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**Iditarod Trail Committee**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**October 23, 2017**

**Below is a statement from the Iditarod Trail Committee Board of Directors regarding ongoing updates to Rule 39:**

**WASILLA, ALASKA** - On Oct. 9, 2017, the Iditarod Trail Committee issued a press release announcing the revision of Rule 39 pertaining to canine drug use. As it explained in the press release, the revised rule was adopted as an outcome of an incident in which four dogs in a musher's team in the 2017 race tested positive for a prohibited substance. After investigating the incident, including extensive discussions with race officials, the chief race veterinarian and the musher involved, and in consultation with legal counsel, the ITC Board of Directors determined that the ITC would likely not be able to prove intent. Given the manner in which the previous rule was written, it could have been interpreted to require the ITC to prove intent by a musher to achieve a competitive advantage. Because of the sensitivity of matter, and the fact that it was not imposing sanctions under the prior version of the rule, the ITC decided that it was appropriate not to disclose the name of the musher involved.

However, because of the level of unhealthy speculation involved in this matter, ITC has now decided to disclose the name of the musher involved. The musher is Dallas Seavey, the drug involved was Tramadol (a pain reliever), and the tests were conducted in Nome after Seavey's completion of the race. The material facts which Seavey presented to the ITC during its investigation included, but were not limited to: statements denying that he had administered that drug to any of his dogs; that it would have been irrational for him to do so at that stage of the race because he knew he would be subjected to mandatory testing in Nome as well as a panel of voluntary tests he had agreed to participate in relating the canine recovery rates; and that Tramadol would not, in his opinion, have given him a competitive advantage.

Under those circumstances, the ITC decided that rather than attempting to enforce a potentially ambiguous rule under uncertain circumstances, that it would be best for all interests involved – including the mushers, sponsors, fans and the general public – for it to rewrite its canine drug test rule to adopt a bright line strict liability standard. ITC anticipates that the new version of Rule 39 will offer certainty to the race and mushers concerning standards and obligations.

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