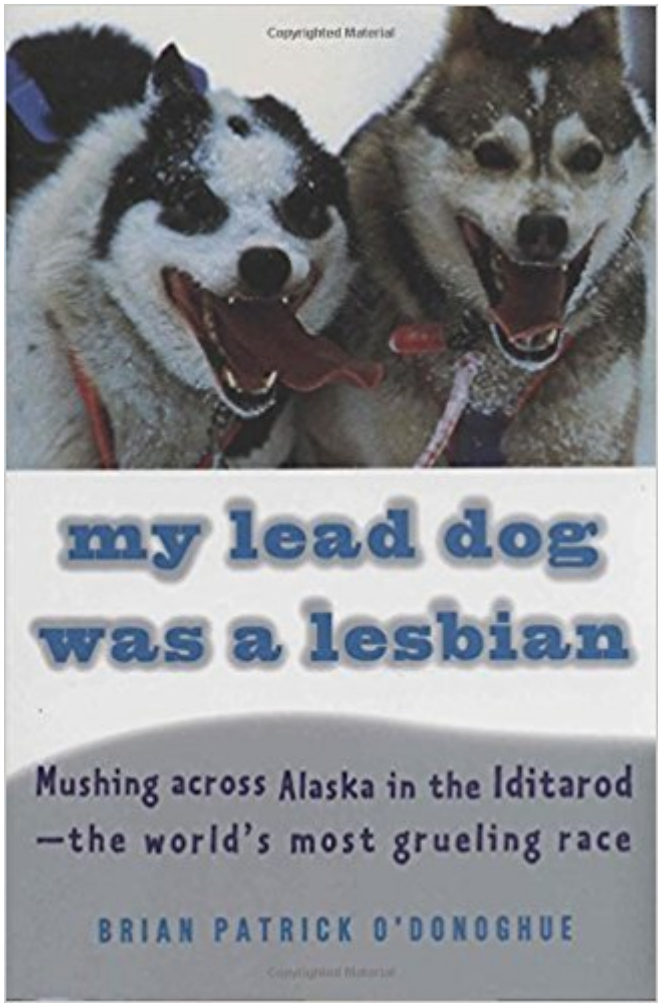
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My Lead Dog Was A Lesbian: Mushing Across Alaska In The Iditarod--the World's Most Grueling Race



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Synopsis

Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â The Iditarod may be the only race that awards a prize for last place.Ã Â But then how many people can even complete a course that ranges across 1,000 miles of Alaska’s ice fields, mountains, and canyons at temperatures that sometimes plunges to 100 degrees below zero?Ã Â In conditions like these, anything can go wrong.Ã Â Ã Â For Brian Patrick O’Donoghue,Ã Â nearly everything did.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â In My Lead Dog Was a Lesbian, his reporter and intrepid novice musher tells what happened when he entered the 1991 Iditarod, along with seventeen sled dogs with names like Harley, Screech, and Rainy, his sexually confused lead dog. O’Donoghue braved snowstorms and sickening wipeouts, endured the contempt of more experienced racers (one of whom was daft enough to use poodles), and rode herd of four-legged companions who would rather be fighting or having sex.Ã Â It’s all here, narrated with self-deprecating wit, in a true story of heroism, cussedness and astonishing dumb luck.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mushing is an odd sport for anybody. First you take a dozen-plus slightly tamed dogs ("damned wolves with collars," one rancher calls them), strap them to a sled that, with little enough provocation, will send you rocketing into the tundra and start out for the 1000-mile race accompanied by chunks of frozen liver and the occasional whole reporter?this after forking over $1249. O’Donoghue, who moved to Alaska from the lower 48 to work for the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, decided to start mushing after just two winters. He soon entered Iditarod XIX while writing a column for the paper titled "Off to the Races." Perhaps because his own mishaps

(shredded doggie booties, sled falls, lack of sleep, poor visibility, missed shelters, tangled, bruised, grouchy and, as the title implies, polymorphously perverse, dogs) don't really change over the course of the race (they just accumulate), O'Donoghue introduces a large cast of other mushers. These do bring new misadventures, but the account can be a little confusing. O'Donoghue's style is amusing but rarely laugh-out-loud. Instead, what really keeps this book going is the same thing that keeps the racers going, a kind of bloody-minded doggedness that thinks, when faced with frostbitten fingers, not about the possibility of amputation but the possibility of scratching. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

O'Donoghue tells what happened when he entered the 1991 Iditarod, along with 17 sled dogs with names like Rainy, Harley and Screech. O'Donoghue braved snowstorms, sickening wipeouts, and endured the contempt of more experienced racers. Narrated with icy elan and self deprecating wit, this is a true story of heroism, cussedness, and astonishing dumb luck.

