



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 13, 2026

Jessie Holmes, first musher to Ruby, wins the First Musher to the Yukon Award

Wasilla, Alaska – Veteran musher Jessie Holmes (bib # 7), of Brushkana, Alaska, is the first musher to arrive at the Ruby checkpoint on the Yukon River on March 13, 2026 at 4:55 a.m. with 15 dogs in harness. In doing so, Holmes claims the First Musher to the Yukon Award. The award consists of a gourmet dinner prepared by Chef Rob Smith and Brandon Desebel from Locally Grown Restaurants, which owns the popular Anchorage eateries Spenard Roadhouse, Snow City Cafe, Crush Wine Bistro and South Restaurant and Coffeehouse.

The menu consisted of a smoked salmon crostini, white bean and bacon soup, watercress salad, beef bourguignon and a chocolate pot de crème dessert. Holmes thoroughly enjoyed his meal, which he shared with Ruby resident and long-time Iditarod volunteer, Billy Honea.

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