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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 2019

Nicolas Petit wins Ryan Air Gold Coast Award

Anchorage, Alaska – Veteran Iditarod XLVII competitor Nicolas Petit (bib #20), of Girdwood, Alaska, was the first musher to reach the Unalakleet checkpoint at 9:46 a.m. today with 10 dogs, winning the inaugural Ryan Air Gold Coast Award.

Wilfred “Boyuck” Ryan, the company’s president, presented Petit with the Gold Coast Award. The award consists of \$1,500 in gold nuggets from the Bering Straits region, as well as a carved ivory dog sled team made by Leonard Savage of Holy Cross.

Ryan Air is a new Lead Dog sponsor of the Iditarod for 2019. The company was founded in Unalakleet and its core business is serving the people who live along the Bering Sea coast and throughout western Alaska.

“The Iditarod is a celebration of Alaska culture and history and we are thrilled to be a part of it. My grandpa, Frank Ryan, drove mail by dog team between Unalakleet and Kaltag in the early 1900s, and my dad, Wilfred, mushed dogs in the territorial guard with Muktuk Marston. Our support of the race is a continuation of that spirit of service and dedication to the communities along the trail,” said Ryan.

The Ryan Air Gold Coast Award will be presented again during the Iditarod awards banquet on Sunday, March 17, at the Nome Recreation Center.

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Photo caption: An ivory dog sled carving by Leonard Savage of Holy Cross with a Ryan Air PC-12 in the background.

Photo credit: courtesy of Ryan Air.