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Dog Sled Teams Praised for Preserving Traditional Lifestyle at the Labrador Winter Games

The Labrador Winter Games is pleased to announce that five teams have registered to compete in the traditional dog sled race and vie for the Henry John Williams Memorial Trophy.

The dog sled race features mushers and their teams from various communities in Labrador and will take place at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 23, 2019 at Terrington Basin, Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

“The Board of Directors of the Labrador Winter Games is extremely pleased that an event that captures the spirit and tradition of the Games is proceeding as planned,” said Ernie McLean, Chairperson. “This is an exciting competitive cultural event that truly celebrates the history of sledding in Labrador.”

The Labrador Winter Games is committed to working with dog sled mushers to build on the success of races that are held annually on the North and South coasts of Labrador.

“We reviewed results from recent dog sledding events and looked at ways where we could encourage even greater participation from the mushers and their teams in the Labrador Winter Games. That was the idea behind the changes we put in place for 2019,” said Mr. McLean. “Our goal now is to take lessons from the preparations leading up to the 2019 Labrador Winter Games and work with the mushers to build a strong regional event for the next Games in 2022.”

The Labrador Winter Games is extending an invitation to mushers to meet with them while they are in Happy Valley-Goose Bay for the Games to receive input, as well as discuss ideas and options for reviving and preserving the dog sled event.

“We want the mushers to know that we appreciate their longstanding efforts to preserve the tradition of dog sledding and we value their input on ways in which we can work together on a plan to make the 2022 event even more prestigious,” said Mr. McLean.

The Labrador Winter Games dog sled race will run from the dock to Rabbit Island and back, a distance of 30 km. The best dog sled team will be presented with the Henry John Williams Memorial Trophy. The trophy pays tribute to the Cartwright fisherman and trapper who kept and worked dog teams well into his 70s. In addition, a new award, the Most Traditional Dog Team, will be presented to the musher who makes the best use of traditional lashings and other materials.

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