



No End in Sight: My Life as a Blind Iditarod Racer

Rachael Scdoris , Rick Steber

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The inspirational first person story of a young dog sled racer who had to overcome incredible odds to compete: she is legally blindFor more than eleven years, twenty-one-year-old Rachael Scdoris has been guiding teams of sled dogs across jagged mountain ranges, frozen rivers, dense forests, and desolate tundra at speeds exceeding twenty mph. Not only is Rachael the youngest athlete to ever complete a 500-mile sled dog race mile, but she is also legally blind and has been since birth.

Though she faced resistance from race organizers, Rachael finally achieved her goal of competing, with the aid of a visual interpreter, in the 2005 Iditarod Trail International Sled Dog Race across the wilds of Alaska.

No End in Sight is a story full of heartache and hope, challenge and courage-- and ultimately the triumph of dreaming big and working to make those dreams come true.

No End in Sight: My Life as a Blind Iditarod Racer Details

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Conner says

This was an okay book. There were quite a few spots where the book really slowed down. I also am not that big of a fan of biographies. I did think that the life of sled dog racer was interesting but it just didn't seem that well written. It seemed like in places there really wasn't enough detail to hold your interest and in other places there was too much information and it became drawn out. All in all I don't regret reading this book but I wouldn't recommend it.

Debbie Zapata says

I found my 2005 edition of this book on a dealer's used book table in the plaza earlier this year. I could not find this exact edition in the GR database, though. All of the ones listed there have Scdoris herself as the author, but mine lists Rick Steber as author. Of course I was confused about that until I read the introduction, which *was* written by Scdoris. There she explains that she told her story to family friend Steber and asked him to write it for the world, which explained the mystery of my edition.

So now that credit has been given where it is due, what about the book? No End In Sight tells the inspiring story of a determined young woman who was born with severe visual impairment due to a rare condition called achromatopsia, a shortage of rods and cones in the retina. Due to this, she is considered legally blind....but from an early age she wanted to run dog sleds the way her father did, and her dream was always to participate in the famous Iditarod sled dog race in Alaska. We follow Rachael from 1985 when she was born to 2004 when she learned whether or not she would be allowed to compete in the race of her dreams.

In between we learn a lot about mushing dogs, bullying in school, loyalties of friends and family, and the power of a warrior spirit. The book was fast-paced and nearly un-put-down-able. I had to admire Rachael's toughness, not only for daring to dream, but for working so hard to try to make that dream come true. Not to mention coping with the shocking abusive treatment she was forced to endure in her school years. I was astonished to see how cruel other students were to her, and how little support she had from school administration, who should have taken control of the situation immediately and put a stop to it.

Some of the most exciting sections of the book involved being out on the trail with Rachael and her dogs, whether she was doing training runs or participating in organized races. The story of her first time running a sled solo brought a happy tear to my eye, as did the experience she had on her sixteenth birthday. The joy and love she has for her sport shines clearly on every page.

Two further comments about this book: 1. The very first chapter of my copy has many words underlined with their Spanish equivalents written above or in the margins. But after that first chapter, no marks at all. I'll always wonder if the person who used to own this book gave up trying to read it in English or understood all the words after that first chapter. And 2. After reading this book I am curious to see if I can ever find any other titles by Rick Steber, to see what his fiction stories are like. Someday!

Cynthia says

Rachel's story of going up against the odds is interesting, but she needed much more help than she got when writing her story. Too often it sounded like a high school essay. However, it was worth reading about how she never gave up even when everything was stacked against her.

Kerri says

The exciting and inspirational story of Rachael Scdoris, a professional sled dog musher who happens to be legally blind. Scdoris tells of her childhood in Oregon, participating in track and cross-country in high school, and her life on the sled, starting when she was first allowed to drive a dog team at the age of ten up until she became the first legally blind person to run the Iditarod. Funny, fast-paced and all in all an excellent book. If you loved Touch The Top of the World by Erik Weihenmayer, you'll like this. Also recommended for any dog lovers.

Jennifer Meffert says

A Memoir following the challenges a courageous and tough blind girl met on her way to run the Iditarod. She had to fight for the right to use a 'sight' team to direct her when he limited sight failed her. I randomly found this book in the library and picked it up, it was interesting to read and I learned a lot about the 'musher' world.

Chrissie says

meh. just. meh.

i only finished it because of my somewhat strange and not fully explored love of the iditarod.

but the book just wasn't well written, the voice was irritating, and it generally lacked.

that said, rachael scdoris, as are all serious mushers, is an amazing athlete.

Erin Martinelli says

I am 2/3 the way through this book and really like it. The writing style is no nonsense; not fluffy or poetic, but Rachael's story is so inspiring, and at times heart-wrenching, that it is difficult to put down.

