Vol 2 No 8

Hike!

June '00

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Hike!

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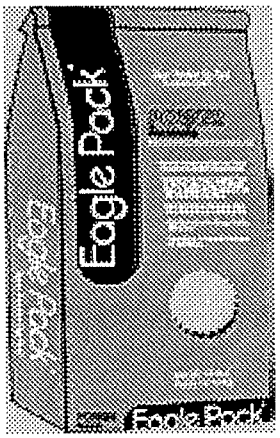

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The Fuss About GSPs

Bob Brock

Bob Brock is an Alaskan Skijorer who runs German short-haired pointers. I asked Bob for some advice on the phenomenon that is Egil Ellis and his amazing GSPs. Check out the back page of the magazine for Bob's photo of a GSP Skijor team in action at this year's Fur Rondy in Anchorage..... Ed.

I'll try to make this short and sweet but as you know it's tough, for me. I'm supposed to be finishing my Fed taxes....there's and easy choice, screw that, I'll answer your email instead.

Mushing/skijoring (dog harness sports) don't really exist. Now don't get mad. By that I mean there is no serious competition, yet, because it is all too new, too small a niche etc. Look, there is no **money in it**. Everyone involved is some shade of dilletante. Most mushers, 99.9% of 'em are not athletes. They live in squalor, are probably wanted by the law or some mental institution in some other state, and smoke far too many cigarettes, legal/illegal, for their own good. The stars of the sport are exceptions.

So, our EURO MAN hero Ellis shines. He is kicking the rear end off of who and what exactly? Now, don't get me wrong there is a legitimate emergent sport here and I love the whole deal. But, it is about a decade away, yet, I reckon.

Now, let's talk dogs. The biggest problem in racing dogs is HEAT!!!!!

So, why do sled dogs have long coats? Because in the extreme conditions that Northern Native American people's lived in dogs lived outside. Heating interior spaces large enough to hold people and animals was not possible. So, dogs evolved coat types suited to this life. Long hair does not make a dog fast, nor does it make it pull stronger or faster. When dogs were used for transportation purposes speed was not important. In fact it would be negative. Speed increases the likelyhood of injury not only to the animal but the driver and might damage the gear. Nobody uses dogs for transport today in the northern regions. If they did they would want a dog able to live outside, exist on fish heads, and pull steadily when called upon.

The German short haired pointer is a time tested **field racing machine** right out of the box. It had been evolving for 100's of years then, according to legend, the Weimar Republic instituted a dog tax (god forbid), which essentially froze the emergent middle class in Germany from hunting because only the nobility could afford to keep a kennel of "specialty dogs": retreivers, setters, pointers, hounds, harriers etc. So, a multi task dog was started, a jack of alltrades, so that, up and comers *bourgeoisie* could afford to pay the tax on one dog only and continue to hunt and pissoff the Prussian/Junker nobility. The base dog, which was a clunky version of the GSP today started getting compiled-debugged around 1870 and by what?...1880's it was a recognized breed but of course it kept getting refined. Tons, and gallons and barrels of English pointer blood to increase speed, beauty and piss off the Kaisers Hanoverian cousins who reigned in England at the time. Now, the English pointer from what I've read has: greyhound, bloodhound, bulldog, American foxhound, English harrier and the base dog was the old Spanish pointer. Bloodhounds are actually "fast" long winded dogs and all the rest are screamers in their own right except the bulldog and who knows what was up with that. I think they wanted the square snout/head (high nasse-as in stuck up nose for bird sniffing).

So, once this faster, sleeker GSP evolved it kept getting refined and refined and your basic unit now dumps heat like an air conditioner in Alice Springs (in December?), runs in a fair approximation of the faster sight hounds (greyhound, whippets) and has that "close" hunting dog need to please, i.e., a highly bidable temperament (for the opposite-see husky).

Now, the Scandinavians as near as I can tell didn't start "seriously" (whatever that means) racing these pointers until about 20 years ago and may have been bringing them on a little further back but not much. Carin Ahlstedt says they used to run German Sheperds because the army had used them as munition dogs, that is, they hauled ammo on sleds, or carried packs. Well a German Sheperd running? What a twisted, bit of skeletal problems that animal is. Clearly, it is not a running dog. So, ski-pulka has been evolving about 20 years while these pointers are steadily gaining in popularity and now we have Ellis beating all comers. Alaskan's messed with pointers way back (George Attla) but obviously there wasn't the stock around the villages to draw from.

So, Ellis drew from "winning stock" (niche sport) and then started fussing with it. Because (and probably mainly just because), and this is **key**, nobody and I mean nobody can disassociate their mental image of sled dogs **SNOW DOGS** (copyright pending) and accept the image of the pointer in the traces. Not even a forward thinking **Euromanmusher Nordic hero** clog wearer, like Ellis. So, they fuss, fuss and fuss around trying to make them smaller (as I explained, theoretically for injury reduction) tried to gain hair (even the "pro's" think they need a coat) and maybe to grind in some of that automaton husky running. It's all just a neural winter picture that won't fade, "chesnuts roasting on an open fire—jack frost nipping at your nose" hot buttered rum...and Santa Claus.

So, ask yourself are you going to mush, or scooter to Perth? Doubt it. Your gonna do short, sprint stuff, hopefully in the cool of the evening. I don't know whether you run a "rig" and will need more dogs, or a scooter,

which would indicate 1,2 maybe 3? I don't know.

The old adage in cross country ski racing is *the race is won on the hills*. Or, he who climbs fastest wins because everybody scoots and skis about the same on the flat, or on the down, so, size, power and pace are the winning variable.

For my money Ellis is just fussing around with centuries of Teutonic/British/American/Australian/Canadian/Nordic hardcore breeding and refining of a screamer of a dog that NOBODY in their "right thinking mind" would have associated with snow/sleds/skis/Santa Claus. Remember everybody has a **SNOW DOG** brain freeze and nobody ever thought about racing these wicked, little, flopped eared ponies. Til now. Yer, right Peter I am a bloody GSPnut!

If you've got bucks and are way serious then call Egil and pay for one of "his" dogs, or call some dogyard up here. I think it's just a brand name brain thing with heavy status overtones. And the whole fussing nonsense is just a meaningless digression, which probably dilutes what was already there and wanted in the first place. The GSP comes in sleek, sleek or sleeker versions nowadays already. Hell, the only way they can hunt with em is onhorseback. (the original, bigger, slower dog was a walker).

I rescued a big old clunky *original type* GSP male, with and inch and a half hair length who'd been deballed, abandoned, hit by a car, dumber than a box of rocks and way out of standard. But he's is my "truck dog" or a freight dog and it is ugly to watch him run but he knows I want that out of him and he tries so hard it is absolutely charming & endearing. The other day he busted through the ice and went totally under water. I dragged him out, he shakes himself off and away we go. So, his initial bad luck has changed and he lives in comparative luxury (gotta pay those taxes). Now, my main guy Lee is an Alaskan whelped, solid liver "out of the box" GSP whose parents came from Missouri and won occasional field trials. He, now that I know what I know, would not be what I would call ideal running conformation and I would want an inch or 2 more leg than he has. But, in spite of that he kicked the beejesus out of all other comers when we started skijor racing except for the "Son and daughters of Bonzo" 5xworld champ GSP from Norway (the winning male is named OZZIE (that's a coincidence by the way) and he and his owner Bernie Kitka crushed any and all) Kitka and Ozzie were despised by Huskie owner types. But he beat them by piles and scores of minutes in 10k-15k events always. Lee and I never did as well as we should because I'm a broken old man mainly. And my lack of proper training and general dog running ignorance put the nail in our coffin. I never evacuated him properly before races and we'd end up stopping so he could have a constitutional, read the paper etc. stop to sniff and fuss. In spite of that he won his share of blue ribbons. If I had been obsessive I would have stomped. But, it is hard for an old guy to get too obsessive about physical stuff because, look here, it is more than just a little pathetic really truely, god help us all if we are functionally preserved much beyond 85 years.. He's 7 now and if my torn hamstring cleans up we'll probably have our most serious year next year (I'm riding my road bike about 3 or 4x's a week) and I promise we will piss some younger folks off and not intentionally. For heavens sakes, I just found out about $100 + cross country ski waxes and I've been skiing for decades. The really serious guys bought this stuff (comes in little viles) under the counter (it wasn't openly displayed on the sales racks) but now the secret is out. I was using 10 dollar a cube stuff. Like skiing on vegamite in comparison. He's just an out of the box dog.

