



## Special invitation for MDs to join Klondike Trail Relay

Physicians who travel to the Yukon for the CMA's 1998 annual meeting will have a unique opportunity to participate in the famous Klondike Trail of '98 Road Relay.

Dr. Allon Reddoch, past president of the Yukon Medical Association and a member of the CMA Board of Directors, advises that there will be a special medical category for the 1998 edition of the 180-km run from Skagway, Alaska, over the White Pass to Whitehorse. The 1998 race will also mark the CMA's 131st annual meeting, which will be held in Whitehorse Sept. 6-9.

The Klondike Relay, which has been run for more than a decade, attracted more than 1300 runners last year. Teams of 6-10 runners begin almost at sea level in Alaska, climb quickly to an elevation of 1004 m at the White Pass summit, then follow an up-and-down course to Whitehorse.

Although the first half of the race is run in the dark, Reddoch reports that the scenery is spectacular, with the Northern Lights putting on a magnificent show during the 1996 race. The remaining 5 legs are run in daylight.

"All the stages are significantly exerting, but the hills and long stretches are the areas you hear the runners talking about," the *Whitehorse Star* wrote before the 1996 race. "Team support and incredible support from the many volunteers at the exchange points pulls participants along and many say they have never had so much fun."

The accompanying map outlines the course. The first 2 legs (14.1 km and 9.3 km) are uphill and perhaps the most daunting. On the third leg (12.3 km) runners pass through Canada Customs and leg 4 (21.4 km) winds through rolling terrain. The fifth leg (22.5 km) crosses the BC-Yukon border, and the sixth leg (26.5 km) is mostly a gradual uphill grade. The seventh leg (14.2 km) usually greets the sunrise and the eighth (19.8 km) is said to be an "interesting" mix of long hills, up and down. Leg 9 (17.9 km) also features gradual ups and downs, and the anchor leg (19.1 km) has some steep hills to bring the race to an exciting climax.

Last year's winning team completed the course in 10:30:01; the record time, set in 1990 by a team from San Diego that included

Olympic-calibre runners, is 10:16:28. Race organizers stress that the relay is for recreational runners as well as serious competitors.

Reddoch said he does not intend to run in the race — "I'm too smart for that" — but many of his colleagues will participate. He said the race is unique. In 1996, a team was accompanied by a flatbed truck that carried a hot tub. When runners finished a leg, they immediately retired to the tub.

Vern Haggard of Sport Yukon says the experienced Fleeter Enemas, a team from the Whitehorse General Hospital, is a likely entrant in the medical category. Physicians from other parts of Canada who are interested in putting together a team for '98 should start by getting the 1997 information package from Sport Yukon, 4061-4th Avenue, Whitehorse, YK Y1A 1H1; tel 403 668-4236; fax 403 667-4237.

## Fewer Canadians among medical students

More students were admitted to Canada's 16 medical schools in 1996-97 than in the previous year, but fewer were Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. The Association of Canadian Medical Colleges (ACMC) says the increase can be attributed to a sharp jump in the number of foreign students, who pay much higher fees because they are charged on a cost-recovery basis. In 1996-97 the number of newly admitted foreign students hit a peak of 76, accounting for almost 5% of new admissions. The January issue of *ACMC Forum* warns that any future examination of enrolment trends should consider the growing share of new places occupied by non-Canadians, who in theory will not practise in Canada.

Since 1980-81, the number of positions available for Canadian undergraduates has dropped by 18%, or 334 places, *Forum* reports. Downsizing was well advanced before recommendations contained in the Barer-Stoddart report were adopted, and by the year 2000 fewer than 1500 citizens and permanent residents will earn medical degrees at Canadian universities. While foreign students in theory will not practise medicine in Canada, they will be eligible for postgraduate training here.