

# MULE VS MOUNTAIN LION

## *GIVES NEW MEANING TO HUNTING MULE*

*By Steven Richards*

There have been pictures floating over the Internet for some time now. In doing some research for this story and trying to find the skinny on the story, it has become funnier and funnier as, just like a gossip circle, the story gets further and further from truth.

Your editor and chief, Ben Tennison and I have devoted much time trying to locate the man that owns the mule in the pictures in order to get the most accurate account. All of this has been in vain as it comes right back in a circle or dead end. We would like to know how old a mule he is and how long he has been hunting with that mule and other things connected with the mule. If anyone reads this and can fill in the blanks for us, it would be greatly appreciated if you would contact us.

There is probably no one who is in the mule business that has not seen these pictures several times, and with each one the story gets bigger and bigger. I asked one of my dearest friends who owns some very outstanding lion hounds (Blueticks) if he knew who the owner of the mule was. He is still researching to help me find this man and mule but he is having about as much luck as Ben and I. In his letter to me, he did a go ahead and add, "With the Walker hounds sitting in the background, the hunter obviously needed something to catch the lion and what better than a mule if all he had was Walkers."

After searching on the Internet I will give you some of the comments on there to show how gossip can put untruths to the story, and those how that don't know anything about mules and lions, perceive things.

### **EXAMPLE 1 TITLED: ONE BAD MULE**

These pictures came from someone's dad in Arizona. Yes, the mule killed the mountain lion. The mountain lion had been stalking them for the better part of the morning on the way out to a hunt.

They were pretty sure it was after a dog. The cat apparently ambushed them and the mule pictured tossed it's rider and went into attack (defense) mode. The horses scattered and shots were fired but no one was sure if they hit the cat or not. Unfortunately, the battle was decently long and it wasn't until it was almost over that one of the guys started snapping pictures.

### **COMMENTS:**

It is obvious that they were on a hunt but the description of the type of hunt is left out. If you notice the mule has a tracking device that is used by lion hunter for dogs, tied on the back of the cantle of the saddle. Also there are remote controlled units for shocking collars on the horn of the saddle, something else lion hunters also use to control lion hunting dogs. Note the mountain lion's position and its limp form the lion is already dead. Also notice the rifle is missing from the scabbard.

### **EXAMPLE 2 TITLED: MULE VS MOUNTAIN LION**

No this is not about a sadistically staged fight between a lion and a mule but a true story in Arizona where a lion that had been stalking a mule, horses and dogs all morning finally attacked. When all others ran to safety, the mule threw its rider and killed the lion! I am sure these pictures will be all over the web soon and are obviously real. That was one bad%\* mule and one stupid kitty!

The pictures are worth a thousand words and in one of the pics, the mule has the lion in his/her teeth.. I have always been partial to horses but could not imagine a horse doing that (the horses and dogs retreat but don't know if there were any stallions in the mix). Two hounds in the picture are watching from a safe distance! Mule breeders have always told me a mule is better than a horse and now I believe them but still don't want to own one!



Lucky for the mule this didn't happen in Caleefornia where these little darlings are protected along with rattlesnakes, retarded Senators, glory-drunk governors and illegals!

### COMMENTS:

This gentleman sure had a sense of humor and a great imagination and ability to tell a story. The poor man has no knowledge of mules and apparently not much on horses. I am not sure what his remark about stallions in this mix was supposed to mean, other than he might think a stallion might wade in on the fight which I doubt would have happened.

### EXAMPLE 3 TITLED: ONE BAD MULE

These pics came from someone's dad in AZ. Yes, the mule killed the mountain lion. The lion had been stalking them for the better part of the morning on the way out to the hunt. They were sure it was after a dog. The cat apparently ambushed them, and the mule tossed it's rider and went into the attack (defense) mode. The horses scattered and shots fired but no one was sure if they hit the cat or not. Unfortunately, the battle was decently long, and it wasn't until it was almost over that one of the guys started snapping pictures.

### COMMENTS:

Here again is another good story teller with a good sense of imagination. It goes to show you if you don't know for sure then make up something.

NOW FOR THE REST OF THE STORY-THIS I CONSIDER MOST ACCURATE AND CLOSEST TO THE TRUTH POSTED ON THE INTERNET BY THE ADMS (AMERICAN DONKEY AND MULE SOCIETY )

There are a number of photos of a mule attacking a mountain lion (cougar, puma) are circulating on the internet. They have been sent to us numerous times - please, we have seen them, do not forward them to us. We receive no less than 10 sets of them a week.

