



Zuma's
Paw Prints

K-9 Health Checkup Continues

February 24, 2006

Hello Everyone,

I told you in a previous report about the EKG's that the dogs were having. Now I am going to tell you about the other tests that the dogs must have before the start of the race.

Jan and her team of vet technicians not only do the EKG's they also draw blood from each dog so that it can go to a laboratory where they do a full panel of blood tests. The laboratory is in Anchorage so the results are sent to the Chief Veterinarian. After he checks them to insure that all the levels are normal, he shares this information with the mushers. The blood "panel," as Jan told me they are called, gives the chief vet and the musher a heads up to what is or could become a serious problem. The chief vet might decide that a dog with an abnormality on one of the blood checks cannot participate in this year's race. Sometimes there is a slightly abnormal reading and it can be corrected with a couple of days of special feeding or some vitamins, but most of the time, the musher will decide to leave that dog at home rather than chance having a problem develop out on the trail.

The last thing that the technicians do is scan the dog for an identifying microchip. If the dog does not have a chip or a previous one cannot be found, they will insert one under the skin high up on the neck and behind the ear. These microchips can be read with a special chip reader. The microchip will identify that dog for life. (Sometimes the chip moves around and the scanner has to hunt for it, but it stays with the dog for life. I have one myself.) I have some pictures from the EKG/blood test/chipping to share with you compliments of June Price.



← A technician takes the blood from this dog that is looking away. I guess she just can't watch.

This dog was not too please to have June take his picture. He is saying, "get that silly camera out of my face!" →





← Jan is checking the eyes of this dog while another technician is checking for a good vein to draw the blood from. The eyes are clear and alert.

Sometimes, the technicians have to get down on the floor with the dog. This dog got a nice tummy rub as the technician hunted for the vein to draw blood. →



Next time I will be telling you about the Jr. Iditarod that takes place this weekend. I know that all my buddies are getting as excited as I am about the races. I can hardly wait.

More next time,



Lots of Tail Wags,
Zuma

Download a free copy of Balto at <http://www.balto-iditarod.com/>