So, my now very long point is if you get a long legged,obviously well formed beauty with lots of jazz on board, who sings at the sight of the harness you and he/she, if you train seriously, are going to slap the lips off any and all the down under wannabes. Maybe even Peter. Christ these dogs are incredible athletes, incredible. All dogs are mostly but this type is even more so. So, the winning edge is what? I think the physical factor is the least of it and I think the training and the bond part are the key. Remember these dogs were developed by the same folks who brought us the BF 109, BMW's, Porsches, Mercedes, the intercontenintal ballastic missle and blitzkreig. You'll probably go faster by running skinnier, stiffer, kevlar tires (higher psi -no tread as in bike racing go fastest, furthest etc.) than buying a toni brand name dog.

Genes? Is Muhammed Ali's daugther just naturally gonna be a good fighter (they are promoting her)? I doubt it.

Peter Brock is great Aussie Race Driver, so, I'm a Brock...Daytona look out here I come? Yeah right!

Na, Ellis is just fussin to be fussin. I'll bet there's a ton of perfect, blow your socks off, pure D OZ born and raised, roo chasing lighting bolts just waiting to be discovered. But, hey, it's your money and I'll bet Egil and other mushers will spend it quick as the next guy. What's the exchange rate?

Oh, a GSP breeder from Arizona told me he uses them to run cattle and sheep and says they are just great. But, he asked me not to tell the GSP club of America. These organizations and show and field people in general are silly, silly folks. I keep telling them about Ellis and his Strom Troopen, but they don't want to hear it. If we can just get a skijorer in the Olympics I can guarantee what breed will be busting everybodies chops on Worldwide TV in living, running color. Then they'll sit up and take notice.

Oh, yeah, one last thing. No less a Dog Sledding Legend than George Attla the great Athabascian driver the *Huslia Hustler*, is reported to have said, when asked at the Races in Tok this spring, where Ellis and Lundberg stomped everyone again, what he thought of these hounds?..."*if it was up to me I get rid of all the huskies in my yard and start breeding hounds*". Maybe, you Ozzies should give George a call. He'll probably sell you a dog or two. Cheap.

May the best dog win,

Bob Brock

Musher Profile - Dave & Tammy Hutchison

Dave Hutchison, age 30, we currently live in North Nowra, NSW, after moving from Queensland twelve months ago - my wife (chief dog/ child handler and support crew/ team manager etc) Tammy (age N/A) and two future mushers Lachlan (7) and Patrick (2.5). I am an Avionics Systems Technician (ex army, 12 ½ years), employed by Raytheon and currently contracted to Naval Aviation at HMAS Albatross.

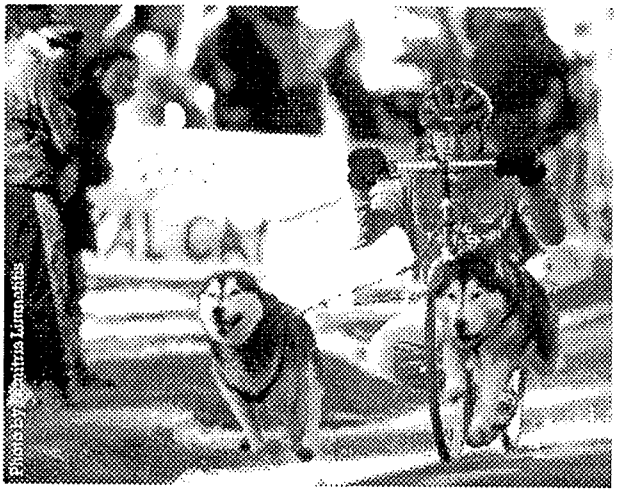
Club/Team
Kotakin Siberians – sponsored in 2000 by Cycle Underground.
We are members of the SHCNSW, VSDRA and have been active members of the Northern Exposure Gig Racing Club Inc in Qld since 1996; Tam is currently the editor of their magazine, Trail.

When did you start mushing?
We first heard about and started mushing in 1995, Tam's sister and brother in law had just started organising racing in Qld and the weekend we picked up our first pup was the first running of the Northern Exposure Classic (good timing). I was given a very quick run down of what to do, was given everything I needed - an experienced dog, scooter etc (I had my own helmet) and off I went. It wasn't until the race was over that I was told that I was actually allowed to scoot etc to help the dog (we came second and won the encouragement award)! That weekend clinched it for me, I was hooked and couldn't wait for the following season. Since then we have raced in both the one and two dog classes with our own dogs and borrowed teams.

How many and what type of dogs do you have?
We have three Siberian Huskies – Kinook, a five year old male from Lawkissa Kennels in Qld, Widget, a 17 month old bitch from Norstarr Siberian Huskies in Victoria, and Rainy, an 11 month old bitch from Arcticmoon Kennels in Victoria with room for more.....a bit further down the track.

Most memorable incident Mushing?
My most memorable incident was definitely during the third heat of the one dog class at my first Undera race in 1997. At the end of the second heat we had managed to hold 4th place, which left me in a somewhat tense state leading into the third heat. Being relatively new to the sport I was not aware that my condition was also being transmitted to Kinook, who was by the time we got to the start chute also a little 'edgy'. We got off to a great start, but as we approached the first corner I called the turn about 15 feet before the corner, at which stage he responded instantly by heading off into the scrub at right angles to the trail. By the time I had realised what he was doing and had reversed him back up out of the bush I had lost the valuable seconds that resulted in me dropping a place by less than a second. In hindsight having already run the one dog course twice that weekend I should have just shut up and let him run his race. I have since mellowed out about running dogs and very rarely take myself seriously enough to create a 'self induced' stressful situation for me or my dogs.

Stupidest incident?
As far as stupid incidents go I would have to say that the 1998 Northern Exposure Classic was one race that I would just love to forget. Having won the night heat in the one dog class (convincingly) I went out first in the second heat and promptly experienced my first wheel wrap. And what a wheel wrap! Locked up the front wheel and snapped the line clean. By the time I had recovered Kinook, unwrapped my front axle and tied what was remaining of my towline back together, all the hard work Kinook had done in the previous heat had been undone. This simple error, which occurred because I had cut in on a corner where Kinook had gone wide, dropped me back to 5th place at the completion of the second heat. While it was a stupid mistake, I put it down as just another lesson learnt in the art of running dogs.



Dave, Monty and Panda at the '99 Canberra Race
Photo: Dimitris Limnatitis

Funniest incident?
We have witnessed and have been involved in many humorous incidents whilst training, racing and on the road travelling to and from races. One incident that was funny (for those around me) was in 1997 at the Northern Exposure Classic running in the two-dog class, at night, on a very wet track. My lights back then left a lot to be desired, and on two occasions I hit washouts and went straight over the handlebars. Ever aware of my fellow mushers I layed on the ground holding my dogs to let another team go by. The driver of that team, Dimitris Limnatitis, refused my many offers to have him pass me saying that he was having way more fun right where he was – laughing at me! Dimitris ever patiently waited for me to fix myself up on both occasions, and followed me around the entire course, eagerly waiting for my next 'trick'.

