



MEDIA RELEASE

From Emerson to Alaska via the Crow Wing Trail Actif Epica – Saturday February 18th

For Immediate Release

The Crow Wing Trail is a 193 kilometre section of the Trans Canada Trail stretching from the southern border of Winnipeg to Emerson, Manitoba. The route closely follows the historic Red River Cart trading route between Winnipeg and St. Paul, Minnesota. It meanders through the communities of Ridgeville, Roseau Rapids, St. Malo, St-Pierre-Jolys, Otterburne, Niverville and St. Adolphe.

It would have been difficult to predict back in 1999 when the Association was formed, that in 2017 it would be involved in qualifications for the internationally-renowned Iditarod Trail Invitational in Alaska, one of only 7 events globally to do so. Yet that is exactly what this year's Actif Epica has garnered with its 6th race on the Crow Wing Trail on the Saturday of the February long weekend.

This year's roster has racers coming from 4 provinces (Manitoba, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta), 8 states (North Dakota, Minnesota, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Tennessee, Iowa, Michigan) and as far away as Brazil and India! Contestants have the option of the classic distance of 120km, beginning in St Malo for cyclists (7:30 am) or runners (6:30 am), or the newly added extended options for cyclists beginning in Emerson at 7:00 am (200km) and for runners beginning in Ridgeville at 6:00 am (162km). There is also an opportunity to buddy up and try the classic route as a 2 or 6 person relay.

"Communities along the route are proud to support the racers at checkpoints at the Emerson Curling Club, the Ridgeville Hall, the St. Malo Arena, the Sugar Shack in St-Pierre-Jolys, Crystal Springs Hutterite Colony, the Niverville Arena and the Ritchot Senior Services in St. Adolphe," explains Murielle Bugera, President of the Crow Wing Trail Association. "I volunteer at the Sugar Shack and we expect racers anywhere from 9 am to way past midnight, depending on the weather conditions. Some years, the temperature hovered around zero and other years – like last year - saw -30° Celsius. You wonder what attracts participants to such a grueling event but they tell us that it is challenging and rewarding and it allows them to learn about themselves, winter travel and this area in Manitoba. We offer them shelter but racers plan to be self-sufficient and are not allowed to participate if they are not well prepared in case of mechanical or physical breakdown."

Actif Epica is a celebration of human resilience, and organizers also encourage outdoor active events along the race route. This year, the following Co-Actif Events are taking place:

- Ridgeville: February 19th – Broomball Tournament – 10 am to 5 pm – Ridgeville Curling Rink
- St. Malo: February 18th - 19th – Festival of Friends – Cross country skiing and snowshoeing
<http://www.friendsofstmalopark.com/festival.html>
- Niverville: February 18th – Family Snow Day – noon to 3 pm – Niverville Arena
<http://www.nivervillecreation.com/event/show/380056787>

In St-Pierre-Jolys, members of the Morris Army Cadets will be helping as part of their Cadet Program of Community Service, Leadership, Citizenship. Their winter camping experiences help them relate with the adventurous racers!

For more information:

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