

## **Jamaica sled dog team coming**

**Oct. 25, 2007**

**A musher on the  
Jamaican dogsled  
team training near  
Kingston.**

Expect to hear a few calls of “mush, mon!” at the second annual Dirty Dog Dryland Derby slated this weekend at MaKaJaWan Boy Scout Reservation in Pearson.

Damion Robb, a member of the Jamaican dogsled team, will complete in the four-dog carting class.

That’s right, Jamaican dogsled team. After all, if a bob-sled team can come from Jamaica why not a sled dog team?

“One of our goals was to make this an international event,” Beth Wagner, an organizer and musher from Pelican Lake, said. “In only our second year this will happen. We have received word from mushers in Canada and Jamaica — yes, I really mean Jamaica, saying they will be attending our race. Word traveled quickly in the sled dog community about how much fun the MaKaJaWan trails are for dryland racing.”

The team, sponsored by pop superstar Jimmy Buffet of Margaritaville fame, gives stray dogs rescued from animal shelters in Jamaica a second chance. In addition, the team's dog mushers are given the opportunity of a lifetime as they cultivate their love of animals while receiving an education and traveling the world.

Long time musher Ken Davis from Saginaw, Minn. is hosting Robb and will be attending the race with him. Because the climate is so different in northern US than in the Caribbean Robb will be racing dogs from Davis's Minnesota kennel.

Robb has been in Minnesota since early October to work with the dogs he will be racing. To his advantage he is very familiar to driving a cart since that is what he trains his dogs with in Jamaica.

Robb is one of three mushers from the Chukka Caribbean Adventures Dogsled Team based in Ocho Rios, Jamaica. Devon Anderson, lead Jamaican musher, will train in the Yukon for long distance sled racing in 2008. The third member of the Chukka Adventures team, Newton Marshall, will be in the Midwest for training and sled racing in 2008.

“All the U.S. and Canadian mushers attending the Dirty Dog are looking forward to meeting and racing with the Jamaican driver,” Wagner said. “Everyone is encouraged to come have a blast in Pearson watching the exuberant teams as they charge off down the race trail.”

The first annual Dirty Dog Dryland Derby, held in October, 2006 drew 90 teams and this year’s competition promises to be even more successful. The event is hosted by the Wisconsin Trailblazers and Langlade County Sled Dog Clubs and sanctioned by the International Sled Dog Racing Association.

Dryland racing features short sprint racing teams made up of trained and conditioned sled dogs and their drivers. Events include canicross, which is hands-free running with the dog helping to pull the musher along; bikejoring with one or two dogs pulling while their driver pedals; scootering with one or two dogs with the driver kicking; and four-dog and six-dog team carting classes.

Chairman Amy Cooper from LaCrosse said she and her committee focus on making the early season event fun for the drivers and their teams. The trail length is 1.5 miles for the one dog classes and 2.7 miles for the multiple dog team classes. Both professional and sportsman categories are offered as well as junior classes.

Races will run from 9 a.m. until about 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the camp, located a half-mile west of Highway 55 on Highway T. An awards program will follow the close of action on Sunday.

Food will be available on site with proceeds to benefit the Boy Scouts of America. There will also be an aluminum can collection to benefit the Scouts and the Langlade County Humane Society.

There will be free spectator admission and free parking.