

# About Karen Ramstead

What does it take to build and manage a team when you want to "go as big as you can get"? Karen Ramstead, Iditarod racer and world-class leader, made this decision when she transitioned her career from retail distributor to professional dog-sledder. Her first puppy led to a team of Siberian Huskies, which led to a kennel, which led to racing, which led to the grueling Iditarod across Alaska.



Over the years, Karen recruited a group of talented volunteers who had the expertise to carry out her marketing, social media, and fundraising programs, allowing her to concentrate on training her dogs, racing, photography and speaking engagements.

While she is no longer racing competitively, Karen gives back to the sport through service to the community and by serving as a race official at events around the world.

As a highly respected member of the international sled dog community, she was recently appointed to chair a newly formed Iditarod advisory committee. The committee will develop standards for a "Best Care" kennel management program that will include certification of sled dog kennels that meet these standards.

Karen has also taken on the new personal challenge of training Border Collies to compete in sheep herding trials, another demanding sport that requires a high level of trust and cooperation between the handler and dog.

While it was humbling to go from being an expert in one area to a novice in a new venture, Karen built upon her management and team-building skills, sought out world-class mentors, trained at every opportunity and mastered new skills. She is now competing in herding trials, including at the famous Calgary Stampede.