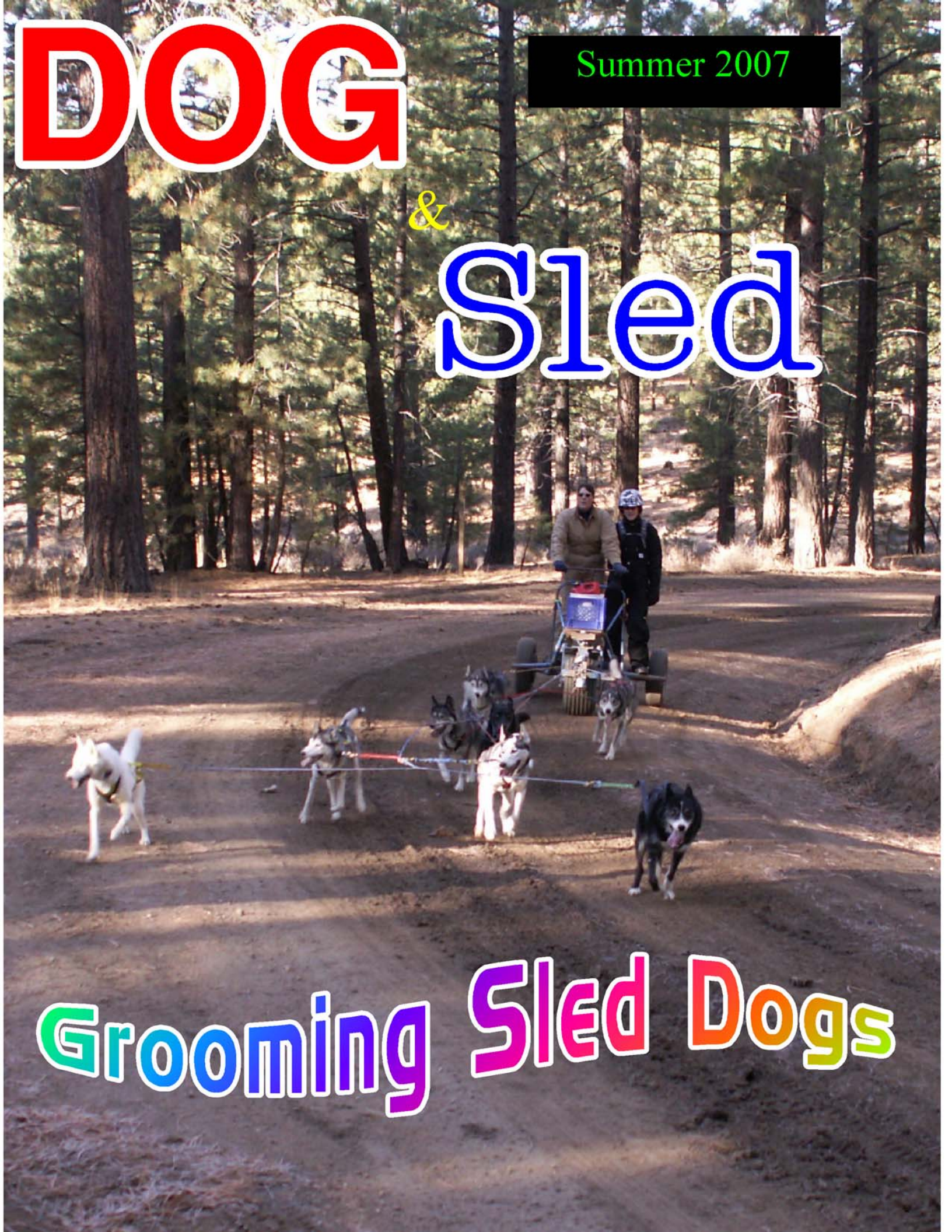


# DOG

Summer 2007

&

# Sled



# Grooming Sled Dogs

*Dog & Sled* is published quarterly. Each issue contains articles, news and information on the world of sled dog sports.