On a cold winter night, to read this excellent book is about as close as most of us will ever get to doing the Iditarod Trail. I tried it with twelve dogs outside Nome last January, and I made it three feet before being thrown from the runners. That brief stint gave me a tremendous appreciation for the people who undertake the difficult journey. Brian has written a book as fast moving as the race itself. From the first page, I was entralled to see how he would finish. I know, but I won't spoil it for the reader. It's enough to say that as Brian approached Nome, I found myself pulling for him. Such is the way he can write. If one wants to know what it entails to make the one thousand mile plus journey, it can be found here. So pick up this wonderfully written and exciting book, sit back, and experience Alaska at its best.

I ordered this book based on rave reviews of others. Initially,the shift in time from one scene to another is confusing, butonce the reader gets used to the format, the book is engrossing. Having also read Winterdance, by Gary Paulsen, I was prepared for the descriptions of the grueling test the mushers and dogs face. What was great about THIS book is the realism of the event and especially the character sketches of "name" mushers. The other mushers in the race are far more than just names, they are real people, acting in the "sometimes great, sometimes evil, sometimes stupid, sometimes humane" way that real people do. In addition, because the book spends a lot of time "in the back" of the race, you understand that the Iditarod tests ALL the mushers, not just the winners.

I enjoyed this book about the iditarod and mushing, something I didn't know much about before. I found the book informative and interesting. It wasn't as humorous as I thought it might be (no laugh out loud moments), and the format was a bit confusing - the author flips back and forth to other mushers and other time periods - but it was a quick read and I learned a little about something new (for me). I also know that while I'll stay off the iditarod trail, I might check the race out online this year. It's an interesting sport, for a very special type of person.

This is far from the best-written non-fiction book I have ever read. The journalist's experience writing in the shorter form of articles shows through in the disjointed feel of much of the narrative. This is still well worth the read if you have any interest in Alaska, mushing, or man's working relationship with dogs. Even without those interests you may well find the book enjoyable.At the beginning I was first overcome by the romantic notion of this amazing race, and reading through his preparations deluded myself with the fantasy of doing such a thing myself (a real joke considering how much I dislike even camping). Once the race gets underway, my most common thought was "these people are ...insane!" It was terrific and I really wanted to know how it would turn out for each and every one of them.The title can provide for some fun too. The other day I overheard from another room Child A ask, "What is a lesbian?" Child B responded, "It is a type of dog." After much laughter I had to call them in and correct it, although I had fun imagining the kind of conversation this could cause in public at one point if they were both left with their misconception.Since you are on this page, and reading these reviews, you are probably interested enough in the subject that reading this book would be a positive experience for you.

If you want to understand what the Iditarod is all about, get the facts from someone who's been there and knows how to tell it. Entertainingly presented without macho hype or sentimentality.

This very well written book is a peek into what it means to race in the Iditarod, 1049 miles in below zero weather with a bunch of dogs pulling a sled. You don't have to be very smart to figure out the Iditarod truly is "the last great race on earth", but this book describes what it is like when you have no idea of what you are doing. Very, very funny but more important, it gave me a deep respect for sled dogs and a better understanding of why anyone would want to do this, maybe even me. I wish there was a sequel. Mush On!

Last January I drove a twelve dog sled along the Iditarod Trail outside Nome. I had not gone far

when I was thrown from the runners whilst overturning the sled. That one event gave me a new appreciation for anyone who can not just mush, but run and complete the Iditarod. This is one fantastic book, well written, and suspensful. Since most of us will never do the race, it is the next best thing to pick up on a cold winter's night and dream of glory or humiliation. I know how the author did in the race, but I won't reveal the ending. Take it from someone who drove the Iditarod for three feet, you will love this book with the strange name.

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