



KILLER QUICK



THE MOM BOMB



OLIVE SPANKINS



BREEZEY



PUNCHY O'GUTS



WREX ZILLA

## Maine Roller Derby Press Kit

Maine Roller Derby is the state's first and only women's flat track roller derby league. MRD is skater-owned and skater-operated, and currently boasts a roster of approximately 40 hard-rollin', fast-skatin' women. We represent women from across the spectrums. We've got:

- ✪ Girlie-girls and women who wouldn't be caught dead in a skirt or stockings
- ✪ A sprinkling of fresh, young 21-year-olds and even more fresh, young thirty-somethings...plus every age in between (& we hope beyond)
- ✪ Lifelong athletes and women who've never touched a sport in their lives
- ✪ Tattooed beauties and landscapes of virgin skin
- ✪ Short girls, tall girls, big girls, small girls
- ✪ Moms, girlfriends, wives, and spinsters
- ✪ Straight girls, gay girls, and anything in between
- ✪ Loud-mouthed firecrackers and reserved tough girls



### What are they saying about Roller Derby?

"Maine Roller Derby is here and it's the real deal. The ladies are serious about their sport, as are their fans. Live rock music before and during the bouts, snappy announcers, bleachers full of supporters and athletes with the proper balance of talent and spunk make a Maine Roller Derby event as exciting as just about any local sports event. It really is more than a sport though; it's a total full-on entertainment experience. You have to see it for yourself." - **Mark Curdo | WCYY radio**

"If PJ Harvey, Madonna, Patti Smith and The Bride of Kill Bill could procreate together, their spawn would parallel the vicious and tough-as-nails ladies of Maine Roller Derby. You don't want to meet the MRD ladies in a dark alley late at night and if you do you better have a case of PBR in one hand and a whole lot of Kiss Ass in the other." - **Lauren Wayne | LiveNation**

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# The History of Maine Roller Derby

The first inklings of MRD started in March 2006 after two Portland women were inspired by the A&E reality show *Rollergirls*. These women began to rouse interest for a roller derby league in Portland by posting fliers and holding organizational meetings. By June 2006 a group of about twenty women from Portland and beyond began holding weekly practices. Determination and hard work along with advice and support from the friendly skaters of the nearby Boston Derby Dames and various other skaters from leagues across the nation resulted in MRD rocketing to the first presentation of its sport via a short demo bout at Rollerworld skating rink in Topsham in November of 2006. The success of that first event pushed the league to work even harder to find a practice home and a place to bout in Portland.

In January 2007 the league held a public scrimmage at Rollerworld against Pioneer Valley Roller Derby (PVRD), and then bouted PVRD on its own turf in Amherst, MA in February 2007. MRD then had its first intraleague exposition bout on March 31, 2007 in Topsham.

The hunt for a place in Portland to hold the league's first official season was long and challenging, but the work paid off this fall when MRD played its first short season at the Portland Exposition Building. Three interleague bouts were played in September and October of 2007, bringing in a total of 2100 fans over the three dates. Maine is buzzing about roller derby, especially after MRD skated away from their first season undefeated.



## How Roller Derby is Played

### Quick and Dirty Description:

A roller derby game is called a "bout" and is comprised of three 20 minute periods. Each period is made up of an unlimited number of jams which last two minutes or less. A jam consists of two teams, five players each: four blockers and one point-scoring player, called the jammer. Blockers from both teams skate together in a pack and are continuously lapped by the jammers. Jammers (denoted by a helmet cover with stars on the sides) are sprint skaters, and after their first lap through the pack they score points each time they pass an opponent. The blockers at the front of the pack are pivots and wear a striped helmet cover.

### A Bit More Detail:

Four blockers from each team line up in a group, known as the "pack," on the starting line. The blockers in the front wear striped helmet covers designating them as the Pivots; they are the pace-setters and the last line of defense against the jammers.

Two jammers, one from each team and wearing a helmet cover with a star on each side, line up on the jammer starting line, 30 feet behind the pack starting line. When the first whistle blows the pack takes off. As the last blocker crosses the starting line the next whistle is blown and the jammers race to catch up to the pack. The blockers must remain in a tight pack and engage each other and the opposing jammer in an attempt to hinder the opposing jammer's progress through the pack while simultaneously helping their

own jammer. The first jammer to pass through the pack without earning a penalty is designated the lead jammer. The lead jammer can strategically call off the jam before the two-minute time limit by placing her hands on her hips.

A point is scored by the jammer for each opposing blocker she passes after her initial pass through the pack. Skaters use their shoulders, torso, hips, and butt to block or hit other skaters. The use of hands, forearms, feet, or elbows is not allowed. Skaters cannot hit their opponents' backs or make contact above the neck or below the upper-thigh, and penalties are incurred for illegal actions. Four minor penalties put a skater in the penalty box for one minute. A major penalty is the result of flagrantly unsafe behavior or misconduct and results in an immediate seat in the penalty box and, at the referee's discretion, expulsion from the bout.

## FAQS

### **Who is the founder?**

Maine Roller Derby (MRD) was co-founded by approximately 20 hard-working, motivated women. We are skater-owned and skater-operated.

### **When did you form?**

The first meetings to develop a roller derby league in Maine began in March 2006.

### **What are your affiliations?**

We are proud members of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association (WFTDA), [www.wftda.org](http://www.wftda.org). It is a skater-owned and –operated organization. The WFTDA creates set standards for rules, seasons, and safety, and will continue to work hard to present national and international athletic competitions of its member leagues. WFTDA skaters work together to accomplish their goals and all WFTDA skaters have a voice in the decision-making process.

