

## **A MUSHING- TIMETABLE FOR RUNNING THE 1000 KILOMETER IN FINNMARKSLØPET.**

By Arne Karlstrøm

I have tried to put together a timetable for running the Finnmarksløpet 100 km as a rookie witch might be helpful as you try to put together your own plan for the race.

As a base for this plan I have used my first race on the 1000 km in 1992. This was the first year we ran the 1000km. So nobody knew then how to run the race. I had been running the Femundsløpet race this year and mushed 500 km for the first time (I was last in this race together with Snorre Ness) had a lot of dogs parking and generally done a lot of mistakes. When I came home I thought there was no use starting on the 1000 km in Finnmarksløpet, I thought my team was too bad. But after a few weeks I just had to start, if I didn't start I would never find out if I could make it or not.

I had maybe trained the dogs around 2500 kilometres before Finnmarksløpet, including Femundsløpet. The team consisted of everything from old worn out dogs I had acquired from around different kennels to a Greenland bitch. I packed depots for 12 days and was prepared to use it if necessary. Great was my surprise when I ran the whole race without parking problems and came to the finish line with 7 dogs.

I refer this story because all teams starting on the 1000 km today are better than the team I ran in 1992 and should have possibilities of making the race in 7 days and 11 hours which my schedule plan for. Then you will make it just in time for the banquet.

### **MUSHING SCHEDULE.**

#### **RE\_START - JOATKA**

Running time: 4 hours. Rest: 1 hour

You might want to go a little bit past Joatka, it might be easier to get the team to rest and then get the dogs to drink. Do not get stressed if many teams pass you here, you'll catch them up on the last leg towards the finish line!

#### **JOATKA - SKOGANVARRI.**

Running time: 5 hours. Rest: 5 hours

It might be a bit tight between the teams at this checkpoint. Remember to bring a good hook to put up in front of the team, besides that Skoganvarri is a good checkpoint to stay at.

#### **SKOGANVARRI - LEVAJOK. 88 km.**

Running time: 8.5 hours. Rest: 8 hours

This is a leg where you very often will encounter tough weather (soft trails, winds etc.) This leg also has a lot of long runs up the mountains, and once you get down into the Levajok valley it never seems to end. Keep track of where you are on the map, then you know how far it is to go. It's a good rule to rest your team in the beginning of the race, keep the dogs happy and eager to go, then you are most likely to have a longer team towards the end of the race.

**LEVAJOK - SKIPPAGURRA** 110 km.

Running time: 11 hours. Rest: 8 hours

This is one of the longest runs, a lot of hills the first hours. When you reach over on the Tana side of the mountain it flattens. You might want to take a break with your dogs here, Towards the end it's a bit hilly again.

**SKIPPAGURRA – NEIDEN** 95 km.

Running time: 8 hours. Rest: 16 hours

This is a great part of the race. Good trail. The terrain is a little bit hilly, there might be little snow as you pass Varangerbotn, so you might want to bring with you new runners in the sled.

**NEIDEN - KIRKENES.** 120 km.

Running time: 12 hours. Rest: 8 hours

It might be a good choice to take a rest out on the trail, even if the dogs seem eager to go. Remember you are not even halfway yet. It's a great trail even though it's a bit hilly at the beginning.

**KIRKENES – NEIDEN.** 70 km.

Running time: 8 hours. Rest: 5 hours

First you go along a railway track, then through some settlements, the rest of the trail is very hilly. Now the dogs have a lot of rest and the stretch over to Varangerbotn is nice, so here I suggest you take a shorter break.

**NEIDEN - VARANGERBOTN** 88 km.

Running time: 9 hours. Rest: 7 hours

Return the same way as going out.

**VARANGERBOTN - SIRMA.** 90 km.

Running time: 9 hours. Rest: 4 hours

A little bit hilly, but on the last 25 km you will be up on the high mountain, there it is hilly. Take a 4 hour break on this leg, but you have to look and see how the dogs are. Maybe you should go straight to Levajok.

**SIRMA – LEVAJOK.** 45 km.

Running time: 4 hours. Rest: 6 hours

The trail up to Levajok is on the river, it's flat.

**LEVAJOK - KARASJOK.** 86 km.

Running time: 9 hours. Obligatory Rest: 8 hours

On the river all the way, it's flat. Keep track of where you are on the map, then it doesn't get so long towards the end.

**KARASJOK - ALTA** 125 km

Running time: 12 hours.

Some last words:

This is meant as a draft for you to put together our own schedule. Things will happen during the race which might make you use shorter or longer time on the legs, but these things are hard to plan for. This schedule is planning for 98,5 running time and 80 hours rest, including 4 hours rest in the Pasvik valley. If you compare this with the race I did last year it consists of 26 hours more rest than I had on my team then. If you compare it with my race in 1992 it's 12 hours more rest, and about the same hours running. All teams in Finnmarksløpet today are better than my team in 1992, and most likely a lot better trained...

you just have to have some faith in them.

GOOD LUCK!