



John Hagen/News-Miner

SIX-DOG SLUSH—Kristina Astrom takes to the trails of the Jeff Studdert Racegrounds in the six-dog class of the Limited North American sled dog race Friday afternoon.

Radant sets four-dog track record

Staff Reports

Warm temperatures didn't seem to slow down the teams a whole lot on the opening day of the Gene's Chrysler Limited North American Championship sled dog races Friday afternoon.

With the thermometer soaring into the mid-40s, Ewe Radant set a track record in the four-dog class and there was some tough competition in the six- and eight-dog classes on the first day of the three-day event hosted by the Alaska Dog Mushers' Association at the Jeff Studdert Racegrounds.

Radant and his four-dog team set a blistering pace in 44-degree temperature with a run of 12 minutes, 59.5 seconds on the 4.5-mile trail, becoming the

first team to break the 13-minute barrier. His time was almost a minute faster than anyone else in the race.

Jiri Trnka completed his trip around the trail in 13:51.2 to take the runner-up spot. Lou Serre, who had dominated the four-dog class for the past two weeks at the Flint Hills Resources North Pole Winter Carnival Races, wound up third in 14:04.9, with Pam Richards and (14:56.9) and Kourosch Partow (15:11.5) rounding out the top five in a field of 20 racers.

The six-dog class, which raced 5.9 miles Friday, was not only the largest class of the event, but it was the most competitive as well with the top 11 teams finishing with times that

were within a minute of each other.

Partow posted the fastest time of the day in 18:09.5 with Rudi Ropertz taking second in 18:12.7 and Jiri Krejci placing third in 18:18.6.

Others within a minute of the leader are: Greg Sellentin in 18:22.0; Bev Stevens in 18:35.7; Ken Chezik in 18:47.8; Christian Taveau in 18:51.1; Aaron Campbell in 18:51.8; Angie Fitch in 19:00.8; Liz Bailey in 19:01.3; and Serre in 19:05.2.

There were 31 mushers in the race.

Uschi Leibhart has a comfortable lead of 34 seconds in the six-dog class after posting a winning time of 33:07.8 on the 10.6-mile trail. Lena Westas

Havrimaki was in second place with a run of 33:41.4 and Chezik took third in 34:04.0.

Taveau and Brenda Burge rounded out the top five in 34:26.4 and 35:19.4, respectively, in a field of 16 competitors.

Skijoring turned out to be highly competitive with just seconds separating the leaders in each of the three classes, which used the 4.5-mile trail.

Carol Kleckner has a 16.5-second lead over Brian Charlton in the three-dog class after posting a time of 15:10.2 Friday. Amanda Byrd is less than a second ahead of Andy Warwick in the two-dog class. Byrd finished in 16:24.5 and Warwick crossed the line in 16:25.1. Kari Lovett has a lead of about 24 seconds in

the one-dog class, after posting a time of 18:31.1. Mike Malvick is second in 18:55.0.

Mushers are competing for a prize fund of \$10,500.

Racing action is set to continue at 11 a.m. today, starting with skijoring, followed by the four-, six- and eight-dog class. The competition concludes at 11 a.m. Sunday at the Studdert Racegrounds.

For more information on the Limited North American and other ADMA events, go to www.sleddog.org.

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