



Recap by: Emily Wicklund

Goodridge/Grygla I-500: Round Four

Cor PowerSports headed to Northern Minnesota for the legendary International 500, currently known as the Goodridge/Grygla I-500. One year ago, teams were welcomed to Goodridge with a snow storm and -30 temperatures. This year, the sun was shining and the temperatures were in the 30 degrees all weekend! This race is a true test of racer endurance and machine durability. To finish this race is an accomplishment on its own. The race course had a mix of ditch and on day one had a long stretch on the river. The day one course was approximately 120 miles heading south and into Thief River Falls. The day two course headed north and was approximately 127 miles. Most classes ran two laps each day, 250 per day, with three mandatory fuel stops. The Junior 14-17 classes ran one lap each day with the Junior 10-13 and classic classes running one lap on Saturday only. The weekend kicked off with sleds being impounded by 5 P.M. on Friday night and then an autograph session with the K.C. Pro West circuit at 5 P.M. After a great turnout at the autograph session, the drivers meeting was held. All classes besides the Pro divisions drew their starting position pill at sign up but the Pros drew their pill in front of the crowd at the meeting. Drawing the number one and the sled who would break the course was Ski-Doo racer Dillan Dohrn. Drawing two was Marshall Busse (Polaris) and drawing three was Dan Revering (Polaris). Last year's I-500 champion Zach Herfindahl (Arctic Cat) drew 11 and the 2018 I-500 champion Aaron Christensen (Polaris) drew the 14 pill.

Saturday morning brought sunshine and racing started a few minutes after 9 A.M. Sleds started one at a time 15 seconds apart with the Pro class starting, Pro Vet 35+ class after them, Semi Pro Factory off next, Pro Factory Women's following and the remaining classes in tow. About 15 miles into the race, Dohrn still led the way with Herfindahl already up to eighth on track and Christensen up to tenth. Coming into the first fuel stop, Herfindahl was already out front on track making up ten positions. Revering came in second, and Tate third. Christensen came in fifth making up nine positions. In the Semi Pro ranks, Boe Bunke made his way to the front of his class. Herfindahl, Revering, and Christensen made a gap from the rest of the pack and pulled away. The Pro Vet 35+ class had a tight battle going between Ritzinger and Roehl on a pair of Ski-Doo's. Sleds made their way into the second fuel stop and clocked in the first lap of day two with Herfindahl, Revering, and Christensen out front. Bunke, Brown, and Selby were all picking their way through the pack as well. Going into the second lap, the ditches were rougher and it was a whole new track for the Pro racers. Multiple racers commented "The river was a nice break from the rough ditches". As sleds made their final lap on the day the running order out front remained the same. After about 240 miles, Zach Herfindahl was the first to cross the line and timed in fastest on his Arctic Cat with a time of 3 hours .5 minutes 20.514 seconds.

Christensen clocked in second (Polaris) 1 minute 43.581 seconds out of the lead. Dan Revering (Polaris) clocked in third 2 minutes 19.294 seconds behind first. Justin Tate was third (Polaris) 6 minutes 13.396 seconds back and Taylor Bunke (Polaris) rounded out the top five 7 minutes 24.403 seconds back. In the Semi Pro division, Boe Bunke (Polaris) led the way with a day one time of 3 hours 47 minutes 10.857 seconds. Zechariah Neeposh clocked in second (Polaris) 3 minutes 52.348 seconds back. Park Krumm timed in third (Ski-Doo) 5 minutes 32.497 seconds out of the lead. Brandon Wolter fourth on Polaris (-6:51.127) and Derick Krug in fifth on Polaris (-7:11.971). In the Sport class, Keagen Houser led after day one with Oliver Olson 2 minutes 49.383 second back and Chance Ogle in third 3 minutes 30.144 seconds out of first. A notable close battle after day one was in the Pro Factory 35+ class, Nick Roehl led by only 7.049 seconds over Craig Ritzinger after 240 miles. In the Junior 14-17 class, Elliot Clark was leading by only 19.286 seconds over Aaden Olson in second. At 2 P.M. there was a one hour maintenance period for teams to work on their sleds. Sleds had to stay in a marked area with all sled components being brought to race trailers marked with paint. There was another one hour maintenance period after the first one for another group of sleds. All sleds were then impounded again after the work period ended. Teams were not allowed to touch sleds until race time Sunday. After day one, the Junior 10-13 classes were done for the weekend so their times were final. In the Junior 10-13 class, Bennett Iverson took the win (Arctic Cat) with a time of 2:16:00.954. Coming in second only 56.465 second back was Trig Anderson (2:16:54.419) on his Arctic Cat. Coming in third and winning the Junior 10-13 Girls class was Reese Novacek on her Polaris (2:18:59.749). Coming in second in the Junior 10-13 Girls division was Charlie Kangas on her Ski-Doo (2:47:42.055). Rounding out the podium was Kynsie Diesen on her Arctic Cat (2:52:07.608).