### **Why do you play on a flat track as opposed to the banked tracks of old?**

To answer this we refer you to some of the points taken from the Women's Flat Track Derby Association website ([www.wftda.org](http://www.wftda.org)):

- It's economical. Purchasing a banked track requires large financial investors to buy the track and a space in which to house it. Flat track derby can be skated on a variety of surfaces both indoor and out, including wood, sport court, and smooth concrete. The accessibility of various flat track spaces allows leagues to remain independent and maintain their skater-owned and –operated ethic.
- It's more athletic and physical. On a flat track skaters must use their own physical strength to gain speed and momentum, rather than the track assisting them.
- Fans can sit track-side and get right down on the level where all the action takes place! As Eight Track from the Texas Rollergirls says, "Why take out a rail, when you take out the audience?"

### **What happens at a bout?**

"Bout" is the term for a roller derby game, and they include more than your average sporting event. Live, local music is almost always included, and often there are performances from local entertainment groups of all varieties. "Maine Roller Derby bouts are not only about the sport, they are pure entertainment" says Punchy O'Guts, skater and the head of Bout Production for MRD. "We have local bands, witty announcers, and very vocal fans. Our bouts are the parties you wish you'd been invited to, but actually did get invited to."

## **Alright, let's get this straight. Is roller derby a real sport or is it fake like pro-wrestling?**

Roller derby is a real sport, with real contact. Skaters train hard to learn how to make effective contact within the rules of the game (no elbowing, punching, tripping, etc); our skaters give hard hits and take hard hits. We follow rules set forth by the WFTDA. *There is no pre-determined outcome, and there are no staged antics and no fake hits.*

## **What's with the names and "out-there" uniforms?**

Roller derby has uniforms just like any sport, but we like to have fun with ours and create themes and images that reflect a sense of style, humor, and the tough, aggressive tone of the sport. Every skater in roller derby adopts a skate name. Some names are funny, some are tough, and a lot are plays on real names or terms.

## **Who are your teams?**

The Maine Roller Derby league is the umbrella organization for all the skaters and staff. In early 2008, MRD finalized its two permanent, official teams: the **Port Authorities**, MRD's All-Star team that will be dealing out blows and serving justice, one jam at a time; and the **Calamity Janes**, a heartbreaking crew of rough and rugged rollergirls who will skate over your heart and saddle up for victory. These teams will make their debut in the Spring 2008 season.

## **I've heard the name the Vacationland Vixens associated with roller derby in Maine. Who are they?**

*The name Vacationland Vixens has been retired and is no longer used in any context with Maine Roller Derby.* In the very early days of MRD that name was used as both a team and league name, but as the league developed a more descriptive and general name was needed for the league; hence, Maine Roller Derby. Eventually the league will house two or more permanent teams each with its own catchy name and theme, and the teams will play both home and away bouts.

## **Where does your money come from?**

The women of MRD work very hard at fund-raising and securing sponsorship in order to help pay for practice space, merchandise, bouts and other operating costs. All skaters also pay dues every month. MRD does not endeavor to be a profit-making organization. If any net profits are gained we will work to give them back to the community via charitable donations to the league's chosen non-profit organizations.

## **How does one get involved?**

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming an MRD skater, please email our head of recruitment, The Mom Bomb, at [TheMomBomb@mainerollerderby.com](mailto:TheMomBomb@mainerollerderby.com).

We are always looking for referees, statisticians, support staff, EMTs, etc. Refs and statisticians can be male or female, 18 years and up. They are committed volunteers who have the desire and time to memorize the intricate rules of the game, and to come to our weekly practices in order to learn the game and train with others. Refs and statisticians are hot commodities in the roller derby community and the good ones often get to travel regionally to assist other leagues and even take part in regional and national roller derby tournaments. We love our volunteers, but we need more, more, more. Contact [PunchyOGuts@mainerollerderby.com](mailto:PunchyOGuts@mainerollerderby.com).

We are also looking for local sponsors, media coverage, and anyone else who wants to help MRD continue to take Maine by storm.

Potential sponsors should contact [GreasyOGuts@mainerollerderby.com](mailto:GreasyOGuts@mainerollerderby.com). Media and press should contact [KillerQuick@mainerollerderby.com](mailto:KillerQuick@mainerollerderby.com).

### **How does MRD contribute to the community?**

In addition to bringing a great sport to Maine as the first and only women's roller derby league, MRD is also committed to achieving a financial stability that will allow us to give back to the community by participating in and hosting charitable events for local non-profit organizations.

### **How often do you practice?**

We currently practice three times per week, but would benefit from a space that would allow as many as four per week.

We are searching for a practice home in Portland. General requirements for the skating area are a smooth, hard surface of wood, concrete, sport court, or other similar materials, and an available area of at least 115 feet x 80 feet. The building must be heated, have adequate ventilation, and include room outside the track area for equipment. It does not need to be big enough to accommodate a crowd for events, though a venue that would work for both practices and events would be ideal. Anyone with leads on a potential space should contact [OliveSpankins@mainerollerderby.com](mailto:OliveSpankins@mainerollerderby.com).

### **Are you insured?**

Each skater must be insured by USARS (USA Roller Sports). It is strongly recommended that skaters also have primary insurance. Each skater who is insured by USARS is covered during practices and bouts. Through USARS, MRD is also covered with a one million dollar liability policy for the venues in which we practice and play.

*Individual skater photos by Matt Robbins (<http://www.matthewrobbinsphoto.com/>), action photos by John Santerre.*