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**International Pedigree Stage Stop Sled Dog Race Signs Champions**  
Reigning distance mushing champs Gatt and Mackey to run in 2011 IPSSSDR

Jackson, Wyoming – May 19, 2010 – The reigning champions of distance mushing, Lance Mackey and Hans Gatt, will compete in the 2011 International Pedigree Stage Stop Sled Dog Race (IPSSSDR), announced race director Frank Teasley. The event – the largest sled dog race in the lower 48 states – which is slated for January 28 – February 5, 2011, starts in Jackson, Wyo., and travels through small Wyoming communities before finishing in Park City, Utah.

Mackey, who twice won the Yukon Quest and Iditarod in the same year, told the Alaska Daily News that he is done competing back-to-back in mushing's premiere distance events. In 2011, instead of racing the Yukon Quest, Mackey will head to Wyoming with his Jamaican mushing/student partner Newton Marshall to participate in the 500-mile stage stop race before returning to Alaska for Iditarod.

Gatt, who has previously won the IPSSSDR four times – in 1997, 1998, 2000 and 2001 – also has registered for the 2011 IPSSSDR. Gatt won the Yukon Quest four times and was 2010 Iditarod runner-up. The 2011 IPSSSDR will be his first time competing in the race since 2001.

Other champion mushers expected to compete in the 2011 IPSSSDR are Iditarod veteran Ryan Reddington and Fur Rondy Spring Champion Blayne "Bud" Streeper. Streeper won the IPSSSDR in 2004 and 2010.

"It is a mushing dream come true," says Teasley. "There's never been a race where you've got the number-one sprint racing driver in the world, the number-one mid-distance driver in the world and the number-one long-distance driver in the world leaving the same starting line."

With its unique stage stop format, the IPSSSDR has become a popular mushing event attracting the world's top competitors. The roster for the 2011 event currently has 19 teams registered for the event and Teasley expects it to fill by June.

Pedigree® Food for Dogs is the title sponsor of the IPSSSDR. The Pedigree® brand actively supports a wide range of programs that promote responsible pet ownership and highlight the contributions dogs make to society.

The International Pedigree Stage Stop Sled Dog Race was founded in 1996 by Frank Teasley to make sled dog racing more accessible to the public. For more information, visit the race website at [www.wyomingstagestop.org](http://www.wyomingstagestop.org); contact the race via e-mail at [bark@wyomingstagestop.org](mailto:bark@wyomingstagestop.org); or telephone at (307) 734-1163.