Your personal goals in the sport?

This year I sat down and wrote out a set of goals that I would like to achieve throughout the season. This is the first time I have done this and I must say that, although it is only early in the season, it has made it easier for me to make decisions with regard to training and developing my dogs as individuals, and as a team. My goals for this season are:

- Injury free training and racing.
- Consistency in training and racing.
- Development of my yearling, Widget, as a leader.
- High attendance at sprint races.

As far as long term goals in the sport go I will one day be running a competitive 4-6 dog Siberian Husky sprint team. This however is a little way off though but I am in no hurry, especially with the calibre of dogs that have appeared on the racing circuit over the last few years.

What turns you on about Mushing?

Well, it's not the early mornings or the late nights, the bitter cold or the sleepless nights, the endless flow of money from my wallet (it doesn't make it to my bank account!) or the endless miles travelled to get to and from races. It's not the rain or the resultant mud, the repeated loading and unloading of the truck for racing and training, the constant fights from the kids in the back seat on those long ten hour trips or the fact that you have to drive a 20 hour round trip to race a few heats with a total time of less than a ¼ of an hour. Holy crap! What the bloody hell are we doing this for? From an outsiders point of view (ie: my parents) we all have rocks in our heads, but we do it because it is fun. The dogs love it, the kids love it, I love it and most importantly, my wife loves it. There are not too many other sports around which involve the whole family like running dogs does.

How mushing can bring about world peace?

Some time ago I read Terry Mace's mushers profile in Hike and I found great amusement in his response to this question. I too, like Terry, am employed by a company where a high proportion of their income comes from supplying and supporting defence both here and overseas. If world peace were to come about I wouldn't know what to do with myself as all I have ever done is worked for defence. Now, if mushing could only bring about the odd occasional international scrap.....????

Advice for the unwary?

If you can smell dog poop, it is too late, as you have already stepped in it!

Training Tip?

A training tip – from me! Christ, I'd be the last person I would ask for a tip. But if I had to give one it would be to stay consistent – in everything you do with your dogs. Whether it be discipline, feeding, watering, travelling, training or racing. I believe that consistency instils trust, and considering all the work your dogs do for you, this is the least you can do for your dogs!

Dave one handed at Underra
Photo Dimitris Limnatitus

The Fastest Team at Southern Cross

Dave Hodgson raced the fastest team at the Southern Cross Race. Dave covered the 4.8 km two dog trail in justunder 9 minutes in heat one. That means he achieved an average speed of 32.1 km/h!

The fastest 4 dogger was Terry Mace covering the 6.8 km trail in just under 14 minutes on day two, clocking up an impressive average speed of 29.4 km/h in the process.

The one doggers were not that far behind with Ross Kinane taking 33 seconds off his first heat time to complete the 3 km trail in just under 61/2 minutes. His average speed was 28.1km/h.

These speeds are all the more impressive in that they were achieved at Southern. Those readers who have raced at Southern will know that the trail twists and turns. It has some serious terrain which should slow teams down - including speed deadening grassy trails in parts not to mention puddles and mud. The fact that the trail was considerably wetter on day two - due to the Saturday afternoon rain - makes those day two race times even more impressive than they already are.

Hike! will provide details on the fastest average times for the classes at each race this year. Stay tuned as *Hike!* solves the perennial camp-fire question - which is the fastest class!

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Mushing Insurance

Peter Komidar

Most readers would be aware that membership of VSDRA qualifies you for indemnity insurance (otherwise known as public liability insurance). The VSDRA membership insurance covers you at all VSDRA races. Also mushers who are members of a club or team are also likely to have a similar insurance which also covers training and other club events.

Just what is public liability insurance?

This type of insurance covers you for any legal liability to the public arising from running your dogs - for instance if your dog bites someone or you run someone over with your team. Event liability is a subset of public liability and is restricted to events only – such as races. Public liability insurance is essential for all sporting organisations and in many states it is a legal requirement as it protects the race organisers against the costs of being sued by contestants and spectators alike.

But wait there's more!

In fact there is a whole range of insurance policies available to individuals and organisations. The point of this article is to explore some other insurance options.

Obviously, insurance doesn't come cheap and one of the roles of a national sled dog organisation – should it ever be established – would be to negotiate through its combined buying power, the best insurance rates for each of these.

This article has been developed in consultation with a number of sports insurance brokers in Australia.

Accident Insurance

The policy can cover an organisation's athletes or individuals for disablement, medical expenses, physiotherapy and loss of income. Insurance companies tailor their insurance policies to the specific requirements of the sport – taking into account the sport's record and potential for injury. Athletes covered by such an insurance policy would be covered regardless of whether they were at a race or just training and whether they were training as part of a club or individually –anywhere in Australia.

Directors and Officers Insurance

For organisations there are even policies which cover office bearers and employees from claims made against them as a result of allegations of wrongful acts committed in the management of the affairs of the club. Policies can even reimburse clubs for costs incurred in defending legal proceedings brought against it.

Contingency Insurance

This policy can cover all types of unforeseen events.

You can insure a club against financial loss due to inclement weather (eg if the weather is too warm to stage a race this type of policy could enable the club to give contestants refunds).

One of my favourites is the Prize Indemnity insurance. This is where you decide to give a really big prize for say breaking the record for completing a heat – you are insured. And if the action necessary to win the prize is really difficult – eg come first in all 3 classes or something you can offer an outrageous prize (new car, a thousand dollars etc) for only a small premium (as the probability of it happening is fairly remote). A national body could for instance offer an outrageous amount of money say for anyone winning every sanctioned race in the season!

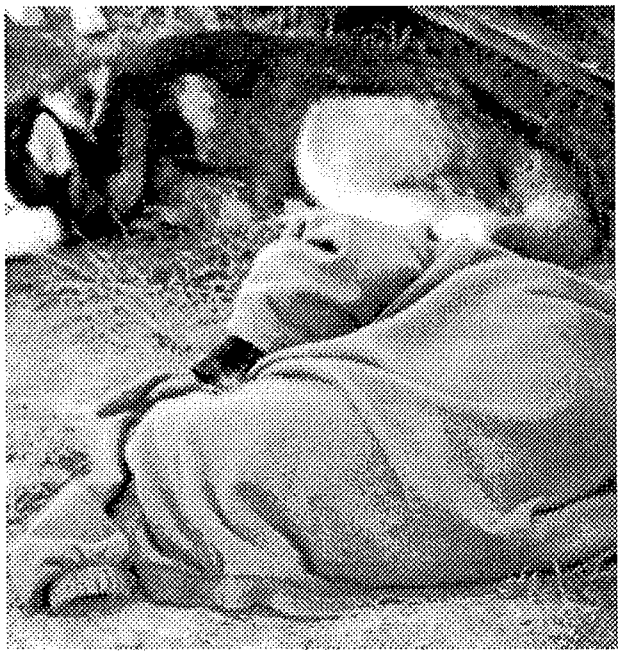
Sports Travel Insurance

Policies can be tailored to suit the needs of mushers driving to races. It could cover damage/theft for car and trailer, vet bills incurred while travelling to races etc etc.

If you are interested in finding out more about the types of insurance on offer – contact your local insurance broker. You'll find that you can tailor your/your club's insurance to suit your specific needs. But ideally the more people seeking the insurance the better deals that can be done.

