

**‘Kickfest at Dawson City:’
The Rise of Sports on the Yukon Goldrush Frontier,
1896-1902**

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Within the short span of three years, the Klondike stampede attracted more than 40,000 gold miners, eager to strike it rich, to the Yukon. The violence and chaos characteristic of earlier American and later Alaskan gold rushes was notably absent from the Klondike stampede, but life in the rapidly growing City of Dawson was nothing if not lively and hectic. While the preponderance of gambling is usually seen as an indicator of this fact, the development of organized sports was of similar importance for the social life in the city. Leagues in hockey and soccer were organized before 1899, complemented by the erection of a Gymnasium and a wooden race track. The Native people living in the area as well as the Gwich'in Indians visiting Dawson from the Western Canadian Arctic were soon drawn into this developing sporting scene, and a number of sporting encounters ensued. This paper describes the forms of contact developing between the two cultures,