

THE TRUTH ABOUT P.E.T.A. & DONKEY BASKETBALL

“From the Donkey’s Mouth” By Jessica Cordell, Co-Owner, Dairyland Donkey Ball, LLC

Before reading the facts of donkey basketball, we would like to point out the animal rights organization P.E.T.A. (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) is in no way an expert on animals or their care. P.E.T.A. is a terrorist organization aimed at targeting anyone and anything that may involve the use of animals. This organization uses outright lies as propaganda and will take dangerous action to further their cause and end all animal use. If P.E.T.A. had their way in our everyday lives we would not be eating meat, drinking milk, wearing leather shoes, coats or owning a pet. (In their view, animals should not be property of humans.) It is important to realize P.E.T.A. does not hold typical American views on the ethical treatment of animals.

The next point is the difference between animal rights and animal welfare. We are proponents of animal welfare. Animal welfare is the belief that animals can be used in food and fiber production as well as research and enjoyment provided there is no unnecessary suffering of animals involved. Whereas, animal rights activists equate the life of an animal to the life of a human being. For example, the president of P.E.T.A., Ingrid Newkirk, touts her belief that a pig is no different from a child. While we will always protect and love our animals, in our opinion, human life is valued above any other.

Our animals are our livelihood and part of our family. Our donkeys are fed and watered before we are, bedded down and comfortable before we are; their needs are put before our own at all times. My husband and I both have degrees in agriculture from Texas A&M University. I grew up with donkeys and horses and he with dairy cattle. We currently own a herd of 65 donkeys and care for them at home or on the road every day, we are donkey experts. We care for our donkeys naturally with no-chemical or organic hay and straw and the best veterinary care. Our veterinarians have even ridden our donkeys in donkey basketball games!

Our donkeys are professional show animals; they know it and they love what they do. Donkeys are very intelligent animals. A donkey cannot be forced to do anything he does not want to do. When the trailer backs into the barn our donkeys run to the gate to get into the trailer. Their actions are proof that we love them and they love what they do!

Donkey Ball goes back in my family to 1934 and P.E.T.A. has been against us and donkey sports in general from their inception. No surprise though, just as they are against rodeos, circuses, horse-pulled wagons, buggies, farm equipment, anything involving animals, etc...

We always encourage anyone with questions to come to a show, see our donkeys, meet us and *then* decide. Never have we had a negative comment about our show or the care of our animals by anyone!

The next two pages detail the false claims of P.E.T.A.

PETA CLAIMS based on the article “Cruelty on the Court” found at www.peta.org:

1) “donkeys are dragged, kicked and punched by participants”

- No abuse of our animals is tolerated at anytime whatsoever. Normal people would never “kick or punch” an animal in the first place, *especially* in front of a crowd of 400-1500 people. If someone did abuse our animals in any way, they would immediately be removed from the show.
- This statement also shows P.E.T.A.’s ignorance and lack of knowledge about donkeys-you cannot “drag” a donkey anywhere-they are much stronger than any human, if he doesn’t want to go somewhere you surely will not get him to go by dragging him.

2) “donkeys are deprived of food and water before games to prevent accidents”

- Completely false. Our donkeys are never prevented in any way of having accidents. In fact, having a “comedy cleanup crew” is actually part of the show!
- This statement has actually changed; back in the 70’s and 80’s P.E.T.A. used to claim donkey ball companies would “cork” their donkeys so the donkeys didn’t have “accidents” on the floor. That is an outlandish and sick idea we have never and will never consider. More recently, they claimed we didn’t feed or water our donkeys for days before a show to prevent accidents. This is even more disgusting.
- Our donkeys eat 24/7-anytime they are not actually in the show they have access to as much hay as they would like. They are watered throughout the day. A donkey is built like a camel; they do not need water 24/7. People don’t even eat or drink 24/7.
- Bottom line, we never prevent “accidents” from happening in anyway.

3) “...send messages to kids that it’s ok to abuse and humiliate those who are weaker than they are”

- #1-our donkey are never abused! #2-it is the riders who are being laughed at-not the donkeys! The donkeys are revered and looked at with awe as being able to outwit and give the riders a hard time!
- From our show, children gain a healthy respect for donkeys and learn what donkeys are capable of and see the lovingness of donkeys. It is good for children to learn the proper way to interact with animals and know that it can be done in a fun, healthy way.
- This is a great learning opportunity for them to see how amazing these animals are.

4) “Children who are exposed to animal abuse are taught the dangerous lesson that cruelty is acceptable”

- Yes, this statement we would agree with! And it would be true, except that donkey basketball is not animal abuse or animal cruelty! This statement is completely subjective and misconstrued through an extremist viewpoint.

- 5) “Like many animals, donkeys who are mistreated or forced into loud, confusing environments can become frightened and may lash out to protect themselves”
- #1-again, our donkeys are not mistreated, #2-they are not *forced* to go anywhere! #3-a gymnasium is not a confusing environment for them; they are all properly trained through positive reinforcement and have learned a gym is a safe environment. Our donkeys love people and a gym means they just get more attention and scratches!

OTHER RUMORS ...

- 6) “they use pregnant donkeys”
- FALSE. We have never and will never use pregnant donkeys. To this date, out of the 20 donkeys on the road at any given time, we only have 2 female donkeys playing in our donkey games and neither are pregnant (one is actually barren).
 - Most of the donkeys that travel are geldings -castrated males.
- 7) “they travel in dirty, cramped trailers”
- FALSE. Our animals have excellent accommodations. They love their trailer. Our trailer is an extra-wide, extra-insulated horse trailer with plenty of room for them to lay down stretch, roll, whatever they like. There is a hay manger in front of them which is kept full at all times and salt licks on the wall for them to lick at any time. The trailer is cleaned out every single day and our animals are well-kept and clean at all times.
- 8) “they use electric shockers on the donkeys”
- FALSE. NEVER are any electric shockers of any kind used on our animals.
 - We reward our donkeys with positive reinforcement and treats for the natural behaviors we desire.
- 9) “the average-sized donkey is only able to bear a little over 100 lbs”
- FALSE. Donkeys are strong animals capable of comfortably carrying 50% and more of their own body weight depending on the conditions. See the university research entitled “Donkey Power” on our website.

Visit our website, www.dairylanddonkeyball.com, for more articles on this topic found under the “Information” link. Thank you for taking the time to read this information and educating yourself on the truth of Donkey Basketball “straight from the donkey’s mouth,” as we say!

Please feel free to call us at 1-888-8DONKEY or email us at info@dairylanddonkeyball.com with any and all concerns or questions you may have. We are always available to talk about our amazing animals.