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**Brent Sass wins Ryan Air Gold Coast Award**

**Anchorage, Alaska** – Veteran Iditarod competitor Brent Sass (bib #27), of Eureka, Alaska, was the first musher to reach the Unalakleet checkpoint at 11:32 p.m. today with 12 dogs, winning the Ryan Air Gold Coast Award.

This award was first presented in 1987. Ryan Air began sponsoring the award in 2019. The award consists of one ounce of gold nuggets (valued over \$2,000) from the Bering Straits region and Ryan Air merchandise. Local Ryan Air employees from Unalakleet presented Sass with the prizes.

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. Mushing has long been a way of life for the Ryan family. The company's founder drove mail by dog team between Unalakleet and Kaltag in the early 1900s and other Ryan family members also mushed dogs in the territorial guard with Muktuk Marston.

The Ryan Air Gold Coast Award will be presented again to Brent Sass at the finisher's banquet in Nome.

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