



HORSE, DOG OR MOTORBIKE?

How winter excitement

You know there's a sport where you don't have to do all the work while skiing? It is called skjoring and you can use a horse, dog, motorbike or even a car to pull you. However, dogs are the cheapest and easiest to control – if you know how, of course! No wonder they are the most popular.

The best dogs to use in European competitions are short-haired pointers¹. They can run up to 60 kilometres per hour and are strong enough to pull a cross-country skier². They are used to³ co-operate with a runner, cyclist or even someone on a scooter⁴, so their owners are not often bored because there

A DOG CAN BREAK YOUR SKIS INTO PIECES

Iva Křížková, 19, lives in the small village of Hradecko in the Orlické Mountains. She has done cross-country and downhill skiing since she was a child. The best activity she has learned is running while **tied**^{1*} to a dog. You might think Iva is lazy and expects the dog to pull her, but she is in fact taking part in a new sport, canicross, running cross country attached to a dog. It started as a way to train sled dogs^{2*} when there was no snow. Soon, it became a sport in itself.

Why did you choose a dog to do sport with?
I tried it on grass first and it was beautiful when the pointer co-operated with me on a long **cord**^{3*}. It was not that easy to control it on the snow because a dog can move very fast with a cross-country skier. If I don't manage to make a turn, the dog will pull me through the forest in such a way that my skis will end up in pieces.

What speeds can dogs and people reach?
A dog with its master on a bike can reach a maximum speed of 60km/h. That's quite



How did you start with canicross?
In the beginning I did canicross several



Man's best friend, even in the snow.

they need **constant**⁹ movement. It is not a good idea to get a pointer unless you are able to **provide it with**⁷ a run everyday. The more they move the better they feel. "During competitions, German short-haired pointers or **greyhounds**⁸ are practically **unbeatable**¹⁰ these days," says Michael Tobiášek, a European leader in dog and scooter skjoring. "They never get tired."

Classic skjoring is done with a horse. To let a horse pull you is not that easy, and to control it is even more difficult. Try to imagine: you are not in a **saddle**¹¹, but behind the horse! When you are pulled by dogs while cross-country skiing, you have a special **harness**¹², but when skjoring with a horse, you have only a long **rein**¹³! Now that's difficult, isn't it?

The home of horse skjoring is Scandinavia but competitions are also held in other parts of the world.



High speed skiing. A skier is attached to a motorbike by a rope.

CONQUER SNOW STEP BY STEP

A walk up the steep hillsides, in deep soft snow, where an ordinary hiker or a skier could not get, that is the ideal terrain for **snowshoes**¹⁷.

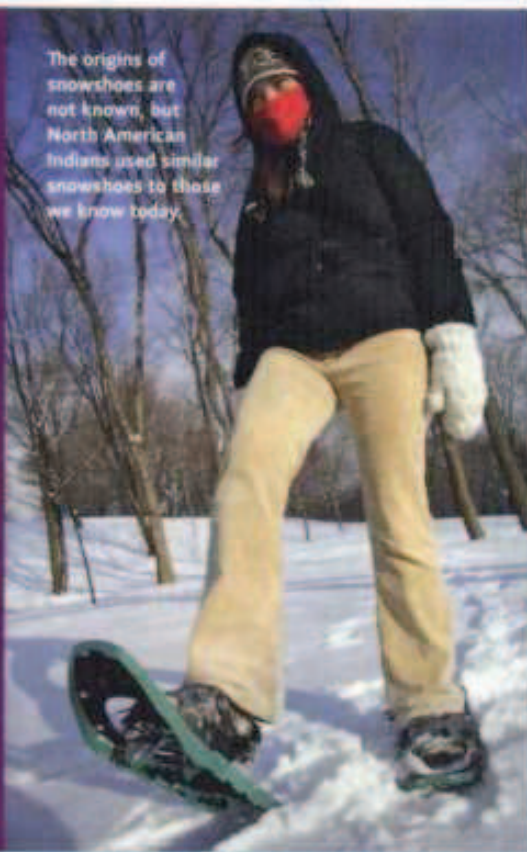
Snowshoes have been popular in winter sports for several years. They can be used for a nice walk but also as an adrenaline sport. "Every morning I take a lift up into the hills with my clients and we go on a **snowy ridge**¹⁸ of the mountain. It's a half-day **trek**¹⁹ to the other lift that will take us back down," describes Pierre Béghin, a winter sports instructor from Les Arcs in France. "For many high school students a walk in a lonely snowy landscape is an amazing experience."

Adults prefer to go on trips beginning in the afternoon. "We go for two or three hours to watch the sunset from a **secluded**²⁰ mountain cabin where we have already booked dinner and accommodation and we return to civilisation the following afternoon," says Philipe, a mountain guide from La Plagne.

Those who prefer to have horse power in the form of an **engine**²¹ will like moto-skjoring. A skier wearing downhill skis is attached to a car or motorbike with a rope. Of course they have to wear a helmet and protective clothing.

The skier communicates with the driver through signals. Right after the start, a proper 'snow hell' breaks out! Tyres tear

The origins of snowshoes are not known, but North American Indians used similar snowshoes to those we know today.



pieces of ice from the ground and create a shower of snow you can't see through. Speeds can get up to 100 kilometres per hour! If you're not an experienced skier, you can easily injure your legs doing this, so don't forget: respect nature, and your own safety!

Jakub Turek (CR)

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VOCABULARY

¹ **short-haired pointer** [ˈpɔɪntə] – krátkosrstý ohař

² **cross-country skier** – běžkař

³ **to be willing to** [ˈwɪlɪŋ] – být ochoten k

⁴ **scooter** [ˈsku:tə] – koloběžka

⁵ **were bred for hunting** – byli vyšlechtěni k lovu

⁶ **constant** [ˈkɒnst(ə)nt] – neustálý

⁷ **to provide with** [prəˈvaɪd] – poskytnout

⁸ **greyhound** [ˈɡreɪhaʊnd] – chrt

⁹ **unbeatable** [ʌnˈbi:təbəl] – neporazitelný

¹⁰ **saddle** [ˈsæd(ə)l] – sedlo

¹¹ **harness** [ˈhɑːnɪs] – postroj na koně, psa

¹² **rein** [reɪn] – opraf

¹³ **engine** [ˈendʒɪn] – motor

¹⁴ **tied** [taɪd] – přivázaný

¹⁵ **sled dog** – pes zapřažený do saní

¹⁶ **cord** [kɔːd] – šňůra, provaz

¹⁷ **snowshoes** [ˈsnəʊʃuːz] – sněžnice

¹⁸ **ridge** [rɪdʒ] – horský hřeben

¹⁹ **trek** [trek] – túra, putování

²⁰ **secluded** [sɪˈkluːdɪd] – skrytý, ležící v ústraní