



What is Roller Derby?

Roller derby, a full contact sport played on quad roller skates, was invented in the 1930s by Leo Seltzer. The popularity of roller derby peaked during the 1960s and 70s. In 2001 a roller derby revival began in Austin, Texas, and was quickly embraced as a grass roots women's sport across the world. Twenty first century roller derby follows the traditions of its earlier incarnations but has developed into a bona fide and demanding sport: the days of roller derby being wrestling's sister act have long passed.



Photo by Emma Burnell

The game

Our flat-track bouts consist of two thirty-minute periods; each containing scoring periods called 'jams' which can last up to two minutes. Both teams may have five players on the track in each jam. Four blockers from each team skate together in a 'pack'. The blockers with stripes on their helmets are called 'Pivots' and they control the pace of the pack. Each team also has one point-scoring player per jam. This skater is called the 'Jammer' and she wears a star on her helmet.

Scoring

A Jammer scores a point for each opponent she passes legally (i.e. without fouling or stepping out of bounds). Points are not scored on the initial pass; Jammers must lap the pack and scoring begins on their second pass. Once a Jammer passes an opponent, that skater cannot be scored upon again until the Jammer makes another lap around the track. The Jammers can lap the pack several times during each jam to rack up points. The advantageous title of "Lead Jammer" is awarded to the first Jammer to skate out of the pack without committing any penalties. The Lead Jammer has the right to "call off the jam" at any time to end the jam and prevent her opponent from scoring. When you see a Jammer place both her hands on her hips, she is "calling off the jam".

Penalties

Players receive minor penalties by committing fouls such as using their hands and arms for blocking, blocking out of bounds or blocking twenty feet outside of the pack. Each time a skater accrues four minor penalties, she must serve one minute in the penalty box and her team skates with one less skater on the track. Major penalties are given for more grievous offences such as dangerous illegal blocking. One minute must be served for each major penalty committed. A skater is ejected from the game after her fifth trip to the penalty box during one period.



Photo by Emma Burnell

What is the Sydney Roller Derby League?

Sydney Roller Derby League represents a dynamic and inclusive, full contact women's team sport striving for empowerment, athleticism and, above all, fun. SRDL is comprised of strong and committed people engaged in a do-it-yourself approach to further develop this spectacular sport.

SRDL held its inaugural AGM in August 2007 and since then has been working hard to secure venues and coaching for its members to build a city-based league. 2009 saw SRDL's first competitive season culminating in sold out 'bouts' that generated so much public interest that the league's 2009 Fresh Meat intake recruited over 70 new passionate skaters.

SRDL pursues the expansion of international flat track roller derby for participants and fans alike. There are now over 17,000 registered derby skaters worldwide and over twenty leagues operating in Australia. The growth of SRDL's popularity over the last 18 months has resulted in sold out 'bouts' during 2009 with 2010 promising more of the same.



The SRDL Teams



Screaming Assault Sirens

Photo by Emma Burnell



Team Zebra (The Refs)

Photo by Nick Parker



The D'vians

Photo by Emma Burnell

Dates for SRDL's 2010 second season

- Sirens vs. The D'vians, 17 April, 7:00 p.m.
- Sirens vs. The D'vians, 8 May, 7:00 p.m.
- Sirens vs. The D'vians, 26 June, 7:00 p.m.
- Sirens vs. The D'vians, 17 July, 7:00 p.m.
- Sirens vs. The D'vians, 7 August, 7:00 p.m.

All bouts will be held at UTS/Sydney Boys' High Stadium, Cleveland Street, Moore Park.

Interleague bouts for 2010

SRDL is set to take its top skaters out on the track to bout with as many other Australian leagues as possible during 2010. There will be a mixture of home and away games. SRDL's Travel Team, the Sydney City Assassins, will be finalised in late April.

