



Media Release

Yukon Quest Weekend Update

February 6, 2011 (Whitehorse, Yukon and Fairbanks, Alaska) – The 28th running of the Yukon Quest (YQ) 1,000 Mile International Sled Dog Race and the recognized qualifier the Yukon Quest 300 (YQ300) both kicked off this weekend.

Race Start

On Saturday, February 5, 2011, at 11:00 am 25 teams started the Yukon Quest 1,000 mile race from Shipyards Park in Whitehorse, Yukon. Thousands of spectators lined the starting chute and trail to watch the teams begin their 1,000 mile journey.

The line-up of mushers this year includes four-time Yukon Quest Champion Hans Gatt, 2009 Yukon Quest Champion Sebastian Schnuelle, many Yukon Quest veterans and experienced long-distance racers as well as a large number of up-and-coming rookies.

The Yukon Quest 300 mile race began at 5 p.m. on the same day. Twenty-three teams are competing in the YQ300. While the YQ300 start drew a smaller crowd, this year's field is a dynamic mix of past Yukon Quest Champions, veteran long distance mushers and rookie mushers. It's going to be a challenging race.

Braeburn

The YQ mushers had an incredible run to Braeburn. They left Whitehorse in fairly mild temperatures but as night fell, the thermometer dropped to -27 degrees Celsius. The teams arrived throughout the night under a clear sky and a spectacular northern light show equally enjoyed by race officials, volunteers and spectators. By mid-day Sunday, all YQ mushers had departed the Checkpoint and the all YQ300 mushers had arrived.

Carmacks

The arrival of YQ mushers into the Carmacks Checkpoint has been very exciting. Early Sunday evening, 2009 Champion Sebastian Schnuelle pulled up at Carmacks, went through the obligatory check-in and began immediate preparations to continue - grabbing straw and food drop bags, checking out and heading back out onto the trail. At the same time, YQ300 musher Gerry Willomitzer was the first to arrive in Carmacks. Willomitzer checked in and bedded down his dogs.

Minutes afterwards, another flurry began. Hans Gatt departed followed by the arrival of YQ 300 musher Ed Hopkins and the immediate departures of YQ mushers Brent Sass, Allen Moore, and Michelle Phillips. A little over an hour later Carmacks witnesses another round of musher arrivals and departures. YQ competitors Ken Anderson and Dan Kaduce departed from Carmacks while Joshua Cadzow, Jodi Bailey and Clint Warnke arrived to take a break at the Carmacks checkpoint.

Denis Tremblay, Quebec musher arrived in Carmacks and scratched; his team having picked up a virus. The Race Veterinarian Team has checked out the team and they are now resting.

Yukon Quest - What's Happening Monday

Tomorrow, 1,000 mile Yukon Quest front-runners will pass through Pelly Crossing Checkpoint and will begin the 200-mile solitary stretch towards Dawson City. Upon arrival in Dawson City, all Yukon Quest teams will rest for a mandatory 36-hour layover.

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YQ300 - What's Happening Monday

Throughout tonight, YQ300 mushers will continue to arrive into Carmacks Checkpoint and will begin their six-hour mandatory layover and Vet Check. The earliest departure for Gerry Willomitzer is 11:08 p.m., followed by earliest departure of 11:35 p.m. for Ed Hopkins. The winner is expected to cross the finish line in Pelly Crossing by early morning Tuesday, February 8, 2011.

Stay tuned for more of this exciting race. The Yukon Quest will provide daily updates. The race will finish in Fairbanks the week of February 15-19th.

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