



MEDIA RELEASE

Tedford Rookie of the Year as Eight More Finish

February 17, 2015 (Fairbanks, AK) – When the awards are handed out at the Finish Banquet Saturday night, Damon Tedford can count on his name being called.

Tedford finished fourth overall in the 2015 Yukon Quest 1,000 Mile International Sled Dog Race – the highest placing rookie in a race that saw nine scratches and one withdrawal. Five of the scratches were veterans, highlighting the difficulty of this year's race.

With his fourth-place finish, the Vancouver resident is guaranteed to take home the Rookie of the Year Award.

Tedford, who moved to Alaska last fall to train for this race with the well-known Seavey family, crossed the finish line at 1:32am, nearly two hours ahead of veteran Hugh Neff, who came in at 3:11am. With a total elapsed run time of 10 days, 15 hours, and 10 minutes, Tedford gave all the credit to his dogs, particularly on the last few legs of the race.

“Man those dogs are powerful. I was definitely the weakest link on Rosebud Summit,” Tedford said.

He finished the race with 12 dogs; a fact that he said helped him pull ahead of Neff, who ended up with seven on his team.

“We had a bit more dog power than he did, so it was nice just to be out there on our own, just enjoying the northern lights.”

Asked about the lack of sleep over the past 11 days, Tedford admitted it's something he's used to as an ER doctor, although it's not quite the same thing.

“I've had sleep deprivation before, just not when I'm driving things,” he joked.

Six more mushers crossed the finish line Wednesday.

Normand Casavant was the sixth musher to arrive in Fairbanks, pulling up at 7:25am, followed by rookie Jason Campeau, who came in at 1:43pm. With the sun shining downtown when he arrived, Campeau had a huge smile on his face.

"Dogs are doing good," he said. "They performed especially well today, as if they knew it was the finish. I am very proud of them."

As he left the chute, his dogs were howling to run again, despite the fact they'd just travelled 1,000 miles. Fellow musher Torsten Kohnert's dogs seemed to be feeling the same way, jumping at the line to go again when they came in at 3:42pm.

Rounding out the top ten were Nicolas Vanier and Mike Ellis. Vanier finished just under one hour ahead of Ellis, at 6:44 pm. Ellis had a great crowd of approximately 100 people out to welcome him home, posting an elapsed time of 11 days, eight hours, and 37 minutes.

Arms raised in the air, Ellis said the finish line is always the goal.

"This is what you shoot for. Ten wagging tails down there makes you smile."

Asked about the fact he finished in the top ten with a team of Siberians, Ellis laughed. "You didn't see that coming, did you?"

Dave Dalton was the last musher to arrive in Fairbanks on Wednesday, arriving in the chute at 11:43pm. With this year's race result, Dave has now finished more Yukon Quests than any other musher – 25.

There were still five more mushers on the trail as of midnight. Brian Wilmshurst was on the final stretch of trail and expected in Fairbanks around 2:00am, while Ryne Olson arrived in Two Rivers at 8:50pm and was set to serve her mandatory eight-hour layover prior to departing at 4:50am.

Lance Mackey and Kristin Knight Pace left Mile 101 on their way to Two Rivers, while Red Lantern musher Rob Cooke had just left Central and was on his way to Eagle Summit.

-30-

To arrange an interview contact:

Echo Ross
867-332-1321
echo@outsidethecube.ca

Pixie Ingram

867-332-0133

pixie@outsidethecube.ca