❁❁❁

Question: How do you keep an Alaskan warm?



Devon and Cash at the SHCNSW Pointscore
Photo: Sharon Komidar

MIXED SIGNALS: WHEN YOUR DOG ACTS PREGNANT, BUT ISN'T

By Kimberly Meenen

Following your dog's heat cycle she begins to show signs of impending pregnancy. But you are positive she hasn't been bred. Your female may be experiencing a normal physiological phenomenon known as a pseudopregnancy or false pregnancy.

This condition usually happens after a dog's standing heat when there is a dramatic change in the reproductive hormones (progesterone and estrogen), explains Dr. Sheila McCullough, community practice veterinarian at the University of Illinois Veterinary Medicine Teaching Hospital at Urbana. "The female is basically receiving mixed signals following her heat cycle."

False pregnancies are well recognized by breeders and veterinarians. "The signs can be so convincing that owners insist that their female is pregnant and, in some instances, about to give birth," says Dr. McCullough. False pregnancies can occur in both young and older dogs and can recur with subsequent heat cycles. She notes that no one is really sure why some non-pregnant dogs exhibit signs of a false pregnancy and others do not.

The signs of false pregnancy usually begin 6 to 12 weeks after standing heat. The female may appear bloated, develop enlarged mammary glands and lactate. She also may act restless, nervous or excitable.

"Some affected animals will make a nest or 'mother' an inanimate object such as a stuffed or rubber toy," notes Dr. McCullough. The dog may also vomit, refuse to eat, have diarrhea or nurse herself.

No treatment is recommended for a false pregnancy, primarily because most dogs remain in this condition for 1 to 3 weeks. Dr. McCullough advises owners to "wait it out."

Persistent lactation is the most worrisome complication. Most females will stimulate milk let down by licking themselves. This can result in mastitis and infection. Rather than prescribing tranquilizers or applying warm or cold compacts which can further stimulate lactation, she recommends placing an Elizabethan collar around the neck of the female to prevent licking.

To determine the possibility of a true pregnancy, a veterinarian can perform an ultrasound around three weeks to detect the presence of any fetuses.

"If the dog experiences repeated false pregnancies and the owner has no desire to breed the animal, Dr. McCullough highly recommends spaying. "Spaying is a reliable preventive measure and it can prolong the health and happiness of a dog that suffers from repeated false pregnancies. Spaying can also reduce the chances of mam mary tumors in female dogs."

Dr. McCullough encourages all pet owners to spay their females or neuter their male dogs if they are not planning on using the animals for breeding purposes.

http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/ceps/index.html

Did you know? The fastest breeds

According to Gary Cuccione ('Origin and History of the Racing Greyhound and Coursing Dogs' in *Canine Sports Medicine and Surgery* Bloomber, Dee & Taylor, WB Saunders, Philadephia, 1998) the fastest breeds (free running) at a sprint-type distance are the:

1. greyhound
2. whippet
3. saluki
4. borzoi
5. Scottish deerhound
6. Afghan
7. Irish wolfhound

Greyhounds are able to clock – free running - between 44-50 **miles** per hour (70-80 kph) while the other breeds listed range from 28 to 34 miles per hour (45-55 kph).

Bad Dog

Rob Clive

Bodily Functions

- I will not relieve myself during a race
- I will not spend 30 minutes before a race trying to find the 'perfect' place to poop
- The tent was not put there as my personal 'relieving post'
- I will not throw up in the car.

Gross!

- I will not roll in dead animals
- I will not eat other animals' poop
- I will not lick my human's face after eating animal poop
- I will not eat my own vomit
- I will not lick my human's face after I've cleaned my private parts

Annoying/Embarrassing Habits

- I will not try to smell my human's visitors' private parts
- I will not jump on the bed and wash the pillows
- I will not eat the slippers.
- I will not itch my bum on the carpet
- I will not sniff the humans while they are sitting on the toilet
- I will not bury the gooey chewy in the humans' bed
- I will not masturbate myself in front of the new guests
- I will not jump on guests and boink them in the groin with my nose

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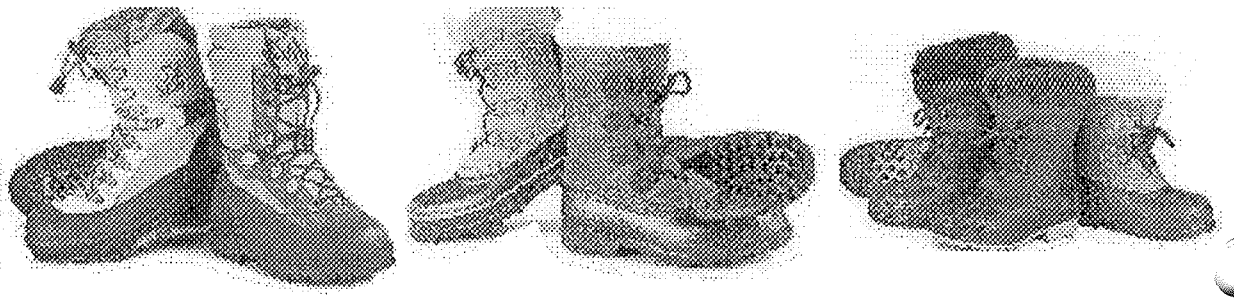

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The *Hike!* 2000 Pointscore Methodology

The short answer to the 2000 point score methodology is that it's essentially the same as that used in 1999 for the sprint and marathon point scores. The Marathon pointscore will apply to the distance races and the Sprint point score will apply to the sprint races on the national circuit (ie those races featured in the Hike Calendar).

The Sprint Point Score

The point score for each race is basically a number which measures your time as a proportion of the winners time and multiplied by 1000. Or:

$$\frac{\text{Competitor's Time}}{\text{Winner's Time}} \times 1000$$

So if you are the winner you get 1000 points. If you, for example, took twice as long as the winner to complete the course - you get 500 points etc.

Just to make it more complicated, the point score gives each competitor an additional 10 bonus points for every top ten 1999 *Hike!* National Champion for that class competing in the race. The idea behind the bonus points system is to reward those people competing in the most competitive races - and hence combating the possibility of a 'petrol musher' getting lots of points by competing in all the easier races.

The Marathon Point Score

The marathon point score is essentially the same as that used in the sprint point score. The only difference being that there is a handicap system where the longer the distance of the race the more points you score.

This works by multiplying your score by a ratio of the distance of the race over the distance of the longest race (60 km) for the 4-dog and greater classes (this is because the 50 & 60km races were restricted to 4 dog teams and above). In other words, if you came first in a 30 km race you would get a total of 500 points whereas if you competed in the B60 you would get the full 1000 points.

As with the sprint point score the bonus points system applies but these points are also subject to the ratio. Thus is in the example of a 30km race with 4 1999 top 10 champs competing – you would get 20 points – but if it were a 60km race you would get the full 40 points.

Top 3 or 4 Races?

One comment from many mushers this year and last was that the combined score should be derived from the top 3 not 4 races.

The rationale is that this will allow people from SA and Qld (who physically cant attend as many races) to compete on an equal footing with the others. It was also argued that it would allow mushers with injured dogs or dogs in whelp for part of the season, as well as people who compete in different classes or in both the sprint and distance races to have a fair chance in the pointscore.

In view of the increasing importance of the *Hike!* pointscore for securing (or maintaining) sponsorship, and the fact that I myself currently have an injured dog and would not want to be seen as manipulating the pointscore to suit my own purposes - I would like all interested readers to contact me (contact details in inside front cover) and let me know you views - before or at the weekend of the Undera race. I will total up the yeas and nays and adjust the pointscore accordingly - and of course advise you all in the July edition!

