said. "Women were especially kind and empathetic."

Schott's advice for parents-to-be is to take in all the advice offered but remember that they still need to do it their own way. She also suggested that couples choose their own labor team wisely.

"I felt so fortunate to have a doctor and healthcare team that I trusted and my husband and mom in the room with me for extra support," she said. "Mark and I are so grateful for the outstanding care we received in the hospital."

Adele said the Schotts' favorite thing about being new parents is the abundance of love in their family and how their hearts have expanded in the process.

"Mark and I are so in love with our son without losing an ounce of love for each other, she said. "It's an incredible feeling."

ets are available through the Eagle Cap Extreme website, <https://www.eaglecapextreme.com> and are \$20 for the general public and \$12 for volunteers. All funds from the banquet and auction support the all-volunteer Eagle Cap Extreme.

Perfect Setting!

Enterprise – 103 N. Holmes St. – 1Bd/1Ba – \$500/mo.

Wallowa – 402 Wynema St. – Brand New - No Pets – 3Bd/2Ba – \$1000/mo.

Commercial Enterprise – 103 Hwy 82 – X-Roads Building – Various Sizes/Units.



AVAILABLE RENTALS AS OF 1/14/2019

See Current Rentals at:   www.wallowamountainproperties.com

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