



MEDIA RELEASE

Day 9: Warmer Climbs

February 11, 2018 (Carmacks, YT) – With temperatures hovering around the -30°C mark, winter looks to be loosening its gelid grip on the 2018 Yukon Quest little by little. And after the Antarctic conditions these mushers and their teams have been subjected to on the trail thus far, anything warmer than -40 feels downright balmy as the mushers navigated King Solomon’s Dome and the seemingly never-ending Black Hills.

As frontrunner Allen Moore’s lead becomes more and more impregnable, the fight amongst the top five is getting interesting. Paige Drobny and Matt Hall were joined at the hip most of the day, both camping before Stepping Stone together, and both bypassing the renowned hospitality stop to arrive in Pelly simultaneously at 10:08am. Hall left almost an hour and a half before his traveling companion of so many miles, leaving with 12 dogs at 3:02pm. Drobny departed at 4:39pm with 11.

Laura Neese rode a one-mile lead over Ed Hopkins into Pelly, beating the Yukon musher to the checkpoint by 43 minutes, arriving at 1:05pm and 1:48pm, respectively. After a short rest, Neese was back on trail with 10 dogs at 5:21pm; Hopkins lingered, going out toward Carmacks with 12 dogs at 6:33pm.

Vebjorn Aishana Reitan took his Stepping Stone burrito to go a little after 10am and reached Pelly at 4:31pm, where he rested briefly before rejoining the race at 8:50pm.

At day’s end Hall, Drobny and Neese were all through McCabe and spread out about ten miles apart on their way toward Carmacks, where a well-rested Allen Moore picked up the trail again at 11:46pm with a full team. A little further back, Hopkins was resting at McCabe Dog Drop, while Reitan was 43 miles out of Carmacks.

Tim Pappas took a five and a half-hour break in Scroggie Creek, hitting the trail at approximately 5:30am, blew through Stepping Stone, and will have reached Pelly in the early morning.

Alex Buetow was the first of the rookie convoy to decamp from the group’s camp spot, leading Claudia Wickert and Bernhard Schuchert into Scroggie Creek beginning at around 6:30am. Luc Tweddell was not far behind Schuchert, pulling in to Scroggie shortly after 8:00am. Schuchert and Wickert led the convoy out of Scroggie around noon, Tweddell at 2:30pm. Day’s end found them camped approximately 25 miles from Stepping Stone.

Riley Dyche into Scroggie around 11am and Nathaniel Hamlyn shortly before 3:30pm. Dyche made tracks for Stepping Stone circa 6:20pm and made camp 38 miles from Stepping Stone. Hamlyn retook the trail around 10:00pm.

Rob Cooke reached Scroggie around 5:00pm; Dave Dalton just before 7:00pm. Both were still resting there at time of writing.

Severin Cathry was a scratch in Dawson this afternoon. Cathry said his decision was based on his team not demonstrating the stamina and endurance needed to continue, which he attributed to poor training conditions earlier this season.

Standings as of 11:59pm:

1. Allen Moore
2. Matt Hall
3. Paige Drobny
4. Laura Neese
5. Ed Hopkins
6. Vebjorn Aishana Reitan
7. Tim Pappas
8. Bernhard Schuchert
9. Claudia Wickert
10. Alex Buetow
11. Luc Tweddell
12. Riley Dyche
13. Nathaniel Hamlyn
14. Rob Cooke
15. Dave Dalton

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