

Chapter 5

Correct Saddle Fit For Mule & Rider

How many times have you heard of a mule running off with his rider for no apparent reason? Or a mule that charges down a hill with his rider? How about the mule that won't stand still to being saddled? One of the most important things you can do for your mule is to make sure his tack fits properly. Poor fitting tack is comparable to you wearing poorly fitted boots: too tight and you've got squished toes and painful feet; too loose and blisters can develop. A mule suffers the same fate when a small saddle pinches his withers or a big saddle rolls around on his back. Mules are intolerant of discomfort, whether it is coming from the rider's hands (jerking, constant



pulling on the reins) or from ill fitting tack. Here's something you can do to determine if your saddle is causing discomfort to your mule.

After a ride, unsaddle and press your fingers firmly down his back and shoulders. Should you touch a sensitive spot, your mule will move away from your touch. He may dip down in an attempt to get relief or he may raise his head, shake his neck or head or twitch his tail to show disapproval.