



## Four-time Champion Mackey Wins Vets Choice Award

For Immediate Release:

WHITEHORSE, YUKON (February 23, 2008) – The 2008 Yukon Quest Finish Banquet had it all, including a marriage proposal by 10<sup>th</sup> Place musher William Pinkham to his dog handler and girlfriend, Jodi.

But it is probably four-time Champion Lance Mackey's emotional response to being chosen for the 2008 Veterinarian's Choice Award that will stay in everyone's mind when the 25<sup>th</sup> Yukon Quest is but a distant memory.

Mackey, 37, was his upbeat and humble self while accepting his prize for First Place for the fourth year in a row, "I don't think this is ever going to get old... I am absolutely blessed with a beautiful family, a beautiful wife, a beautiful dog team and people who support all of our madness."

He praised the Second Place finisher and his only rival in this race, who also happens to be his neighbour in Fairbanks, AK. "Ken Anderson, you put on a hell of a race, made it exciting, kept me on my toes. It's hard to keep up with a high-caliber team like that."

But when the Head Veterinarian announced that Mackey had been chosen by the Yukon Quest's team of 14 professional veterinarians for his superb dog care on the trail, the man they call "invincible" was visibly moved. "This means more to me than winning this damn race," said Mackey. In his earlier acceptance speech he spoke at length about his dog team and how, "for whatever reason they go out of their way to please me."

Mackey's fourth win this year is a Yukon Quest record. He confirmed plans to run the Yukon Quest next year with the goal of achieving five championships in a row. Anderson, 34, who also received the 2008 Rookie of the Year Award, was less committal about returning, "I will be back next year if I can."

In just a week's time, both Anderson and Mackey will compete in another 1,000-mile race, the Iditarod. In 2007, Mackey became the first person in history to win the Yukon Quest and the Iditarod in the same year. The world will be watching to see if he does it again—or whether Anderson can steal that championship away from him.

Brent Sass, 27, also of Fairbanks, won the Challenge of the North Award for the musher who best exemplifies the 'Spirit of the Yukon Quest'. Kelley Griffin, 48, of Wasilla, AK, was chosen by her fellow mushers for the Sportsmanship Award. Kyla Boivin, 25, of Whitehorse, YT, received the Red Lantern as the final finishing team. She crossed the Finish Line at 5:36 p.m.

Speeches from all 15 Yukon Quest finishers included praise for the Veterinary Team and Race Officials. For more information visit our website [www.yukonquest.com](http://www.yukonquest.com).

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