

Apogee Photo Magazine



Smiling Siberian Sled Dogs: How the New Yorker Magazine Went to the Races

by Jim Austin, M.A., A.C.E.

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Those blue eyes can't help but draw and hold your attention.

Teamwork. Performance under harsh winter conditions. We're talking sled dogs here, and a picture of them I sold to the New Yorker Magazine.

The New Yorker, the one with cartoons, right? That's the one.

In pursuit of a winter adventure, I drove west of Denver to the Winter Park area. In a valley surrounded by the Colorado Rockies, was a sled dog race course and you could hear the dogs singing. As I got close enough to watch them

race, it became clear to me how amazing Siberian Huskies truly are.

As I lay on on my stomach on top of a snow bank, and waited at the edge of the hard-packed race track, I heard the starting signal. Teams of two, four, and eight dogs raced in different heats around the course.

Lying down to photograph the sled dog race, I practiced 3 camera skills for sports subjects:

- 1) Get low to the ground and shoot up to get a clear blue sky background.
- 2) Use a faster shutter speed than you think you'll need.
- 3) Pan with a fast moving subject.

After making a lot of



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Just look at those smiles - how they love to run and have fun!

made the image work was the smiles on the dogs faces and their wagging tails. They seemed to prove the saying that "the reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tale instead of his tongue."

Later, I posted the image to the social image website, Flickr. Flickr is free. Simply upload your pictures. Others can see them and comment on them right away. Before long, you are leaving notes for other people about their pictures. The site has a fast search engine, so a buyer can find a specific picture they need. The New Yorker Magazine was online, searching. Wayne Kogan at the New Yorker phoned, offering to buy the image after he'd seen it on Flickr. He sent a contract with details of publication in a color advertising section. The smiling sled dog image fit their needs for a 1/8th size image in a spread.



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Huskies traveling by truck.

While I could tell more stories of how much fun we had that day, the better story is the one about the Siberian Huskie itself, and we'll end the story there. Originally bred by an indigeneous people on the shores of the Russian Bering Sea, the husky has a two-layer coat to survive the arctic cold. Mushing over the snow in a team, they can run the equivalent of 10 human marathons in a row.

The Husky is known to sing, and talk rather than bark. Most surprisingly, the breed is known for its "snow nose." As an example of the this "snow nose", back in 1925, 150 huskies carried emergency diphtheria serum over 675 miles in 5 days across Alaska, saving Nome from an epidemic. The lead Siberian Husky on that team, Balto, became the most famous canine celebrity of his day, after he stayed on the trail during whiteout conditions that confused the mushers.

If you love winter, the stunning Colorado mountains and sled dogs, see a race for yourself and try your skills at action photography. Just visit [The Rocky Mountain Sled Dog Club's](#) race information page.

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*An Adobe Certified Expert, Jim Austin has many HDR articles on Apogee, and teaches Photoshop for Photographers at the [Apogee Online Campus](#). His HDR work is also featured at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jimaustin/sets/>.*

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