



*Kirghiz women outside the kibitkas after the game and entertainment.*

were in a separate kibitka. At my request they were asked to come out. They appeared in high boots with a characteristic manly gait and stood in a row with downcast eyes to be photographed.

After refreshments the game was resumed on rested horses. This time the goat was replaced by a slaughtered calf, the weight of which increased the difficulty of the struggle. In about an hour a halt was called and a toothless old fellow without any voice vainly urged those present to go in for a wrestling match with a herculean Kirghiz who had dismounted to wait for an opponent. After this there was a pretty bout of wrestling on horseback between pairs of boys of 7 to 9 years of age. Having started their horses towards each other by a blow of the nagaika, they seized their whips between their teeth, extended one hand towards each other, while bending over the other side of the horse's neck and hanging on to it with the hand that was free, and made desperate attempts to drag each other from the saddle. When this occurred, the delight of the spectators knew no bounds and the victorious youngster was generously rewarded with small coins.

When this had come to an end, 11 lads of 8 to 12 rode up on trained racehorses, carefully covered up in hoods and several blankets of felt and woven carpet. The boys trotted up and down a couple of times after removing the hoods and blankets and then walked their horses to the starting point about 1 1/2 to 2 miles from the spectators. Soon a cloud of dust in the distance showed that the race had begun. Towards the finish each horse was met by a grown-up Kirghiz who seized it by the bridle and endeavoured to get every ounce out of it by whipping it with his nagaika and galloping alongside and ahead of it. This little manoeuvre caused great disorder and feeling ran high. The horses were mostly stallions, all of them trained for a couple of months. According to what the Kirghiz told me, these horses are used solely for racing and it is only at a later age, often when they are 15 years old, that they are sent to the stud or used for work. The boys rode on small wooden saddles with a little rug thrown over them. The stirrups were also of wood to reduce the weight. The horses were carefully groomed, had shining coats and plaited