We do not know the owner of the mule. While we were contacted by a member saying it was a friend of theirs that owned the mule BEFORE the photos started making the rounds, we also know how urban legends are born.

The photos are supposed to be of a mule in New Mexico on a lion hunt (yes, it is legal in some states). The mule is attacking the lion which we were told

initially had already been shot by hunters.

Yes, a mule will attack a predator in this fashion. This is the same way a donkey would attack a dog or coyote, which is what makes (some) donkeys good guard animals. The photos are very graphic but do show exactly the mode of attack a mule or donkey would use.

We would not say that the photos had been "contrived" or doctored in any way. Leah Patton, office manager of the ADMS, has witnessed similar attack behavior between a donkey and dog as have other staff of the ADMS and other mule and donkey owners. In this case, the photos would be classified as "Genuine".

While we are neither supporting nor condemning the photos, we do believe them to be a true depiction of what a mule or donkey would do faced with the situation of a predator invading their territory.

Thank you for your interest in longears, and in the photos, but please, do not continue to send them to the ADMS email.

*The ADMS Staff.*

### THIS MESSAGE I FEEL IS THE MOST ACCURATE

The following message was posted 2004/12/13 at 23:00:38:

Name: Muleman (Harold DeWalt)

Subject: re: Mule vs. Mountain Lion

Message: Being a muleman, several of my friends have sent me information about this particular mule. The best information is that the mule named Henry has a great dislike for bears and mountain lions. If not tied with a chain, it will follow the hunters to the lion when treed.

It appears that the lion was in a tree and shot through the lungs by a hunter. The lion jumped from the tree and ran with the dogs and mule in hot pursuit. The hounds gave way to the mule thus the pictures of the mule attack. I doubt that the lion ran very far and in reality was dead or in the final stages of dying when the mule caught it.

This happened in northern New Mexico. These hunters were actually

hunting for a lion thus I find it hard to accept that they were being stalked by the lion. Note the dog with the radio collar and the radio receiver on the mule's saddle.

Yes, mules inherit this type of behavior from their donkey daddy. For an excellent hunting mount as well as a great trail riding experience, try a mule.

I once owned a mule named Hub. He was very short on looks and was somewhat of a knot head, but he had some redeeming qualities. We were taking some cattle off the mountain pastures and I took Hub along to pack our gear. I was going to leave him at the cow camp and pick him up in the evening. Hub decided he did not want to be left behind and jumped the fence and joined us. I just let him come along. He did not have a halter or anything on him and he just trailed along happy just being with us.

We started gathering the cattle out of the summer pockets of meadows and ol'Hub would watch us and pretty soon he figured out that we needed the cows and calves gathered and started helping us. Once gathered we started the cattle off the mountain to the main ranch. Once again Hub would gather the stragglers and keep them going. All I had to do was say "go get'em, Hub" and he would go after them just like a good cow dog.

Another time I was in a summer camp helping an outfitter and had a good horse named Pard that Hub was real partial to. I had Pard picketed out in the meadow close to the stream and turned ol'Hub loose as he would just hang around Pard. A cow moose and calf wondered too close to Pard and ol'Hub took after the cow/calf moose and ran them clean away from there.

Although I live and camp and recreate where there are plenty of bear and lions all around us, I have never seen my mules take on any of those beast. However if a coyote or a deer would come out to the pasture and if it would amuse them, the mules will take them out of the pasture in good fashion.

I believe john mules have more tendencies this way then the molly's. When I go in the mountains, camp by a babbling brook in the whispering pines with my mules and dogs close by, I sleep the sleep of a contented baby. Mules ride better and when they become your buddy

they will watch out for you as you watch out for them.

I believe the lion was dead in these pictures as I believe a mule isn't going to stick his muzzle within the distance of two sets of claws, at least they won't do it twice. I see no marks on the mule and I can't believe it accomplished as much against an uninjured cat as some of these stories would imply. I have seen mules stomp deer hides etc. so it is not uncommon occurrence.

The pictures are dramatic for sure. If anyone knows the mule and the mule owner in these pictures, please let me know.

Where the eagle flies  
And the coyote cries

STEVEN RICHARDS  
Wyoming Outdoor Industries  
1231 13th street  
Cody, Wyoming 82414  
1-800-pak mule