Sunday started with dense fog at the original start time of 9 A.M. The start was pushed back to 10 A.M. with the hope the fog would lift when the sun came out. Exactly that happened and sleds were given the green at 10. The Pro class left the line in their finishing position from yesterday with the top three leaving with the time gap they created the previous day. The remaining Pro racer left with a 15 second gap. All non Pro classes left in an inverted start order from day one. Herfindahl left the line first and broke the trail on the day two loop which was completely different from day one. 1 minute 43 seconds later, Aaron Christensen was given the green. Another 36 seconds later, Dan Revering got the green. All other sleds started 15 seconds apart and tried to chase down the lead. Coming into the first fuel stop, Herfindahl led the way with Christensen and Revering nose to tail closing the gap on Herfindahl. These three riders created an even bigger gap on the field during day two. Selby got around Tate along with Brown making his way into the top six. Boe Bunke, who led after day one in the Semi Pro class, started towards the back of the pack on day two. He picked off riders one by one and was the fourth sled into the first fuel stop for Semi Pro behind Kangas running third on track, Peppel second, and Wolters first into fuel. During lap one, the sun went behind some clouds which created a flat light making visibility an issue. As Charlie Revering asked his brother Dan after the race "Where were you when the lights went out?" The sun thankfully came back out by lap two but this threw a wrench in things on lap one. As sleds finished the first half of day two, Herfindahl was still out front but the battle of Christensen and Revering were slowly closing in on the lead. The last 125 mile lap was all about closing in and finishing. Going into the final fuel

stop in Skime, Herfindahl was in and out of fueling before the next two sleds came in only 50 seconds back. Reverting was second into fuel with Christensen third. However, Christensen was able to get out of the fuel stop first and was on the hunt to chase down the lead with Reverting now in third on the course.

The crowd grew around the finish line anticipating the winner of the I-500 to appear. Coming to the line with his fist pumping in the air was the Arctic Cat 312 machine of Zach Herfindahl. His total race time was 7 hours 15 minutes 15.958 seconds. This officially made Herfindahl the 2023 Goodridge/Grygla I-500 champion making him a five time I-500 champion tying for most all time with Brian Dyrdaahl. He is also the first racer to win four titles back-to-back. Coming in next with the fastest day two time but second overall time was Polaris racer Aaron Christensen. His total time was 7 hours 15 minutes 58.081 (-42.123). Rounding out the podium was Dan Reverting on his Polaris with a time of 7 hours 17 minutes 35.333 seconds (-2:19.375). In fourth was the Polaris of Justin Tate (7:29:47.538) and in fifth was David Brown on Arctic Cat (7:32:28.479). The Pro Open podium was the same as the Pro Factory class. In the Semi Pro Factory class, Boe Bunke came away with the win on his Polaris with a time of 7 hours 41 minutes 45.675 seconds. He is now a back-to-back Semi Pro Factory I-500 champion. Clocking in second was Brandon Wolter (-4:49.199) and Zechariah Neeposh in third (-4:44.777) making it an all Polaris podium. In fourth was the Polaris of Evan Peppel (-12:12.159) and the Polaris of Derick Krug in fifth (-16:6.689). In the Semi Pro Improved class the top two were the same with Evan Peppel moving up to third, Cooper Kangas place fourth (-20:11.229) and Luke Van Lyssel in fifth (-29:9.568). The Pro Factory Women's class also had an I-500 cup up for grabs this year. Lydia Sobeck was able to claim the cup on her Ski-Doo with a total time of 8 hours 52 minutes 51.673 seconds. This makes Sobeck a back-to-back I-500 champion. Coming in second was the Ski-Doo of Gabby Hallstrom (-32:11.532). Rounding out the podium was Frankie Omang on her Arctic Cat (-1:4:22.604). In the Pro Vet 35+ class, the class battle was cut short due to some mechanical issues. The only racer to finish the entire 500 mile race was Arctic Cat racer Jon Arneson. His total time was 8 hours 48 minutes 48.620 seconds. In the Sport Stock class, Oliver Olson took the win on his Polaris with a time of 8 hours 18 minutes 57.482 seconds. Taking second was Chance Ogle on his Polaris (-8:05.588) and in third was Jon Arneson on his Arctic Cat with his Pro Vet 35+ time stated prior. In the Sport Improved class, Oliver Olson also claimed the win with Lydia Sobeck taking second with her Pro Factory Women's time and Jarrett Loegering taking third on his Polaris (35:45.98). In the Masters 40+ and 50+ classes, Jon Arneson claimed both titles on his Arctic giving him three I-500 wins this year and 4 podiums. Coming in second in the Masters 40+ class was Dale Cloose (-14:21.184) on his Arctic Cat. Rounding out the podium in Masters 40+ and coming in second in Masters 50+ was Mike Carver (-18:19.489 behind Arneson). Coming in third in the Masters 50+ class was Jeff McKay on his Polaris (-40:37.297). In the Expert 600 Limited class, the podium was swept by Arctic Cat with Aaden Olson taking the win with a time of 8 hours 26 minutes 30.844 seconds. Clocking in second was Elliot Clark (-37:7.228) and in third was Stuart Brandt (-1:6:53.455). Adam Brandt took the win on his Arctic Cat in both the Trail and Vet 30+ classes with a time of 8:59:45.022. Coming in second in the Trail class was his brother Stuart Brandt with a time of 9:43:24.299. The Junior 14-17 classes ran one lap each day. Elliot Clark took the win in this class with a time of 4 hours 11 minutes 12.595 seconds. Coming in second was Aaden Olson (-1:10.732) and in

third was Colin Taggart (-16:7.782) all on Arctic Cat. In the Junior 14-17 Girls class, Katie Clark took the win with a time of 5 hours 24 minutes and 52.058 seconds. Rachel Wimpfheimer came in second (-28:34.849) both on Arctic Cats. The Classic class only ran one lap on Sunday with three brave entries. Kyle Kozel took the win with a total time of 2 hours 41 minutes 8.264 seconds. Ryan Derrick took second (-29:07.66) both on Polaris machines. Congratulations to all those who finished the prestigious I-500.

Cor Powersports will take next weekend off and will be back in action the following weekend February 25-26 in Walker, Minnesota for the Leech Lake 200!