Sounds Complicated?

That's because it is! But as with previous years, the full calculations for individual mushers are available on request at the end of the season – so you can double check. Just send *Hike!* a stamped self addressed envelope and we'll mail it out to you.

May the games begin!

Choking Dog

Julie O'Connor

This article originated as a message posted to the email list Dogsledding Talk. For the benefit of those who don't have email access, I thought I'd reprint it here as it has some invaluable advice about the value of thinking on your feet! Ed.

Thank goodness I scan all the postings on this list... I had a dog inhale a piece of food last night and she started choking. She was wheezing at first, but the chunk got down far enough that she couldn't get enough air into her lungs to cough it out. She was able to get a tiny gasp in at a time, but was exhaling more than she could inhale with each attempt at a breath. She started to panic, and was starting to make this awful squealing noise, and brought her right leg up and back, like we do in a range of motion. The leg was parallel to the ground, straight back from her shoulder to her hip. She'd lift it back, try to cough, wobble a bit, stagger a couple steps, then lift the leg back up again.

I tried to do the dog equivalant of the hiemlick but that didn't help. Then I remembered reading that if you thump on either side of their ribs that you can make them puke.

I tried that, and sure enough, she puked up her dinner! I don't know how that would have dislodged the piece that was blocking her windpipe, but she stopped choking and panicking immediately and finished her meal.

I was pretty worried for a minute... I thought I was going to watch her pass out! I'm sure glad that came into my mind!

The Bike! 2000 Sprint Pointscore

Its now June and the first sprint race of the season has been run. Elsewhere in this edition you can find the results and an explanation of how the pointscore methodology works - on this page you can find how those results have translated into actual points.

Each month the pointscore will be updated - with the final results being published in the October edition. Good luck to all the competitors!

One Dog Class

Darren Kent	1	1060
Ross Kinane	2	1041.272
Darren Higgins	3	1019.547
Travis Smith	4	1016.32
Trevor Taylor	5	976.3486
Mark Mulcahy	6	965.1943
Chris Neave	7	960.629
David Hutchison	8	908.8386
Lyndon Reid	9	904.6053
Kirsten Lindsay	10	893.3263
Peter McCann	11	861.2596
George Podger	12	859.462
Joel Hines	13	842.2222
Josh Martin	14	825.9113
Joe Abela	15	816.6609
Simon Creely	16	800.7258
Andrew Gersbach	17	798.9464
Daniel Odgers	18	794.7478
Brett Jarvis	19	790.8949
Malcolm Skinner	20	729.2871
Phil Jones	21	717.8701
Michelle De Bono	22	714.5891
Peta Jones	23	694.4798
Leon Gubin	24	655.1647
Stuart van der Pol	25	648.2559
Kerrie Tzioulzias	26	639.6866
Elizabeth van Driel	27	558.2821
Fiona Matthews	28	553.7212

Two Dog Class

David Hodgson	1	1040
Beth Bobroff	2	1008.363
Raelene Kwong	3	976.2112
Owen Robertson	4	969.5156
Mike Allsop	5	935.9093
Mark Mulcahy	6	935.6585
Shaun Butcher	7	932.4036
Peter Komidar	8	931.3799
Michael Herbst	9	927.1636
Andrew Gersbach	10	920.4571
Steven Paul	11	917.6938
Hayley Coutts	12	914.1041
David Pettifer	13	902.236
Craig Turner	14	885.9427
George Podger	15	882.6532
David De Bono	16	882.1574
Jakob Jensen	17	880.0049
Rob Losurdo	18	870.1207
Geoff Carter	19	868.4518
Tony Field	20	864.9399
Adrian Fasham	21	858.4171
Peter Skinner	22	847.0808
David Hutchison	23	837.6536
Dugald Baird	24	825.5405
Daniel Odgers	25	795.9169
Wayne Baker	26	779.1021
Danny Bruce	27	777.7337
Lea Mason	28	755.2701
Geoff Styche	29	745.1762
Sharon Komidar	30	706.8547
Helen Pettifer	31	637.3401
Daniel Hamann	32	636.1388
John Rozman	33	602.8894

Four Dog Class

Terry Mace	1	1090
Owen Robertson	2	1057.813
Lawrie Coutts	3	1047.386
Mitch Blockley	4	1043.222
Annie Jackson	5	1037.005
Alex Theuma	6	1028.704
David Cole	7	1000.35
Paul Snibson	8	999.8436
Clem Bittendorfer	9	999.7503
Jozsef Toth	10	998.3629
Jason Strenger	11	980.6196
Daniel Skakal	12	974.8783
Luke Elliot	13	947.0252
John Hodgson	14	924.405
Andrew Colvin	15	903.2345
Mark Waldock	16	886.2964
Karen McCarthy	17	853.2303
Diane Baker	18	842.0009
Jason Walkom	19	809.9098
Anthony Cook	20	792.1511
Rick Van Driel	21	758.5837
Ralph Koch	22	739.8928
Merv Turner	23	727.1991

John Hodgson and team on the home straight at the '99 Wilddog Derby Photo: A&F Matthews

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Southern Cross Pro-Am 2000 Results 1 Dog Pro Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
Darren Kent	3	0:06:34.01	1	0:06:33.50	2	0:13:07.51	1
Ross Kinnane	2	0:06:57.58	3	0:06:24.96	1	0:13:22.54	2
Darren Higgins	14	0:06:46.79	2	0:06:53.92	5	0:13:40.71	3
Travis Smith	12	0:07:01.66	4	0:06:41.82	3	0:13:43.48	4
Trevor Taylor	5	0:07:29.41	7	0:06:49.99	4	0:14:19.40	5
Mark Mulcahy	10	0:07:24.96	6	0:07:05.03	6	0:14:29.99	6
Chris Neave	8	0:07:14.40	5	0:07:20.00	7	0:14:34.40	7
David Hutchison	7	0:07:44.85	8	0:07:42.90	9	0:15:27.75	8
Lyndon Reid	6	0:07:46.03	9	0:07:46.37	10	0:15:32.40	9
Kirsten Lindsay	4	0:08:08.17	11	0:07:36.85	8	0:15:45.02	10
Peter McCann	11	0:08:03.86	10	0:08:18.88	11	0:16:22.84	11
Josh Martin	1	0:08:21.30	13	0:08:46.90	13	0:17:08.20	12
Simon Creely	9	0:09:03.54	14	0:08:39.62	12	0:17:43.16	13
Brett Jarvis	13	0:08:10.52	12	0:09:46.94	14	0:17:57.46	14

Southern Cross Pro-Am 2000 - 1 Dog Sports Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
George Podger	27	0:08:25.70	2	0:07:59.35	1	0:16:25.05	1
Joel Hines	34	0:08:23.65	1	0:08:23.11	2	0:16:46.76	2
Joe Abela	32	0:08:32.93	3	0:08:47.84	4	0:17:20.77	3
Andrew Gersbach	21	0:09:18.89	5	0:08:26.83	3	0:17:45.72	4
Daniel Odgers	26	0:08:55.33	4	0:08:56.48	5	0:17:51.81	5
Malcolm Skinner	28	0:09:42.60	6	0:09:54.04	8	0:19:36.64	6
Phil Jones	30	0:10:58.17	10	0:08:58.89	6	0:19:57.06	7
Michelle De Bono	25	0:10:25.22	7	0:09:37.84	7	0:20:03.06	8
Peta Jones	33	0:10:42.68	8	0:09:58.51	9	0:20:41.19	9
Leon Gubin	37	0:11:49.83	11	0:10:13.35	10	0:22:03.18	10
Stuart Van Der Pol	31	0:10:57.56	9	0:11:21.16	12	0:22:18.72	11
Kerrie Tzioutzias	35	0:12:02.60	12	0:10:35.91	11	0:22:38.51	12
Elizabeth Van Driel	29	0:12:43.51	13	0:13:36.94	15	0:26:20.45	13
Fiona Matthews	36	0:13:01.97	14	0:13:33.08	14	0:26:35.05	14
David Sanders	24	0:15:50.99	15	0:12:59.00	13	0:28:49.99	15

