



MEDIA RELEASE

February 18, 2010; 13:30 PST (Whitehorse, YT) - Yukon Quest Race Marshal Hans Oettli and Head Veterinarian Kathleen McGill announced the preliminary findings of a necropsy performed early this morning on musher Terry Williams' dog Bags.

Bags, an eight-year-old male on Williams' team, was pronounced dead late yesterday afternoon in Carmacks, Yukon. The dog expired between McCabe Creek and the Carmacks checkpoint.

"It appears to be cardiac, a silent cardiac disease, not one we picked up," McGill said from Whitehorse this afternoon. "There was no heart murmur, all of the vet checks along the way indicated a healthy dog."

"During checks the heart rates were normal and they came down appropriately," continued McGill. "This was an uncommon condition. It's extremely rare."

Final results from the pathologist will take up to two or three weeks to be returned from laboratory examination.

"It's been a very traumatic event for all of us and it's been very hard on the musher in particular, Terry Williams," Oettli said. "He is very much attached to his dogs. That's why he scratched because he didn't feel that he could continue in the race."

Williams made the decision to scratch from the race yesterday at the Carmacks checkpoint at 20:21 p.m. local time.

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