

## THE SOUTH SHORE



# CONNECTION

NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE SUPERIOR'S SOUTH SHORE

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-----FREE-----TAKE ONE-----

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## Berington twins take on sled dog world

If the residents of Port Wing haven't been seeing double this past winter, it's because Kristy and Anna Berington have been out of town every Friday through Saturday. After being kennel help for a local sled dog musher for the past three years and attending this year's Aspen Run Sled Dog Classic, the twins fell prey to the "sled dog racing bug."

"It's definitely contagious," says Lisa Chaplin, an avid sled dog racer herself. Although not everyone who gets introduced to the sport becomes hooked, Chaplin said that, "The girls love dogs and horses, so they were nine-tenths of the way there before they went to watch this year's races."

After a one-week "crash course" on competitive sled dog speed racing, Kristy and Anna packed up and went to Elton, Wisconsin with Lisa for some more sled dog racing.

"They cut a deck of cards the week before, high card winning, to determine who got to race the first week," said Chaplin.

Anna won, so at Elton she took out a 3-dog team comprised of Lisa's older, honest veteran dogs and raced against three other Junior mushers. After the two day race, Anna placed third.

The next weekend found the trio at Menomonie, Wisconsin, where Kristy ran a different three dog team and placed fourth out of five. "By all rights, she should have been third because the winner of the Junior class should have been competing in the four dog pro class," said Chaplin.

Anna got another chance at racing the following weekend and ended up second place. As of this writing, there are still three more race weekends to



Kristy and Anna Berington with sled dogs at the finish line at Menomonie, Wisconsin where Kristy placed fourth. The twins fell in love with sled dog racing through their work for a local musher and seeing the Aspen Run Sled Dog Classic at Iron River.

go, so if the weather cooperates, both Anna and Kristy will get to compete in three Junior races this year.

Chaplin said, "It's a bit hard to get used to, having them along. But they are a big help, and my dogs love them. They have been welcomed with open arms at all of the races, as all of the mushers have been great about trying to help them and make them feel at home."

As for the next racing season, Chaplin said, "I don't know yet, but if Kristy and Anna want to go again next year, and it's okay with their parents, then I guess I'd better come up with some faster dogs for them! They're already comparing their times with other Juniors, even though they know

they're running my older, semi-retired dogs."

So if you start seeing double again when you're in the Port Wing area, you'll know that the Beringtons' first year of racing is over - and if you have a few minutes to spare, ask them what it's like to run dogs!

The next thing you know, you just might find yourself wanting to be on a trail next year running dogs yourself. Or maybe you will simply be satisfied to take in the fourth annual Aspen Run Sled Dog Classic at Iron River in January. And if you do, you can be sure you'll be seeing double while there. The Berington twins will more than likely be racing and maybe placing in the sled dog races