Southern Cross Pro-Am 2000 - 2 Dog Sports Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
Mark Mulcahy	85	0:10:12.68	1	0:10:01.89	2	0:20:14.57	1
Andrew Gersbach	77	0:10:55.83	4	0:09:39.71	1	0:20:35.54	2
George Podger	86	0:10:59.46	5	0:10:31.51	3	0:21:30.97	3
Jakob Jensen	72	0:10:51.53	3	0:10:43.51	4	0:21:35.04	4
Dugald Baird	80	0:11:47.27	7	0:11:17.56	5	0:23:04.83	5
Daniel Odgers	74	0:12:04.66	9	0:11:54.44	7	0:23:59.10	6
Wayne Baker	81	0:12:13.15	10	0:12:18.69	8	0:24:31.84	7
Danny Bruce	71	0:13:16.97	12	0:11:17.60	6	0:24:34.57	8
Lea Mason	73	0:12:01.60	8	0:13:19.28	10	0:25:20.88	9
Geoff Styche	79	0:12:33.43	11	0:13:09.22	9	0:25:42.65	10
Sharon Komidar	75	0:13:18.29	13	0:13:53.01	11	0:27:11.30	11
Helen Pettifer	76	0:15:16.73	14	0:15:04.41	13	0:30:21.14	12
Daniel Hamann	84	0:15:27.72	15	0:14:57.09	12	0:30:24.81	13

Southern Cross Pro-Am 2000 Results 2 Dog Pro Class

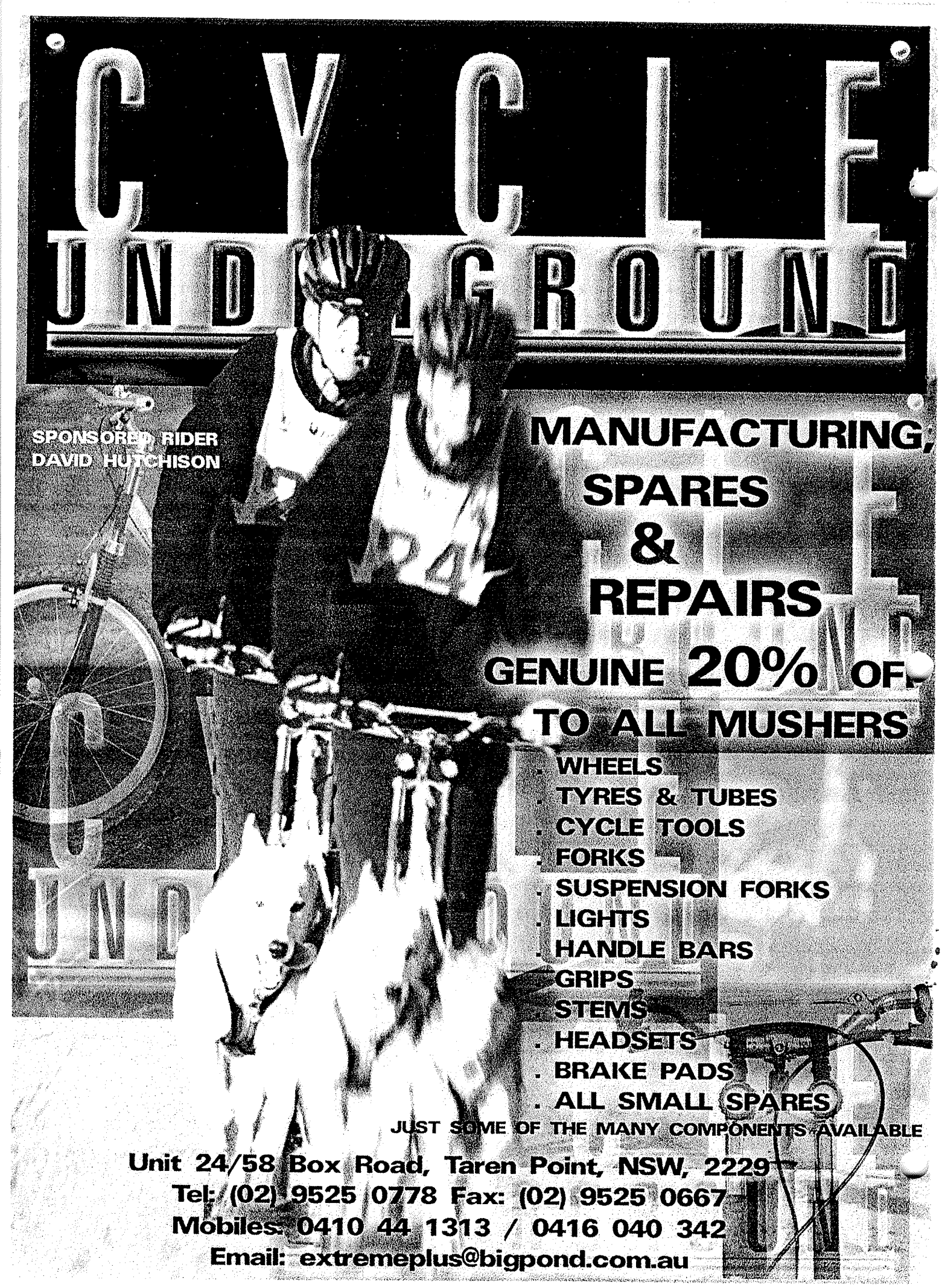
Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
vid Hodgson	56	0:08:58.01	1	0:09:09.83	1	0:18:07.84	1
Beth Bobroff	51	0:09:30.49	2	0:09:12.89	3	0:18:43.38	2
Raelene Kwong	54	0:10:11.09	7	0:09:10.87	2	0:19:21.96	3
Owen Robertson	55	0:09:41.45	3	0:09:48.88	4	0:19:30.33	4
Mike Allsop	50	0:10:01.48	4	0:10:12.75	8	0:20:14.23	5
Shaun Butcher	60	0:10:22.56	9	0:09:56.44	5	0:20:19.00	6
Peter Komidar	44	0:10:09.90	5	0:10:10.50	7	0:20:20.40	7
Michael Herbst	45	0:10:23.82	10	0:10:02.38	6	0:20:26.20	8
Steven Paul	61	0:10:10.92	6	0:10:28.51	11	0:20:39.43	9
Hayley Coutts	53	0:10:17.43	8	0:10:27.09	10	0:20:44.52	10
David Pettifer	48	0:10:35.15	11	0:10:26.50	9	0:21:01.65	11
Craig Turner	52	0:10:46.91	13	0:10:39.04	14	0:21:25.95	12
David De Bono	59	0:10:58.87	15	0:10:32.86	13	0:21:31.73	13
Rob Losurdo	43	0:10:40.17	12	0:11:10.29	19	0:21:50.46	14
Geoff Carter	49	0:10:51.06	14	0:11:02.04	18	0:21:53.10	15
Tony Field	57	0:11:09.38	16	0:10:49.31	15	0:21:58.69	16
Adrian Fasham	46	0:11:38.91	19	0:10:30.29	12	0:22:09.20	17
Peter Skinner	58	0:11:26.45	18	0:11:01.42	16	0:22:27.87	18
David Hutchinson	42	0:11:16.06	17	0:11:27.74	20	0:22:43.80	19
John Rozman	47	0:19:56.02	20	0:12:16.58	17	0:32:12.60	20