For more information, contact *Dog & Sled* at P.O. Box 32 Armuchee, GA 30105-0032 or online at [huskystuff@roman.net](mailto:huskystuff@roman.net) . Visit *Dog & Sled's* new website at [www.dx4solutions.com/dogandsled/](http://www.dx4solutions.com/dogandsled/)

**ALICE E. WHITE Editor, Writer, Publisher and Distributor**



I am a teenager and love sled dogs and sled dog sports. I have been running dogs for many years, sometimes on foot, sometimes with a bike or scooter or, in the rare case that my home state of Georgia actually gets significant snowfall, with a sled.

My current sled dog is Calypso, a Siberian husky. I scooter with her nearly every day and she loves it!

*Dog & Sled* started out as a handwritten magazine in 2000. Now I write it with the aid of a computer.

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Alice E. White

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COVER: A dog team pulls a dryland rig. Photo

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# Talk & Bark

Commentary By Alice White



It is July as I am writing this and I have finally put together the Summer 2007 issue of *Dog & Sled*. Although not as long as some I hope you will find it informative and entertaining just the same.

The past few months have been hard for this Georgia musher. I lost my Grandmother, Irene Rankin, in May and that has been difficult. "Grandmommy," as I called her, was a huge supporter of my pursuits. It didn't matter what I was interested in or what my goals were, she was always behind me one-hundred percent.

On a happier note, the sport of mushing has received a lot of publicity this year, some positive and, unfortunately, some negative. However, the good seems to outweigh the bad. In fact, a recent survey confirmed that the percentage of people opposed to dog mushing is actually quite low.

A couple of weeks ago, an article on dryland mushing appeared in dozens of newspapers nationwide - including journals that usually do not give much coverage to sled dog sports. What's more, dryland sports will also be featured in one of this Fall's issues of *Dog Fancy* magazine.

And it's not just dryland mushing that is gaining coverage - all aspects of the sport have been publicized in the past few months. New mushers and sled dog enthusiasts are appearing all over. This can only be a good sign.

The upcoming mushing season looks to be an interesting one.

I say, bring on Fall!

# Sled Dog Grooming & Tools

As anyone who has spent time around Nordic sled dogs well knows, the animals have a thick coat to protect them from the Winter cold. Many also know that, come Spring, the dogs lose their Winter fluff. In the span of a few weeks, it all comes out in tufts and hunks. This phenomenon is known to husky owners everywhere as “coat-blowing.” Most huskies blow their coats twice a year, in the Spring and in the Fall.

Generally it is the Spring coat-blow that produces the more infamous mountains of fur. Short-coated dogs also need brushing but this article will focus on double-coated breeds. This double coat consists of an outer layer of coarse, and often shiny, guard hairs and an inner layer of wooly undercoat. It is this undercoat that is shed twice a year.

Some dogs hate being brushed. However, if introduced to grooming at an early age, puppies will tolerate brushes and combs through adulthood.

Generally, a regular brush is the preferred tool for use on puppies. It is used as more of an introduction to grooming rather than a tool for removing masses of fur. Puppies usually do not shed as much as adult dogs so other tools are not needed.

Brush your puppy gently and try not to frighten it. Being brushed should be presented as something pleasant.

A generally scruffy look often signals the onset of coat blowing. Tufts of fur appear that can easily be pulled out. This is one way of removing the underfur - pulling it out by hand. You can remove all the tufts and use your hands as a rake. The result is often a cloud of fur so it is best done outside. For dogs who hate to be brushed, this is an alternate way to



ABOVE: Typical brush

BELOW: Shedding blade



remove dead fur. However, using grooming tools is much more efficient. There are many types of grooming tools.

Regular dog brushes and combs are great multipurpose grooming tools. They are great for daily brushings when a dog is not blowing his coat. They do remove a lot of fur when the coat is being blown and for someone who has never used better tools, they seem to remove massive quantities of fur.

The shedding blade is much more efficient. It



ABOVE: DE-MATTING COMB

is made to remove dead fur from long-haired dogs. It can be used both during coat blowing or during other times of the year. The little “teeth” along the edge of the blade catch on fur and gently pull it out. The shedding blade also helps remove guard hairs.

