



A Guinness representative visited Mueller's farm to verify weight of the big mules.

LISTED IN "GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS"

World's Largest Mules

By Nat Williams

Where does a 2,200-pound mule sleep? At Herb Mueller's farm, usually next to a 2,100-pound one.

The mules — Apollo and Anak — are the largest in the world. If you don't believe Mueller (and who wouldn't?) you can look it up. It's right there, in living color, in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The Columbia, Ill., breeder's massive mules are featured for the third time this year in the book, used for settling arguments or fascinating curious readers.

Apollo stands 19 hands, 1 inch, while Anak measures 18 hands, 3 inches. They are the offspring of Belgian mares and Mammoth jacks.

Mueller has always been a "mule man," even when he was a boy. "Back then, we farmed everything with mules." In 1962 he began raising Shetland ponies, then got into miniature mules. Soon he was raising other mules and horses.

Mueller hitches up his mules once in a while to get them used to the idea, but he doesn't work them much. "I used to use mules to plant potatoes but we don't raise spuds anymore."

Mueller's attempt to get his huge mules listed in the Guinness book was spearheaded

by a friend from Kentucky who was determined to document the fact that they were the world's largest. A Guinness representative visited the farm to verify the mules' size by weighing them on a certified scale.

Each year, Mueller sells an average of 15 mules, mostly to Amish buyers. He has sold as many as 37 in a single year at prices ranging from \$500 to \$3,000. One recent buyer was a U.S. government representative who ordered two mules and sent them to Afghanistan for use in packing artillery in rugged mountain country. "The specifications were strict," according to Mueller. "Among other requirements, the animals had to be dark for camouflage purposes."

Mueller gets many offers for the large pair but says he hasn't given serious consideration to any of them. He once turned down an offer of \$12,000 for the animals at ages 12 and 13. "The average lifespan of a mule is 30 to 35 years, which places Apollo and Anak in their prime," he points out.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Herb Mueller, Rt. 1, Box 219, Columbia, Ill. 62236 (ph 618 939-8498).

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Expandable U-joint, which flexes in either direction, may have been part of the first-ever built-in tractor pto, according to Gilbert Miller.

"RESCUED" FROM AN OLD JUNK HEAP

Home-Built U-Joint Part Of First-Ever Pto?

"I am sending along a photo and letter written to a farm magazine in 1961 concerning what might be the first-ever tractor pto built by my father-in-law Harry Knox and his brothers. All three brothers are now deceased and when their family had a farm sale some years ago, this joint, which was part of the pto assembly, was in the iron pile. I rescued it and still have it in my possession. I think it deserves a spot in the Agricultural Hall of Fame," says Gilbert O. Miller, Mitchell, S. Dak.

Here's the letter Harry Knox wrote to THE FARMER Magazine in 1961:

"We might have the 'missing link' in the history of the tractor-powered pto. We used a universal joint of our own making (pictured) to drive a two-row cornpicker in 1921. The picker was a combination of two Deering single-row machines mounted in a single frame and pulled by a steel-wheeled 'Uncle Sam' tractor.

"Power was delivered to the universal joint through a Model T ring-gear, mounted beneath the tractor. A short, flat belt connected the ring-gear drive to the regular belt pulley on the tractor. The universal was mounted on center, both horizontally and vertically, in the tractor hitch line.

"Designers from IHC saw the machine in operation and immediately altered their plans for the regular Farmall. They incorporated the idea of a built-in power-take-off in their 1923 models.

"Our first pto drive was not entirely satisfactory, on account of the closeness of the belt in front of the steel-lugged wheel. So,

we revised it the following year and made it a 'live' power-take-off. This was accomplished by taking the power from the front end of the engine through a roller chain, hooked to a jackshaft mounted alongside the tractor frame. Another roller chain was required at the rear of the tractor to get the power from the jackshaft down to the universal joint at the hitch center line. A separate clutch was provided for this jackshaft drive.

"Three of us (brothers) were involved in the construction of the picker, universal joint and pto. Arthur was the 'brains' behind the project. Edgar and I assisted him.

"There were no patents taken out. The universal joint could have been patented, but we decided it was too complicated and cumbersome to be a salable item, even though it had two distinct advantages over conventional types: First, it took a much sharper angle without jerking, and second, it required no slip coupling to compensate for variances in spacing between tractor and drawn implement.

"We did not consider the pto to be a strictly new idea with us, because we had read about it being tried on steamers back in the 1890's. However, as far as we know, this was the first installation of its kind to be successful enough to induce manufacturers to adopt the idea and use it as a built-in feature of tractors."

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\$10,000 FOR A 12 BY 12-IN. "ROCK"

Montana Buyer Pays \$100/Lb. For Meteorites

You should be taking a closer look at rocks you plow up in fields because a Montana collector will pay you up to \$100 per pound for any that turn out to be meteorites from space.

Marlin Cilz recently paid a South Dakota farmer \$10,000 (that's the maximum total amount he'll pay) for a 12 by 12-in. meteorite he plowed up in a field several years ago. "He kept the rock around thinking there was something different about it because it weighed so much - 165 lbs. - for its size. After reading an article about me in a local paper, he got in touch," says Cilz who travels all over the country looking for meteorites. As a result of publicity he received in local papers, he recently located a 17 pounder in Williston, N. Dak., a 63-pounder from California and a 38 pounder

from Roundup, Mont.

Cilz has collected meteorites for 16 years and has one of the 10 largest collections in the world, containing more than 150 specimens. He cuts his meteorites in half, donating one half to Arizona State University where research is conducted on them. Although not trained as a scientist, Cilz has taught himself just about everything there is to know about them.

When a farmer contacts Cilz about a possible meteorite, he asks the farmer to cut off a small piece of the specimen and send it to him for analysis. Since most meteorites are made of dense metal, they can be cut with a hacksaw. Cilz cautions that you should never hammer or use a torch on a meteorite since that can damage them, making them useless for research.

Here's how to recognize a meteorite:

- Rusty-brown or black in color.
- Often heavier than ordinary rocks. Some are 90 percent iron.
- Sometimes distinguished by metallic specks on a broken surface.
- Rather smooth on the outside and don't have cavities like a sponge.
- Different from local rocks.

Cilz, who has never found a meteorite himself, pays cash for them. His top rate of \$100 per pound is for metal meteorites. He pays less for stone meteorites, which are less common but not of as much interest to researchers.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Marlin Cilz, Box 1063, Malta, Mont. 59538 (ph 406 654-2192).



Cilz poses with meteorites he bought from farmers who found them on their land.