Michelle says

From the beginning Rachael's life is one of hardship. However she lives her life according to her rules. She

loves the outdoors and enjoys her father's sled dogs. As Rachael grows she decides she wants to learn to run with her dad's sled dogs. As her first run is described I felt that I was with her on that sled. This book is full of action as well as heart-felt sadness for the taunting she took as a child because of her visual impairment.

Mom says

As an eight year old legally blind girl, Rachael Scdoris decided that she wanted to be a sled dog musher and to run the Iditarod. She faced many challenges along the way but was determined to achieve her goal. Her story is inspiring and informative.

Written in a very simple way, the book seemed aimed to middle-schoolers. Not a great or memorable book, but maybe a good choice for a young child needing a dose of courage or inspiration.

Jonathan McFerran says

This book took me on an adventurous journey across the frozen Alaskan tundra. I enjoyed reading about the hardships Rachael faced for being a blind dog sled racer, and the way she overcame the many preconceptions others had of her. Throughout the book, she proves to be a force to be reckoned with and shows, even professional dog sled racers, that she can do anything she puts her mind to. Rachael and Rick also do a remarkable job incorporating the lifestyle of what it takes to be part of a dog sled team. I had no idea how much work, dedication, and persistence it takes to put together a reliable team of hardworking dogs. Despite Rachael's visual limitations, both authors do a fantastic job describing the Alaskan scenery and each chapter is filled with imagery and figurative language. No End in Sight was a pleasure to read and anyone who is looking to go on an epic trek through the Iditarod trail should read it also.

Emilia says

This eye-opening autobiography was interesting and easy to read. I learned much about blindness and loved seeing the world from Rachael's point of view. My favorite chapters were the ones in which she described sledding with the dogs and the care she showed for each of them. Racheal is just a normal girl who works hard to overcome the challenges she faces. One that she will deal with forever is her blindness, but this does not define her, just as the challenges you meet do not define you.

Shannonmde says

Glossary of sled dog terms in back of book.. helpful to read before reading the rest of the book.

Some of the places she describes in the book are so big and beautiful sounding or big and dangerous that I find myself looking them up on Google Maps / Google Images to get a clearer picture of where we are since it is such a foreign landscape to me.

Reading the book and hearing the name dropping she does about people who support her or people she's met while making so little mention of her mom make me wonder about her relationship with her mom. Is her mom really that absent?

While Rachael likes to say that she sometimes runs her mouth off at reporters and has to ask them not to print some of her remarks, she also seems to run her mouth off at one particular reporter in the book, "If I ever run into Mr. Medred again I will ask him why he did not feel an obligation, or have the common courtesy, to introduce himself to me before he interviewed me, and I suppose I should apologize for having too much sight for a blind person." 223

My dogs run to please me and because it is fun for them. They are bred to run, but when running becomes a struggle they lose interest in a hurry. To motivate them I stopped often, gave them loves, and tried to pump a little enthusiasm back into their tired bodies. I let them know that, much like a long-distance runner on the track, they could push through this pain, and once they had their second wind everything would be better. I was animated and expressive in my gestures and with my words. I switched leaders often so unnecessary stress was not put on any one or two dogs. We were a team, and as a team we would get through this trying stretch of trail together. I handed out salmon treats, hot dogs, and beef fat. 251

Nikki Horne says

No End In Sight is a great inspirational story for children to read. I myself was given this book at the age of 12 and I loved it. It is true story about a girl named Rachael Scdoris who is blind. She is also a sled dog racer. It tells the journey off her overcoming her blindness and doing what she is passionate about regardless of her disability. I think this book would be considered a social issue because of her disability. It is hard to talk to children about disabilities because they usually cannot relate to them.

With the help of this book, children can have a different perspective about disabilities. They can realize that although someone may be different than them, they can still accomplish great things. Just because someone has a disability does not mean that someone cannot follow their dreams. This book is such a great example of that and especially so because it is based off of Rachael Scdoris's actual life. I think this book is a great way to introduce disabilities to children and makes it easier for adults to explain and talk to them about the topic. I think this is a great book and would recommend it to adults as well since it is very inspirational.

Cathy says

I haven't actually read this book yet because I just checked it out today for an English project. It sounds intriguing though! Imagine a *legally blind* young woman participating in a *500 mile* dog sled race. In *Alaska*.

Sounds awesome! Can't wait to read! :)

Update: This book was truly inspiring and awesome. I recommend it to anyone!

Emily says

I read this book in eighth grade, and I enjoyed it so much that I loaned it to my English teacher. It pains me

that I never got it back. Six years later, I remember enjoying the story immensely and being thoroughly inspired. I would love to read it again.