The shedding blade is really one of the best I have. The main problem is that the teeth are so small and you have to keep going over the same area, especially when the dog is blowing its coat. Also, it isn’t very good around the haunches, as the fur there is much denser.

I also have problems around the haunches and tail where fur is often thick and can easily become matted. For that area, the de-matting comb works best. It has sharp, curving blades that easily catch fur and pull it out.

Unfortunately, it pulls hard and dogs often do not like it. Even dogs who like to be brushed may view this tool in an unfavorable light. Therefore, as efficient as it is, I rarely use it. It has little use on other areas as it doesn’t remove much fur at a time.

One good tool is an undercoat rake, which has round, metal bristles with large bases and thin tips. On some undercoat rakes, the bristles rotate.



ABOVE: UNDERCOAT RAKE WITH ALTERNATING TEETH

I have found that an undercoat rake with rotating bristles works wonders on the haunches and tail. It removes dead fur while acting as a detangler. Best of all, when I used it on my husky this Spring, she didn’t mind it a bit.

However, my favorite grooming tool was shown to me last March at Siberian Husky Assist’s Wag’n Tails Road Rally in Sevierville, Tennessee. Also called an undercoat rake, this tool is basically a comb with different length teeth, as seen in the photo above. The alternating teeth easily pull out underfur even before the appearance of tufts that signal the onset of coat-blowing. It works in all areas from the tail to the haunches to the head and neck. If I had to pick the best, most efficient all-purpose grooming tool I’ve used, this would be it.

With a working sled dog, it is not always important to have it look like a champion show dog (although some Siberians are both sled and show dogs). What is important is that dead fur comes out so that the dog will be more comfortable, especially during the heat of the Summer.

# Sleds, Scooters and the Squeaky Ball Deficit

By Kristari's September  
Calypso



I have just been informed that another article is needed for the Summer 2007 issue of *Dog & Sled*. Seeing as I have some important stories and information to share, I took it upon myself to write this much-needed article on issues facing today's sled dog.

Like the salmon strike, for instance.

Last Winter, when I was running a lot, my Mommy started feeding me canned salmon, mixed with my dry food. I liked this arrangement very much. The only problem was that my Mommy would sometimes take *an entire minute* to fix my food. I loudly expressed my impatience. But that's beside the point.

What happened was this: around Springtime, the amount of salmon in my dinner decreased drastically. This allegedly had something to do with "not running as hard or as much." Right, like the availability of salmon is dependent on how much mushing we do!

Faced with the depressing prospect of eating plain dry food, I decided to go on strike. I would not eat anything unless it had salmon on it.

I have heard from reliable sources that I am not alone in my decision and that large numbers of sled dogs around the world are joining the salmon strike. This is very encouraging. Especially since it works.

At least, it worked for me!

Another issue of great importance is snow. I love snow! It's so much fun and it feels nice and cool on my fur when I roll in it.

Unfortunately it doesn't snow much where I am. I want to pull snow sleds but usually the weather is uncooperative and I pull a scooter. That's fun because it's lightweight and can go really fast. And you know what's really fun? To pull it through big mud puddles! For some reason this always makes my Mommy mad and is therefore very funny!

But getting back to sleds, I heard a group of people talking about a You Tube video (whatever that means) called "Ski The Beach." Now I am exceptionally smart so I know what skiing is. I listened more and discovered that some guy has started skiing on sand at the beach instead of snow. I like that idea. We should start mushing the beach. My Mommy thought this is a very good idea too but

points out that there aren't any beaches around here.

I do not believe her. She also says that my Squeaky is not on top of the cabinet and I know for an absolute *fact* that it is because I saw it up there a few months ago.

My Squeaky is a yellow and black squeaky ball that my Mommy thinks I am obsessed with just because I keep trying to climb the cabinet to find it. She tells me it isn't there and picks me up to show me that there is nothing on top of the cabinet.

But I know better.

Sometimes my Mommy gives me my squeaky ball and I demand that she throw it for me. If she doesn't, I stuff the little ball under the sofa and raise a fuss until she crawls under the sofa to bring it back.

It's so much fun. Almost as much as dragging her through the puddles.

