



Sport and Romance Behind the Dog Team

For the First Time in the History
of the North Country, Girl
"Mushers" Vie with Men
in Astounding Feats.



Miss Lydia Hutchinson, First Woman Contestant in the Famous Yellowstone Dog Derby, Who, with Frozen Lips and Eyes Almost Blinded, Pluckily Finished the Course.

SEVEN sturdy dogs and Mary Conley have cut their way through the storm and snowy wastes of Alaska for seven hundred miles. This stretch was but one leg of a 1700-mile journey which Miss Conley made from Akiak in the Kuskowim country to Juneau for the purpose of marrying Carl Thiele, Acting Governor of Alaska.

Miss Conley is a trained nurse and formerly lived at Anaconda, Montana. She received her appointment to the post she recently left, from Seattle in 1916. It was while she was on her way to take station at Akiak that she met Mr. Thiele and the romance which thereupon sprang up grew stronger with the passing months despite the obstacles of geography and temperature which romance always encounters in the Far North.

Once marriage was decided on, Miss Conley would consent to no arrangement other than her coming to her fiancé. So she assembled a team of husky malemutes and started out. Traveling by dog team is no light task even for a husky man under propitious circumstances. But reports from that dreary country through which Miss Conley was outfitting her way indicated that conditions would be anything but propitious for her. She ran into a heavy blizzard 100 miles out of Akiak and a little farther on, lost her way, but she never

once considered the idea of turning back, however, and got through in good shape. It was the first time a woman had ever made a trip with a dog team for such a distance.

While Miss Conley was ploughing her way to civilization another woman was provoking the enthusiasm of a whole country by her plucky dog-team race against hardened veterans of the northern trail. She was Miss Lydia Hutchinson, who shattered a precedent by entering the annual American dog derby which is run at Ashton, Idaho, every year.

This event is held in celebration of the anniversary of Yellowstone Park and is the occasion for tremendous enthusiasm. A touch of adventure was added to the event this year, not only by the unusually hard conditions which attended the race, but by an attack made on one of the contestants by a lynx while he was on his way to Ashton. This contestant was

Smokey Gaston, the young driver who won second place in last year's event.

Gaston, it developed, is Miss Hutchinson's fiancé, and while this did not in the least mitigate her determination to win the dog derby, if possible, his absence put a noticeable damper on her enthusiasm. When the days passed without any word coming from him she determined to go to his assistance.

At the time she had been putting her dogs through a few trial runs and so, without waiting to find out if a rescue party would be organized, she sent back word to the other contestants that she was going out to look for Smokey.

Miss Hutchinson plunged unhesitatingly into the Targhee woods and took the trail she thought Gaston most likely followed. Other drivers started after her, taking other probable trails. The girl was pursuing her way along the old Union Pacific right of way into Yellowstone Park entrance when her sled ran against a projecting rock and was overturned. In the fall her knee was wrenched. She was forced to return. But as she limped back into Ashton she learned that Gaston was safe at West Yellowstone, but that two of his dogs had been killed by the lynx that attacked him.

When she saw that Gaston could not make the race Miss Hutchinson announced that she would carry his colors as well as her own. A tremendous throng saw the start and an even greater one saw the finish. The drivers ran into a terrific snow storm when they had completed about half of the twenty-five mile course. Tud Kent, last year's winner, came in first and though Miss Hutchinson did not get in on the money, she finished in good shape despite the wind and snow. The fact that she was the first woman to make the race and stuck it out so gamely caused her to be given a tremendous ovation when, lips frozen and almost blinded, she drove into Ashton.

There was still another member of the so-called weaker sex who gave notice that she would start the race. She was Clare Colwell. She drove her team bravely up to the starting point, but on account of the rough weather and her tender years, a male driver was substituted. Clare is only 10.

Miss Hutchinson vows that nothing will keep her from winning next year. And Clare wants it understood that there will be no substituting for her no matter how bad the weather.