



No chains are allowed, even though course is over snow, slush and glare ice.

DICE ON ICE

Even a well-banked turn on a good, paved track has spelled death to many a race driver. So these crazy men do it on ice!

by **BOB FREWIN** PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL BURNS



Leaning out into curve adds weight to inside wheels.

Final check on ignition system is essential. It is the most critical component in cold-weather driving.





Hitting sixty-five on the straightaways, cars must slow to about thirty for turns. A heavy foot on brake or throttle is fatal.

Some people play Russian roulette for kicks. Other bravados charm snakes, tame lions or tiptoe up preposterous peaks. Man likes danger, it seems; at least, he has tried everything from rolling over Niagara Falls in a barrel to Sunday driving, in his strange, uncontrollable quest for thrills.

Excitement is somewhat a matter of habit and taste, so the Toronto sports-car set, naturally enough, conducts its particular flirtation with suicide behind the wheels of sleek and revved-up automobiles moving at high speeds.

Speed is nothing in these days of jets and compression engines, so the Jaguar and MG boys—and girls, too, incidentally—had to find a gimmick.

They did. And they call it "Dice on Ice," an appropriate title for a skidding series of races held each winter since 1950 on the frozen lakes of Muskoka, the resort area situated only 135 miles north of Toronto.

The gimmick is that the Dice on Ice races are held on a weaving, curvy, and irregular mile-and-a-half course placed smack in the center of a frozen lake.

This year Dice on Ice was held in early February on Mary Lake, a small jewel of an ice pond near Huntsville, Ontario. It attracted 100 drivers, another 200 sports-car owners and about 3,000 plain but curious spectators.

The 1959 races and the Mary Lake course, bulldozed and snow-plowed by aficionados who worked all night to thwart a sudden and unpredicted snowfall, were acclaimed the best in the nine years of Dice on Ice. The acclamation came about, no doubt, because this year's course was made extremely dangerous by adverse weather conditions.

"The snow made the Mary Lake course treacherous," reported one driver after he was finally snug in his garage. "Even with all the bulldozing and plowing we



It takes ten people to get Art Johnston's Austin back on the track.

DICE ON ICE

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did, we still had twenty-four inches of snow on top of the ice of the lake.

"Whenever you get that much snow on top of ice you get some water underneath the snow. Once a few cars had been over the course and shifted the snow around a bit, you were driving on a mixture of snow, water and then the ice. Made it very tricky."

Experienced drivers claim that a heavy foot on the accelerator means almost certain pile-up in the Dice on Ice races.

"The daredevil who tries to open his throttle on this course is asking for an accident," said a veteran of five of the Dice throws. "What a driver must do is control his car at all times. The fast driver makes a

fool of himself, since it is impossible to control a car at high speeds."

"High speeds" mean above sixty-five mph to the Dice on Ice veterans. Racers hit sixty to sixty-five in the straightaways, then must cut back without using the brakes to about thirty for the many turns which make the Dice on Ice route a drivers' shocker. Tires fitted with steel spikes are banned, incidentally. Only standard equipment is permitted.

Despite the hazardous conditions, there has not been a serious accident, let alone a fatality, in nine years of Dice on Ice racing. This is partly a tribute to the driving skill of the competitors in the event and partly a favor from Lady Luck. *(Continued on page 31)*

This looks like sure death for a handful of spectators, but the snowbank stopped John Farrar's car just in time.





Hit a turn too fast and the next second you are in a four-wheel skid into the bank. Result—bent wheels, panels and fenders.



Frank Bradley, of Toronto, fought his Porsche into first place to win this year's Dice on Ice trophy.

