



Sled Dog

**Powerful
Miracle**



by Stephen Person

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Isobel's Story

It was a sunny winter day in 2005 near the town of Churchill, Canada. A team of dogs was pulling a sled along a snowy trail. They were **training** for a race. Suddenly, a dog named Isobel began to **stagger**. Then she stopped and refused to start running again. Her owners, Gerald Azure and Jenafor Ollander, knew something was very wrong.


Isobel (on the right) was pulling a sled along a trail like this one when she came to a sudden stop.



They rushed Isobel to a **veterinarian**. The doctor discovered that Isobel had a disease that had caused her to go blind. Isobel's life as a sled dog was over, the doctor said. Gerald and Jenafor took Isobel home and kept her inside—but she did not like her new life. She seemed sad and even stopped eating and drinking. Her owners were afraid that unless they could figure out what was wrong, Isobel would soon die.



This photo shows Isobel after she went blind. She lost her sight when she was four years old.



Sled dog racing is a popular sport today. In short sprints, sled dogs like Isobel can reach speeds of about 28 miles per hour (45 kph).

Back on the Trail

Finally, Gerald and Jenafor realized that Isobel still wanted to run. They took her outside and **hitched** her up to the sled, along with her old team of racing dogs. Gerald climbed into the sled and shouted, “Let’s go!” The dogs began to run. “The first couple of steps she stumbled a little bit,” said Gerald. “After that it was straight on down the trail.”



Isobel (on the left) helps lead her team of sled dogs. Isobel relies on the dog running beside her to help guide her in the right direction.

As soon as she began racing again, Isobel went back to being the high-energy, fun-loving dog she had been before. “She runs better now than she did with her eyesight,” said Jenafor. Isobel’s story is unusual, but she shares one important **trait** with sled dogs everywhere—a love of running.



Even after going blind, Isobel helped her team win several sled dog races. She retired from racing in January 2010, at the age of nine.



Isobel’s story **inspired** many people. “She has touched the hearts of a lot of people,” says Jenafor. “If a blind sled dog can run, just think of what the rest of the world can do!”

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About the Author

Stephen Person has written many children's books about history, science, and the environment. His childhood dog was half Siberian husky (and half poodle). He lives with his family in Saratoga Springs, New York.



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Sled Dog

Powerful Miracle

It was winter 2005. Near the town of Churchill, Canada, Gerald Azure and Jenafor Ollander hitched their dog Isobel to a sled. Earlier in the year, Isobel had lost her eyesight as the result of an illness. Yet the big, strong sled dog still wanted to run. Did she still have what it takes to help her team win a race?

Look inside to learn more about Isobel and other dogs that pull sleds across the Arctic snow. You'll also discover how these amazing animals are built to survive in one of the coldest places on Earth, how they train for races that last for days—and how they have touched the hearts of people around the world.

Arctic Wolf
The High Arctic

Caribou
And Reindeer, Too

Polar Bear
Shrinking Ice

Sled Dog
Powerful Miracle

Walrus
Tusk, Tusk

Wolverine
Super Strong

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