Bio, Musher: Ryan Anderson

written by Amy Bory | February 14, 2023

Ryan Anderson has stayed at the Lodge while participating in the 2021 and 2022 CopperDog150, and will also stay with us during the **2023 CopprDog150**. I recently interviewed Ryan to learn more about him and his philosophy for dog sledding. Below is his bio.

Ryan Anderson, Bio, Musher

Ryan Anderson, originally from Pine City, Minnesota, knew he wanted to pursue professional mushing since he was in high school. When Ryan was about 4 years old, his father brought his own dog sledding hobby to life, inspiring a love for dogs and mushing in his son. Ryan began driving his own sled team in 1992 and made the move to become a professional musher in 2002. Currently, Ryan's family includes his wife, two children (aged 2 and 4), and about 30 Alaskan Huskies, which he breeds and trains. The 30 dogs include members of his active race pool as well as retired dogs and new puppies.



During the summer months, Ryan works as a carpenter while the dogs take the summer off to rest and relax. Alaskan Huskies are prone to heat exhaustion in temperatures above 50 degrees so training doesn’t begin until temperatures begin to drop. Once the temperatures drop below 50, Ryan uses an ATV with applied brakes for added resistance to begin training his teams. Each week he adds a mile or two and changes up the route so the dogs don’t lose interest and become bored. It takes about 8 inches of snow accumulation before the sled can be used for training. During the winter, Ryan is a full time, professional musher. He rotates his race dogs during race season so no one gets too tired or becomes prone to injury. Ryan and his teams have completed dozens of races which include the Iditerod, Junior Iditerod, the UP 200, and Bear Grease, just to name a few.



When asked what happens to older dogs, Ryan explained that dogs are generally considered retired between 8-12 years old or if a dog has sustained a problematic injury. Ryan keeps his old friends around and they are free to roam around his property and through his house. He keeps them feeling employed by allowing the local YMCA to use them for short dog sled rides in the winter months.



Ryan and his family enjoy a simple, easy lifestyle that centers around love for animals and nature. He loves to spend every day with his dogs. Ryan believes in goal setting and working hard to achieve personal goals. He also believes that teamwork is a huge key to success. Teamwork is more than just getting along with your co-workers, though. Just like humans, dogs have individual personalities which bring strengths and weaknesses to their teams. Often times, training dog sledding teams isn’t just about teaching commands, it’s a lesson in canine camaraderie as well. Currently, Ryan’s young daughter has begun dipping her toes into the sport by learning how to drive her own team.

The Keweenaw Mountain Lodge is proud to support sportsmen like Ryan, who value nature, family, and team, and believe that what you work to accomplish today will be what you love to enjoy tomorrow.



Amy Bory

Amy runs. See Amy run. Run, Amy, run.