

Q How did you get into dog mushing?

A As a kid everyone had dogs, racing was starting
Living in Nenana, always wanted to race

13 years old, got 1st dog, a Johnny Allen dog from Ruby
Allen was best racer ever, bred own crossbreed of
wolf, husky and Irish setter; now trying to duplicate breed
Got 1st dog from Harry Riley in Minto; team had to be
driven all the way from Ruby along river (mom was
pregnant)

Later all Allen breed was drowned in river crossing
so few left.

Wright's dogs of that breed - have black spot on tongue
Got 3 more next year from same mother

Used for trapping \$60-70 for fox & mink \$3-4 for muskrat
Made good money - Good for kids

Q Train 1st dog team yourself?

A Yes - Best lead dog ever

To high school in Fbks, drove from Nenana, used to
commute to school every day, passed cars

Q Special training for trapping and racing?

A Spend much more time w/ them. Lay down and wait,
come on call

Teach to stay by repetition

If dog is bred for it, teaching is easier

Q Tell about dogs now

A Oldest is 13 years old, 20 pups; wants total 25 dogs

Never know till 2 years old till they're any good - 3 or 4 years
to get running speed; gotta have the genes - Spend & waste

a lot of time training

Q Always careful about dogs you breed?

A Yes. May lose entire genes of breed. Separate pen to know exactly through visual knowledge. Most don't take seriously. Good breed lost in 3-4 years

Q Good dog, good breeder?

A No. two of best may produce nothing or two w/ genes showing nothing may produce great. Genes held in female - if female throws good pups, hang on to her. Males even harder to find - 1 in 500 ; 1 in 50 females

Good bred dog may not run but produce the great

Good pups - feed 2-3 times a day - worm as soon as weaned as all usually have worms (liquid) - Give lots of food and water when small, cut down later

Q Shots? - Distemper & rabies - Immune to 6 months from mother's milk, but need permanent shot after 14 weeks

Q Food? - Purina high-energy. In winter need extra protein (fish) and fat. Well balanced except for extreme stress. Fat is whale blubber now, raw

Q Training? - Sooner the better & individual, not in group. Dominant brothers will overshadow good pups

Psychology of dogs - good ones may not be aggressive. 2 months to follow master 1000 feet yds

Older - chase snow-go 15-16 miles at 8 months (18 at one) even through kennels, horses, moose ; see who keeps up, is fastest, aggressive - Eliminate 4 year wait

Q 9 months - harness, may take time

Use older lead dog and experienced mates to run with to teach young ones

Q Train pups? - Smaller team so they don't lose balance, get choked & scared. 5-7 dog team w/ good lead, couple good swing. Encourage so they don't get scared they'll die on 1st time out. Large team only w/ experienced dogs

Q Feak for races? - Run in summer if possible - Start in Oct or Nov 7-8 miles Weights on them to make them work. Don't need 30 mile practice to race but need to work at it - just 9 miles at a time

Q Trail? Cross highway, brushy country, not smooth trail like some, rough trail keeps in shape - must be better 7 miles to 10, 12, or 15 or even 26, usually 7 or 12 for train 3 snow-goes wide to train for passing teams Frost from air can get on trail, freeze dog's feet w/o knowing Pulls tire first, slow dogs 1st, ~~st~~ faster later

Q Training equipment? Racing Equipment?

A Train - heavier sled, steel runners (heavy, hard to pull), Siwash harness (orig. Huslia), run double (never single or fan) too short line pulls dogs down, even cripple or choke too long lines may trip up dogs

Dog lines?

Makes lines self, but Pinkerton makes nice ones to sell

Made of polyethylene 3/16" neck 3/8" main line Long string 1/4"

Sled? 4-6 foot basket to haul weight etc, short runners

3 1/2-4 foot basket for racing, long runners equal to basket (ski's)

Birch (from Nenana), well-seasoned, straight it's stronger lighter than hickory

even 1/2" for fast back dogs

Q To season? Green birch, bend runners, let rest dry
One season to age birch - not a month in
the house

Hickory & Ash - heavier and harder to get
Moody sled - \$ 250 (Lombard) made in New England

Q Future?

A Dog sledding is way to go - Snow-gos had their time
(Smoke in face, etc) People ready to go back to nature -
to dogs. Horses not as good - Dogs are a team, a
^{indiv.} group to train. Other living things dependent on
human master. Dogs natural to country. Teaches
children responsibility of care, catch fish for food,
trap food; Self-sufficiency. Snow machine
breaks, unnatural

Racing, and also individual means of transportation
and enjoyment END