But there is a problem. Squeaky is starting to lose its squeak and this distresses me. That happened to the Previous Squeak when I tried to drown it in my water bowl. My Mommy had to buy a new one and it was the last one in the store. So I don't know what I'm going to do if we can't find a new Squeaky. Of course, I know there are more on top of the cabinet!

## **Grizzly, Not Dogsled, Chosen For AK Quarter**

A team of sled dogs running beneath Mt. McKinley was rejected as a design for the Alaska state quarter, due out in August 2008. Instead, the coin, with the caption "The Great Land", will feature a grizzly bear with a freshly-caught salmon in its mouth. Spokeswoman, Meghan Stapleton, said the Alaska Commemorative Coin Commission received over 30,000 votes. "I know it was really close between the grizzly and the musher."

*Source:*

[www.adn.com](http://www.adn.com)

## **Ramy Brooks Suspended From Iditarod**

The Iditarod Trail Committee suspended top musher, Ramy Brooks, from running the Iditarod for two years, followed by three years probation, after he admitted to striking his dogs with a trail marker.

*Sources:*

[www.adn.com](http://www.adn.com)

[www.iditarod.com](http://www.iditarod.com)

## **Iditarod Film Wins Emmy**

The 2006 Iditarod documentary, *Mother Nature's Turn To Dance*, won an Emmy Award on June 1st for "program achievement in the best news special, long-form documentary category."

*Sources:*

[www.iditarod.com](http://www.iditarod.com)

[www.frontiersman.com](http://www.frontiersman.com)

## **All Alaska Sweepstakes To Be Run In 2008**

To celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the All Alaska Sweepstakes, a 408-mile sled dog race that was the premier mushing event in the early 1900s, the race will take place once again in March 2008.

The race, which runs from Nome to Candle, Alaska, now boasts a \$100,000 winner-take-all purse. The rules for the 2008 race are the same as those from earlier races. Mushers are allowed to use outside assistance but are not allowed to drop (temporarily leave with race veterinarians) dogs from their team. Some worry that this rule will place dogs at risk while others feel that it

will encourage mushers to be especially careful with their dog teams.

*Source:*

[www.adn.com](http://www.adn.com)

## **Lance Mackey Nominated for ESPY**

Lance Mackey, winner of both the 2007 Yukon Quest and Iditarod has been nominated for Best Outdoor Athlete, one of ESPN's 2007 ESPY Awards. The awards will be broadcast on ESPN July 11th.

*Sources:*

[www.iditarod.com](http://www.iditarod.com)

[www.comebackkennel.com](http://www.comebackkennel.com)

## **TV Show Looking For Dog Mushing Family**

The popular ABC TV reality show, *Wife Swap*, has announced that it is looking for an Alaskan dog mushing family to feature in the upcoming season. *Wife Swap* episodes take two very different families and have the wives trade places for a week.

*Source:*

[www.sleddogcentral.com](http://www.sleddogcentral.com)



# CLASSIFIEDS

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SIBERIAN HUSKY ASSIST RESCUE is now a distributor for MANMAT harnesses to help raise funds.

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["http://www.howlingdogalaska.com"](http://www.howlingdogalaska.com)

To order, please call Marcia at:

276-466-9856; or email her at:

["mailto:siberianhuskyassist@bvunet.net"](mailto:siberianhuskyassist@bvunet.net)

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## Publications

### MUSHING THE MAGAZINE OF DOG-POWERED ADVENTURE

Bi-monthly magazine covering all aspects of dogsledding, dog packing, carting, skijoring and more. Recently merged with *Sled Dog Sports* magazine.

Call (917) 929-6118 or visit  
[www.mushing.com](http://www.mushing.com)

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### TEAM & TRAIL MAGAZINE

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### CONTINENTAL KENNEL CLUB MAGAZINE

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[www.ckcusa.com](http://www.ckcusa.com)

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# THE LAST WOOF



ZORRO THE CAT INSPECTS FRESHLY-BRUSHED UNDERFUR FROM CALYPSO THE HUSKY. Photo taken Spring 2007