- SRDL vs. Northern Brisbane Rollers, 22 May (home)
- SRDL vs. Newcastle Roller Derby League, 21 August (Newcastle)
- SRDL vs. Wollongong Illawarra Roller Derby, 4 September (home)
- SRDL compete at the NSW/ACT Tournament, 18/19 September (Wollongong)
- SRDL vs. Canberra Roller Derby League, 9 October (home)
- SRDL vs. Wollongong Illawarra Roller Derby, 23 October (Wollongong)
- SRDL vs. Newcastle Roller Derby League, 20 November (home)
- SRDL vs. Canberra Roller Derby League, 11 December (Canberra)

The Great Southern Slam – 12 and 13 June 2010, Adelaide

Strap yourselves in for the biggest thing to hit this side of the equator: *The Great Southern Slam*. The weekend will see roller derby teams from Australia and New Zealand converge on Adelaide to do battle with skate and booty. Some will be intent on glory, others will test their mettle, but all will revel in the biggest celebration of hard-hitting knocks and derby love this nation has ever seen.

The Great Southern Slam will take place at the Adelaide Showground, close to the heart of the Adelaide CBD, public transport, accommodation and after party venues. It will play host to five rockin' tracks, three dedicated to fierce but friendly competition, one for challenge bout awesomeness and one for freewheeling good times.

Further details available at www.greatsouthernslam.com.au.



Who are the roller girls of Sydney Roller Derby League?

SRDL skaters are from backgrounds as diverse as those of our fans. The League's skaters are lawyers, students, nurses, businesswomen, teachers, stay-at-home mothers, architects and musicians, as well as everything in between and beyond. SRDL welcomes anyone who has a love of roller skating... and adrenaline.

Roller derby allows skaters to have an alter ego who may be more assertive, feminine or risk-taking than their everyday selves might be. All skaters adopt a roller derby name which may be a play on words, menacing or funny. Many League members don't know their fellow skaters' real names or what they do for a living.

SRDL's roller girls are sassy and sexy, with perhaps more than just a little attitude. But don't let the fishnets, frilly knickers and short skirts fool you, we are athletes committed to our sport, our league and the derby way of life.



Photo by Maja Baska

Where do you train and how often?

SRDL currently trains at Sydney Boys' High School and the University of Sydney. Sessions are attended by skaters depending on their skill level; newer skaters attend sessions twice a week and the League's more experienced members practice up to three times a week and must attend a weekly session dedicated to scrimmage training. All sessions incorporate on-skates work as well as general fitness training.

SRDL skates to the rules and regulations of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association. Details about WFTDA can be found at www.wftda.com/about.

It looks dangerous...

All SRDL training sessions include learning how to hit and fall safely in order to reduce injury to League members. Protective gear including helmets, knee and elbow padding, wrist and mouth guards must be worn at all times during which League members are on-skates, whether training or during bouts. While the League does what it can to minimise injury to its members, roller derby is a full contact sport, and sometimes people do get hurt.

How does SRDL cover costs for training, insurance and bouts?

SRDL is a not-for-profit organisation, which means that it is skater-owned and operated. Our primary income source is from our League members' monthly dues. Proceeds from ticket and merchandise sales also help cover the League's expenses such as insurance, uniforms, travel and venue costs. We have several sponsors and are currently seeking further interest from organisations based in Sydney who have a love of roller derby.



How can people get involved?

SRDL is always looking for new skaters and recruits women aged 18 and over through biannual tryouts and an annual Fresh Meat intake. Tryouts run over two consecutive weekends and Fresh Meat courses run for eight weeks. Both programs teach the skills necessary for roller derby. SRDL can recommend skating workshops for beginner skaters to attend prior to trying out for the League.

Refereeing is another way to join SRDL if you are a skater. Roller derby refereeing is not restricted to women so it's a great way for men to get involved in the League. SRDL referees are as committed to roller derby as other League members. They attend up to three training sessions per week and undertake specific training programs to learn the intricacies of roller derby so that they can confidently referee SRDL and interleague bouts.

Off-skate League members are also encouraged to join SRDL. If you love roller derby but would prefer to support the League by volunteering at bouts, through promotions, fundraising or marketing, SRDL would love to have you on board.



Photo by Maja Baska

For more information

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