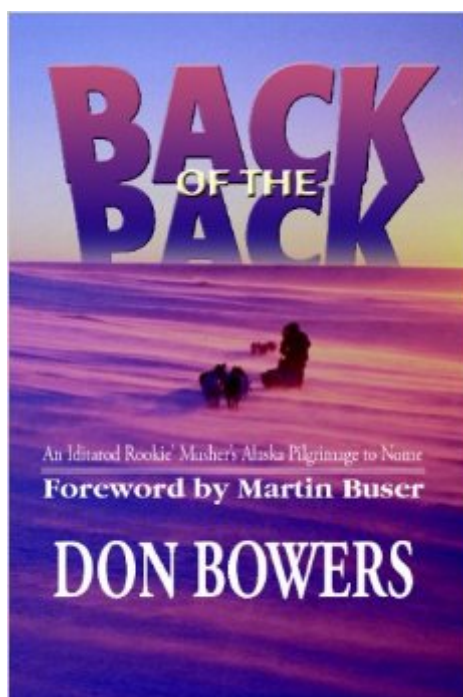


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Back Of The Pack: An Iditarod Rookie Musher's Alaska Pilgrimage To Nome



Synopsis

Once infected with the mushing virus, there is no cure -- there is only the trail" Don Bowers learned the truth of these words as he lived his dream of running Alaska's grueling 1,100-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. With no mushing experience and little money, but with a spirit of adventure and support from friends, he started from scratch to put together a team. Over the next two years, he discovered that becoming a serious musher is not to be undertaken by the faint of heart, or by those who cannot learn to laugh at themselves and keep going in the face of daunting difficulties and dangers. By the time he eventually pulled under the famous burlled arch at the end of Front Street in Nome, his perspective on life had been changed forever by his dogs and by the staggering scope and intensity of the Iditarod. This is Everyman's Iditarod, a tribute to the dedicated dreamers and their dogs who run to Nome in back of the pack with no hope of prize money or glory. This is truly "the rest of the story" of the Last Great Race on Earth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Subtitled, "An Iditarod Rookie Musher's Alaska Pilgrimage to Nome", the author, Don Bowers, shares his 1994 and 1995 experience in running a team of sled dogs on the 1,100-mile run from Anchorage to Nome in the race that has been sometimes called the "Last Great Race on Earth." He was 48 years old, a bachelor, with no previous experience in dog mushing. However, he was a pilot who lived Alaska and had worked as a volunteer in previous races. He knew many people who had run the race before him and they all encouraged him to do it. Every March, since 1967, between 50 and 80 dog sled teams set out on the trail, which can take up to three weeks to complete. Most

are not competing for the front-runner prize. Merely finishing the race is a personal goal for many. The trek is difficult, requiring stamina, endurance and the ability to make quick decisions in constantly changing conditions. The temperature can vary from 40 degrees above to 65 degrees below zero and there are storms and flooding, drifting snow and heavy winds. In some places the trail plunges down 200 feet or more, twisting between trees and at the edges of steep drops. At other places, there are long empty stretches over slick icy rivers. The sled often spills, the dogs get tangled and sometimes they find themselves miles and miles off the regular trail. Mostly, they prefer to travel at night when the weather is cooler and the dogs are more comfortable. The musher wears a single beam headlight if the night is dark. Other times the moon and stars reflect off the snow. And, on rare occasions there is an spectacular display of flashes and colors in the northern sky.

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