

Many of you have sponsors who are helping you to run the Jr. Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Some of you have large sponsors. Others may have many small businesses or groups helping you.

Being a junior musher makes it hard sometimes to get a sponsor at all. We know that it takes as much for you to support your team as it does an Iditarod musher. So, in order to make it easier for you to obtain sponsors and keep them, here are a few ideas that work.

First of all, be sure to say “thanks.” This is the most important of all your responsibilities to your sponsor. A letter from you and maybe a picture of you in the race would help. Your sponsor can display the picture and letter for all to see. If you can print it in the local papers where their business is, as a thank you letter, this gives them publicity and publicly says “thank you.”

There are many ways you can give a sponsor - big or little - the publicity he deserves and is probably looking for. Put his name on your sled banners, on your dog boxes if you have them. If your sponsor has a patch, wear it; if he does not, have his business name silk screened on your jacket.

There are many ways to get your sponsor involved in the race. Invite him to the start and finish of the race and to the banquet to be with you when you receive your awards and remember to thank your sponsors whenever possible, at the starting line, when talking to the media, at the banquet. The main thing is, don't forget them. It's because of them, maybe in a small way or maybe totally, that you are able to run the race, and that deserves a lot of thanks and all the publicity you can bring to him/them.

When you have received your awards or prizes at the banquet, take a few minutes to write the people who donated them. If they had not given, you would not have received.

Maybe you have a unique way of working with your sponsor --- we would like to hear about it so that maybe in the future we can offer suggestions to other junior mushers on ways to attract a sponsor and to make him feel appreciated.