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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Wasilla Alaska) - On Friday, October 6, the Iditarod Trail Committee Board of Directors revised Rule 39, pertaining to canine drug use. The revised rule has been put in place because several dogs in a single musher's team in the 2017 Race tested positive for a prohibited substance. In consultation with legal counsel, the Board of Directors determined that the ITC would likely not be able to prove intent.

The way the rule was previously written, it could have been interpreted to require the ITC to have proof of intent. The revised rule now holds a musher strictly liable for any positive test, unless the musher can establish, to the satisfaction of an independent review board by clear and convincing evidence, that the positive test(s) resulted from causes completely beyond their control.

Because of the sensitivity of this matter, the ITC does not intend to disclose the name of the musher involved.

Rule 39 -- Drug Use: *No oral or topical drug which may suppress the signs of illness or injury may be used on a dog. No injectable may be used in dogs participating in the Race. No other drugs or other artificial means may be used to drive a dog or cause a dog to perform or attempt to perform beyond its natural ability. The following drugs and procedures are prohibited:*

- *Anabolic Steroids*
- *Analgesics (prescriptive and non-prescriptive)*
- *Anesthetics*
- *Antihistamines*
- *Anti-inflammatory drugs including but not limited to:*
 - *Cortico-steroids (the exception is for use on feet)*
 - *Antiprostaglandins*
 - *Non-steroidals*
 - *Salicylates*
 - *DMSO*
- *Bronchodilators*
- *Central Nervous System Stimulants*
- *Cough Suppressants*
- *Diuretics*

- *Muscle Relaxants*
- *Tranquilizers & Opiates*
- *Blood doping*
- *Cheque Drops*

Megesterol acetate (Ovaban) is permitted for use as an estrus suppressant. Newer products may become available that are approved for use in the USA, and may be allowed by the Chief Veterinarian” Race veterinarians may utilize any of the listed drugs or other prohibited drugs necessary to maintain a dog’s health, however, such dogs will be withdrawn from the race.

Drug Testing:

- *Dogs are subject to the collection of urine or blood samples, at the discretion of the testing veterinarian, at any point from the pre-race examination until six (6) hours after the team’s finish. The musher or a designee will remain with the dogs. All results will be sealed and signed for before the tests are considered complete.*
- *A musher must assist the veterinarian in collecting samples whenever requested. If blood or urine testing of a dog reveals any of the prohibitive drugs in the dog, this rule has been violated regardless of when such drugs were administered to the dog. Blood, urine and other test results will be made available to the musher upon request.*
- *Mushers are cautioned to ensure that food, meat, snacks and veterinary supplies do not contain prohibited drugs.*
- *Mushers will be held strictly liable for all positive tests for prohibited drugs and procedures of dogs in their team for purposes of application of and sanctions administered pursuant to this Rule 39 unless they can establish, to the satisfaction of a review panel comprised of the Race Marshall, the Chief Veterinarian and three independent professionals appointed by the Board President, by clear and convincing evidence that the positive tests resulted from causes completely beyond their control.*
- *The clear and convincing evidence may include polygraph testing offered by the musher or required by the ITC, as well as other types of evidence. The costs of any polygraph evidence shall be borne by the party offering or requiring it. In all cases, the polygraph testing must be conducted by a facility approved by the ITC.*
- *Any musher who is found to be responsible, either directly or indirectly, for tampering with another musher’s dogs, foods, snacks or supplies, or tampering in any other manner, which effects the results of drug testing results of another musher’s dogs will be subject to discipline of disqualification and/or a ban from the Race.*

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