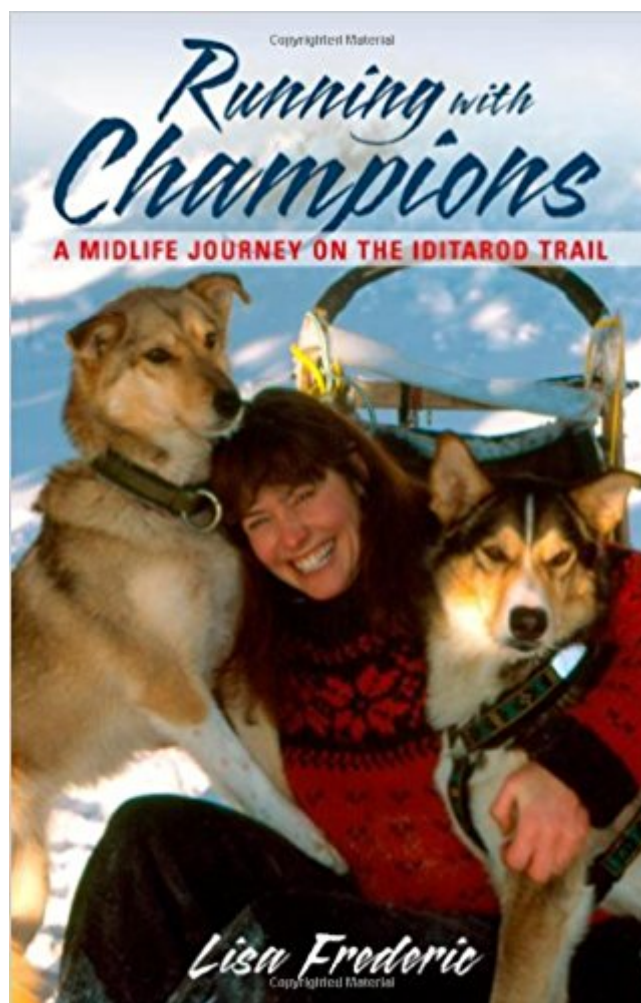


The book was found

Running With Champions: A Midlife Journey On The Iditarod Trail



Synopsis

An inspiring book about dedication, the love of dogs, and the physical endurance and mental toughness needed to run the Iditarod sled dog race -- from a female perspective. Lisa Frederic didn't set out to run the Iditarod. She just fell in love with the event and wanted to help. She ended up working as a volunteer for the Trail Committee at various checkpoints. Then she helped Iditarod champion Jeff King train his puppies. She had never mushed before. She was a rookie, but a rookie with heart and drive. She started out with short races and eventually raced the 1,049 miles from Anchorage to Nome in the Iditarod. Her story speaks to everyone who has ever followed a dream and found that the dream realized is even bigger than the imagined one.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (35 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Here is a simple yet exciting story about running a dog team in the Iditarod dogsled race -- about the dogs, the trail, the weather, and the delightful musher. Lisa Frederic, the author of this autobiography, grew up in Kentucky, went to college in Montana, and spent 20 years fishing for salmon out of Kodiak, Alaska, before discovering sled dogs. As a middle-aged tourist in 1997, Frederic visited Nome to see the end of the annual Iditarod race. The next year she became a volunteer at checkpoints along the race trail, but that only whet her appetite for more. She continued to volunteer at checkpoints for each race, and she took an unpaid job as a dog handler in the lot of a major musher, Jeff King. In 2002 she ran King's puppy team in the Iditarod. The dogs were young, this was a training run for them, and Frederic took them the entire 1,200 miles to Nome. In her direct and modest style, Frederic recalls the humor and the danger of the situations she got into. She

describes the process of learning how to mush, the initial races to prepare dogs and musher for the big one, the frustrations, the injuries, the storms, and the joys. This is Frederic's story, yet she weaves in the support of her husband David, as well as the support of friends, strangers, and other mushers. Frederic finished in 47th place in a race that 64 mushers had started and 55 would complete. Not bad for a 42-year rookie. Fortunately, Frederic is also a talented storyteller and gifted writer. This book is a fun read, an informative account of mushing and the Iditarod, and an adventure story. I highly recommend it.

Here's the deal: A woman of a certain age decides she needs to change her life, or at least follow a different path. It is not exactly like she has lead a dull, boring existence to this point. She has been a commercial fisher on Kodiak Island, the home of the world's largest brown bears. But she needs something more in her life...so she decides, after helping Iditarod champion Jeff King, to run the 1,049-mile race herself. Here is where the book really gets good because the author does not fall into that old "I-am-a-hero" trap. We learn her self-doubts, mistakes, share her pitfalls, and ultimately her triumph. She engages us with good humor, even self-deprecation at times, and always invites us to share the trip and process vicariously. In short, she is a likeable person, who becomes a friend that we end up rooting for. This book gives the human side to outdoor adventure that is often missing in some of the chest-thumping hero books. After reading it I thought that maybe even I could haul my aging carcass across Alaska on the back-end of a dogsled, all I really need - like Lisa - is the desire to do so. Highly recommended.

If you have plans for the day, do not begin reading this book. You will not be able to put it down! The author tells of her experiences caring for and learning to train Alaskan sled dogs to run in sled dog races. In the process, she introduces the reader to the winning sled dog team for the 2006 Iditarod. When the reader meets the winning team, they are just a group of engaging puppies. If you love puppies, Alaska, or the Iditarod, you will want to make the acquaintance of the charming author and read her delightful story.

On a recent trip to Alaska's Denali National Park, my wife and I were fortunate to have an extremely knowledgeable tour guide who had spent the last 27 years in Alaska, first as a commercial fisherman(or fisherwoman) and now as a dog trainer/fisherman/tour guide. Only in passing, at the end of our delightful 8 hour tour, did she mention that she had completed the Iditarod (at age 42). Seeing this obviously healthy, energetic, and outgoing person and hearing this rather incredible

story certainly piqued our interest. As we were leaving, she also mentioned that she had written an account of her adventure "Running with Champions". At our first stop, at the Denali Wilderness Center, we found the book and both of us read it in the next three days. I only hope that Alaskan travelers can have the pleasure of Lisa's company on the Denali tour and share in her story and extensive knowledge of this great state and National Park. If Alaska isn't in your plans, please read this book and share Lisa's love of life, dogs, and the challenges of the Alaska frontier.

Wow, what an adventure! To take on the 1000 mile Iditarod across half of Alaska. Lisa Frederic has written the completely enjoyable, totally honest and surprisingly exciting story of how she entered the world of long-distance dogsledding. Her courage, endurance, her terrors, successes, accidents and setbacks, the camaraderie she found with other sledders, her love of Alaska and her incredible love of the dogs themselves comes through beautifully in this well-written book. I read it cover to cover in three nights, as I couldn't wait to read what was going to come next. Very inspiring, lots of fun & drama, and quite amusing. Highly recommended.

Running With Champions: A Midlife Journey On The Open Trail is the memoir of an ordinary Alaskan fisherwoman whose journey to see the finish of the 1,049-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race transformed her life forever. Observing the musher's devotion to their dogs and the strenuous demands for competing in an epic race, she began volunteering at checkpoints, became an apprentice to Iditarod champion Jeff King, and at last dared to mush her own dog team. A midlife adventure, told with wit, spirit, and respect for the loyalty of man's (and woman's!) best friend.

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