Southern Cross Pro-Am 2000 Results 4 Dog Pro Class

ame	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
Terry Mace	113	0:14:12.10	1	0:13:53.54	1	0:28:05.64	1
Owen Robertson	111	0:14:46.04	2	0:14:15.66	2	0:29:01.70	2
Lawrie Coutts	110	0:14:51.88	4	0:14:28.79	4	0:29:20.67	3
Mitch Blockley	103	0:15:04.96	5	0:14:23.40	3	0:29:28.36	4
Annie Jackson	109	0:14:48.41	3	0:14:51.56	7	0:29:39.97	5
Alex Theuma	112	0:15:14.54	6	0:14:41.17	5	0:29:55.71	6
Paul Snibson	115	0:16:04.22	10	0:14:48.45	6	0:30:52.67	7
Clem Bittendorfer	108	0:15:48.97	8	0:15:03.89	8	0:30:52.86	8
Jozsef Toth	114	0:15:30.92	7	0:15:24.77	9	0:30:55.69	9
Jason Strenger	107	0:16:06.83	11	0:15:25.83	10	0:31:32.66	10
Daniel Skakal	101	0:16:01.86	9	0:15:43.14	11	0:31:44.94	11
Luke Elliott	118	0:16:44.93	12	0:16:01.92	13	0:32:46.85	12
John Hodgson	117	0:17:41.25	15	0:15:58.92	12	0:33:40.17	13
Andrew Colvin	104	0:16:47.12	13	0:17:45.64	14	0:34:32.76	14
Mark Waldock	105	0:16:56.85	14	0:18:20.00	16	0:35:16.85	15
Karen McCarthy	116	0:19:00.94	17	0:17:47.62	15	0:36:48.56	16
Diane Baker	102	0:18:12.70	16	0:19:08.84	17	0:37:21.54	17

Southern Cross Pro-Am 2000 - 4 Dog Sports Class

N	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
David Cole	126	0:15:49.90	1	0:15:01.74	1	0:30:51.64	1
Jason Walkom	121	0:20:11.75	3	0:18:49.71	2	0:39:01.46	2
Anthony Cook	128	0:20:01.94	2	0:19:58.74	5	0:40:00.68	3
Rick Van Driel	124	0:21:07.28	4	0:20:53.93	6	0:42:01.21	4
Ralph Koch	123	0:24:02.98	6	0:19:10.74	3	0:43:13.72	5
Merv Turner	127	0:24:29.38	7	0:19:36.00	4	0:44:05.39	6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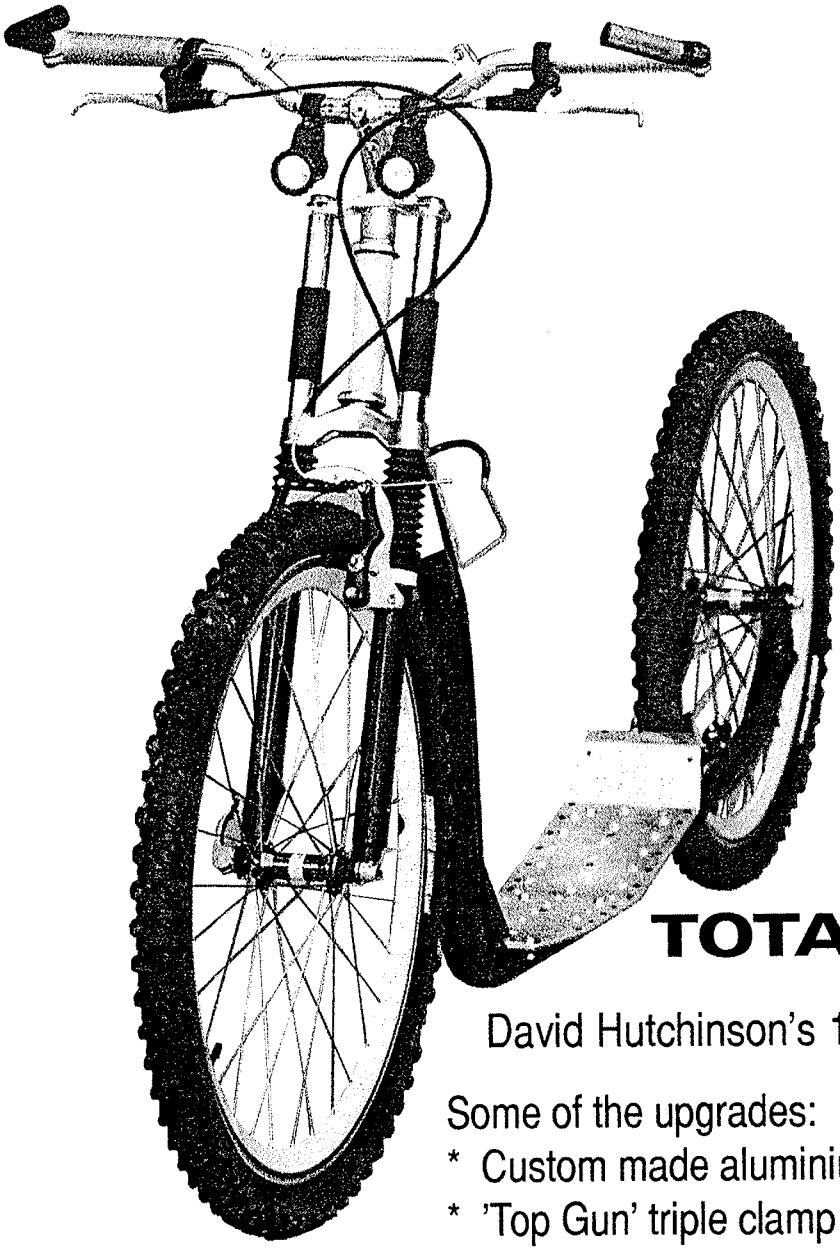

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COMING NEXT ISSUE

We will begin our technical section to help you take care of your scooter & rig.

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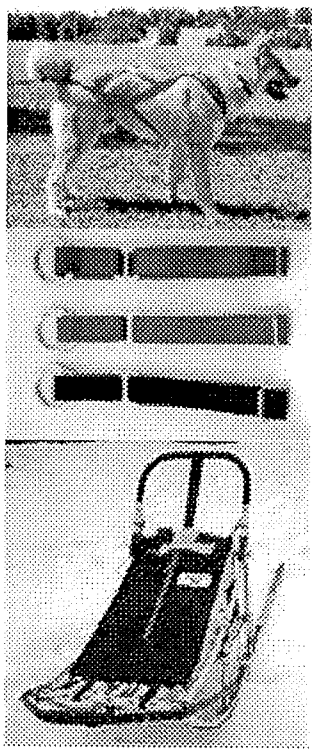

Canberra Distance Race

According to the latest Canberra Sled Dog Club Newsletter, the Canberra Club will be holding a distance race on the Saturday night of the sprint race weekend kicking off at 6pm.

At this stage race trails are still to be finalised but the aim is to have a race of approximately 40 km in total comprising two stages. *Hike!* will keep you posted as more details come to hand.

