

Slippery Bill's Novel Bear Trap Insures Safety for Man, Beast

Slippery Bill Jefford has done it again—almost. He has invented a bear trap that enables both bear and human trapper to emerge unscratched.

Until last year, Slippery Bill focused his inventive talents on airplanes. He was a mechanic for Northern Consolidated Airlines. This season he became general "mechanical brain" for Katmai National Monument at the head of the Aleutian chain.

Since no bears may be harmed in a national park or monument, they must be transported alive to areas where they will not have unfortunate encounters with humans.

The bears usually are loaded trap and all onto the back of a pickup truck. They are driven to a remote area and released. Park rangers must get the heck out of the annoyed bear's way. A few haven't been quick enough.

This spring Bill put his mechanical mind to work and invented an electrically timed switch that opens a bear trap 15 minutes after the trapper has left the scene.

A nosy little Alaska brown bear had been poking into tents at Brooks Lodge camping grounds. Last week he took the bait.

Bill was elated. He painted the trapped bear's face green, carried him off to a

remote island and released him.

A few days later the green face found its way back to camp. It wasn't about to give up all that good garbage and campers' chow.

Slippery Bill has set another trap, but apparently Green Face learns from experience. That remote island is a long swim from the lodge.

Bill is not discouraged. The National Park Service thought enough of his gadget to send him a special citation.

Now he's tinkering with another invention, which he hopes to perfect by next spring. It's an electric fishwheel. The plans will be available for the asking for the cost of printing and postage.



BETTER BEAR TRAP—Slippery Bill Jefford adjusts his electric brain child. He used to invent parts for airplane motors.