



## Interesting Case from our web site [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)



### Husky Racing



Husky racing in Austria

Having just returned from Austria - where I had been ski-ing in temperatures as low as -20 C - it had become very apparent of the importance of good nutrition. If you consider that over half the calories we burn are used to maintain our body temperature you will appreciate why I felt totally justified in gorging each day.....simply to keep warm!

The importance of good nutrition was no more apparent than when I had the privilege of watching the husky sledge races in Sports Gastein. Keeping warm is one thing but having the additional energy to pull a sledge around a snow track is another.

For this reason these performance athletes are fed on very high energy dense diets. These are in the form of dried food which are compacted with oils and fats. Despite the huge calorie intake every single husky I examined remained lean and muscular illustrating the high energy output required by these very beautiful creatures.

Their enthusiasm, energy and effervescence prior to the race switched to a finely honed canter once the race began. The number of torn ears also illustrated the way that most disputes are settled in this "pack atmosphere".

The wide availability of high energy diets has meant that working animals, puppies and lactating bitches can now perform and develop at a very high level. What is sometimes difficult to gauge is what is required for the pet dog who has given up pulling sledges as a bad job!

Since maintaining body temperature is not too difficult in the relative balmy climate of Hinckley and there are few sledges around, the calorie intake requirement is considerably reduced. This means that if you are using a dried energy dense diet it is astonishing how little you need to feed to maintain your pets energy levels. As has recently been pointed out to me on my return from near Arctic conditions, it is clear that my input has been exceeding my output!

Husky racing is very active in the UK - though the lack of snow means that the "sleds" have wheels. See the web site for the Siberian Husky Club [www.siberianhuskyclub.com](http://www.siberianhuskyclub.com)

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