OOO

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Cats are smarter than dogs. You can't get 8 cats to pull a sled through snow". Jeff Valdez

OOO

Right: Andrew Colvin & Team at the Y2K SHCNSW Pointscore
Photo: Sharon Komidar

2000 Sled Dog Events Calendar

Sprint Races

Race	Distances	Date	Contact
Undera Sled Dog Dash (Victoria)	1 Dog Class 3 heats of 2km 2 Dog Class, 3 heats 4.5km 3&4 Dog Class 2 heats 7km + night heat 4.5km, Novice 2 heats of 2 km -no night heat	10-12 June	Helen & David Pettifer pettifer@bigpond.com
Sydney Sled Dog Sprint (New South Wales)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 4km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 8km 3 Dog Class 2 heats of 12km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 12km 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 15km	24-25 June	Craig Turner ionamal@shoal.net.au (02) 4285 2457
Northern Exposure Classic (Queensland)	1 Dog Class 3 heats of 2.5 km 2 Dog Class 3 heats of 4 km 4 Dog Class 3 heats of 6 km	30/6 - 2/7	Donald Maillet d.maillet@mailbox.uq.edu.au (07) 3822 6427
Great Grey Bound (Victoria)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 2.4 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 6.5 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 9.0 km 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 12.7 km	8-9 July	Terry & Narelle Mace weish@primus.com.au (03) 5782 2638
Wild Dog Derby (South Australia)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3.6 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 5.9 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.6 km	15-16 July	Dave Brown davebrown@ozemail.com.au
Sydney Sled Dog Shield (New South Wales)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3.6 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 4.6 km 3 & 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 8.2 km	29-30 July	Ivan Douglas skylaska@zip.com.au (02) 9824 7759
The Burn (Victoria)	1&2 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.5km 3, 4 & 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 15km Junior Class 2 heats of 3.8km	5-6 August	Lisa Hodgson lihuk@netspace.net.au (03) 5281 5283
A5000 Sled Dog Derby (Victoria)		12-13 August	Robert Stevens sleddogs@ssc.net.au (03) 5428 3285
Canberra Sled Dog Classic (ACT)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3.6 km 2 & 3 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.2 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 9.0 km	19-20 August	Kate Ord kate.ord@ea.gov.au (02) 6274 1111

Distance Races

Race	Distance	Date	Contact
CHA Distance Run (Victoria)	6 dog class (min 4 dogs) 1 heat of 25K	8 July	Terry & Narelle Mace weish@primus.com.au 03 5782 2638
Southern Highlands Freight Run (New South Wales)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.8 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 14.9 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 20.8 km 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 20.8 km	8-9 July	Geoff Styche styche@pnc.com.au (02) 4784 2543
B60 (New South Wales)	6 Dog Class (min 4 dogs) 60 km	22-23 July	Stephen Carrick crack@ozemail.com.au
Kooyoora Challenge (Victoria)	2 heats of 25 km 6, 8, Open class (min 4 dogs)	5-6 August	John Hynd 03 5438 7451
CSDC Distance Race (ACT)	To be advised – but approx 40 km	19-20 August	Kate Ord kate.ord@ea.gov.au (02) 6274 1111

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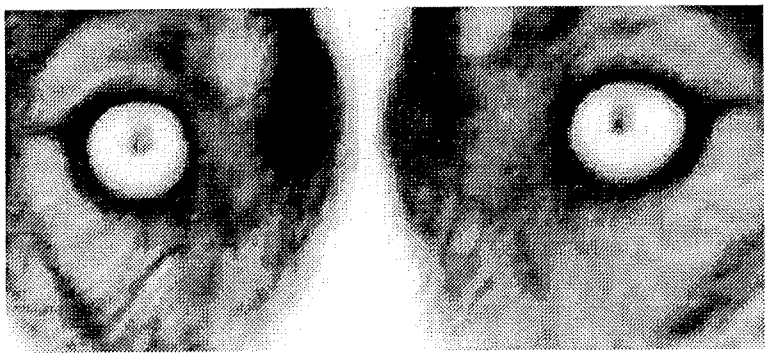

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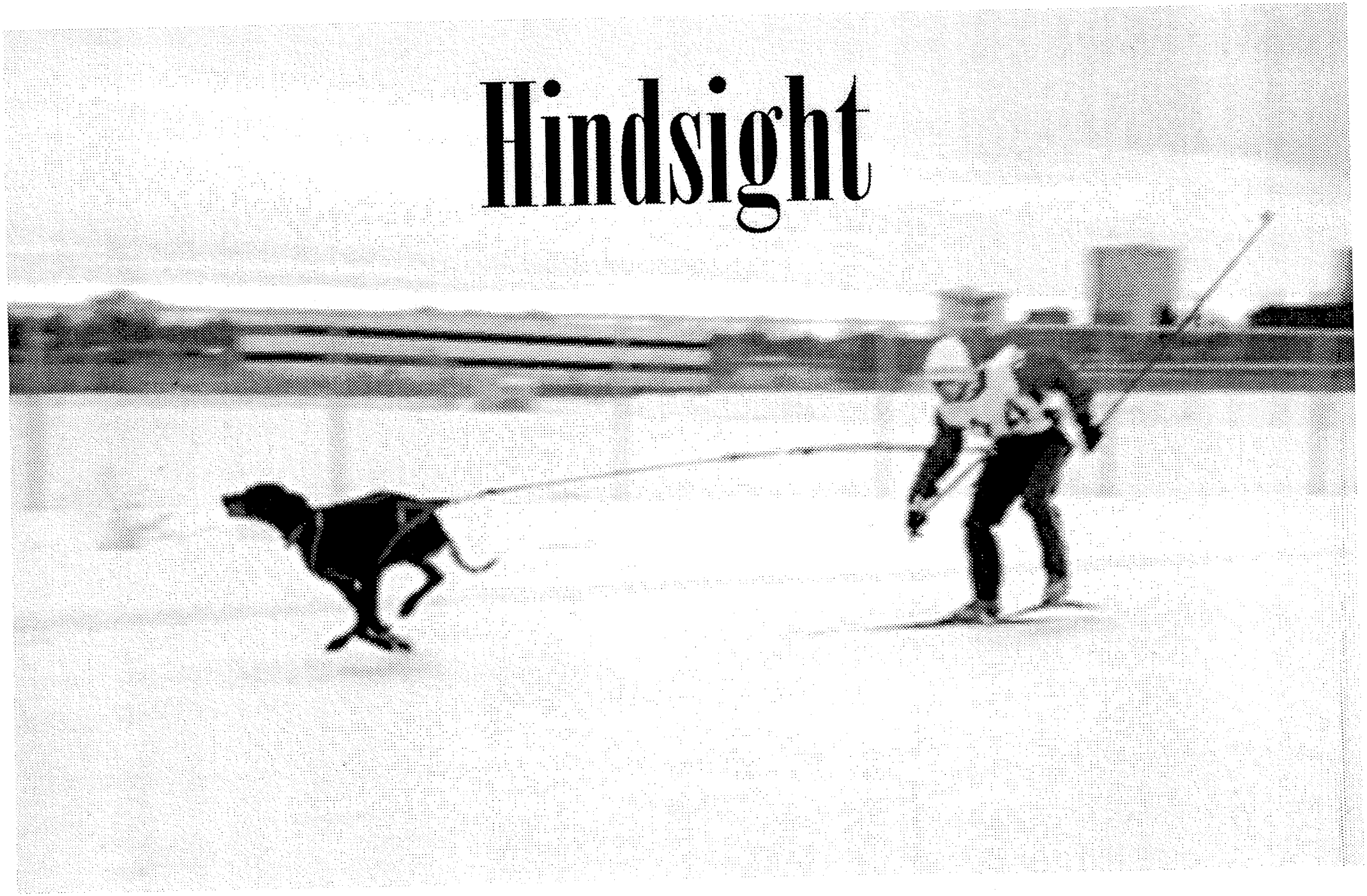
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