



2010 New Skater Information Packet

So you want to be a Roller Girl?!

Welcome! This packet contains the basic information you need to know to decide if you want to further explore joining the league. Roller Derby can be a life changing experience and a lot of fun. It can also take time and money, so before you start ordering your gear, the Bleeding Heartland Roller Girls highly recommend that you attend open skate at Western Skateland, skills camp and a couple of our scheduled practices. Not only will you be able to meet the rest of the girls but you will also get an idea of what kind of commitment is expected of you.

Bleeding Heartland Roller Girls Frequently Asked Questions

Who can join?

Any woman or man over the age of 19 can join BHRG. If you are 18, contact us and we'll tell you what you can do to get started and get strong. Skaters (roller girls and refs alike) must obtain WFTDA insurance (You will receive more information on insurance later). The purchase of this insurance is required of all skaters, but please note this is NOT health insurance and will not cover you outside of derby practice and bouts.

What are the rules of the game?

During a bout, two teams of five skaters each face off on a flat track. Each team consists of a pivot, three blockers and a jammer. The pivot sets the pace and leads the group of skaters. The other three blockers take on various formations to work out strategy with the pivot and guarding each other in what we call "the pack." The blockers work to assist their jammer through the pack (offense) and keep the opposing team's jammer from making it through the pack (defense). The jammers are the scoring skaters (they are essentially the "ball") and start twenty feet behind the pack. When the first whistle blows, the pack takes off. On a second whistle, the jammers start making their way through the pack. When the first jammer makes it legally through the pack, she's designated the "lead jammer" and can begin scoring points. The jammers must lap the pack once before sprinting through the pack to score points by passing members of the opposing team. A jam lasts a maximum of two minutes, but the lead jammer has the right to call off the jam at any time by putting her hands on her waist. The rest of the team tries to stop the opposing jammer from passing them and scoring. At the same time, they block the opposing team's blockers to help their jammer score. For detailed rules, please visit www.wftda.org.

What if I get hurt?

It's not a matter of *if* as it is a matter of when and how bad. This is why protective gear and WFTDA insurance is required, and primary insurance is **strongly** recommended. We will do everything possible (strength training, lots of practice communication, for example) to minimize injuries, but be prepared to get hurt. Sprains, strains, pulled muscles and fractures are a part of derby life! Additionally, you may find that seeing a chiropractor or other specialist is necessary and important. A minor injury can turn into a major injury very quickly if not treated properly. Derby has many wonderful health benefits but it is a contact sport and there is risk of injury. If you have pre-existing injuries we also recommend talking to your doctors about additional risks of playing a contact sport.

How much time will it take?

It depends on if you want to be placed on a team or if you just want to learn how to skate and play roller derby. In 2009 BHRG expanded to include a program called "The Disorderlies" as an intro-to-derby, minimum time-commitment version of the real deal. Traditionally, roller derby is very time consuming. There are three practices a week for team skaters (Mondays 7-9 p.m.;

Wednesdays 7-9p.m.; and Sunday 4-7p.m.), skating outside of practice time is encouraged and we also have many promotional events. Participation in committee work and promotional appearances is required for league members. BHRG has both an "A" team, the Flatliners, and a "B" team, the Code Blue Assassins. These teams play both locally and across the region. Full-league try-outs for placement on teams will be held in September. Filling vacancies on teams will be evaluated monthly. To be eligible to try out you must meet WFTDA minimum skating skill requirements.

As roller derby has become more popular we have had increased interest from women wanting to join in on the fun. In order to provide more opportunities and to give our league the cutting edge in competition, we introduced The Disorderlies. Being a Disorderly will consist of attending one practice per week and skaters can join anytime throughout the year. Likewise, any skater who does not get placed on a team during try-outs is highly encouraged to continue to participate in the Disorderlies. Just because your skills are not up to competition level at try-outs does not mean you should give up! Ask any roller girl, the improvements we have seen people make in a short period of time are astounding! Disorderlies practices will be held once per week (Thursday 7PM-9PM) and will focus on basic skating and derby skills. Skaters will be required to have WFTDA insurance and rather than paying monthly dues will pay \$5/practice. Once a Disorderly has passed their skills and rules tests they may be invited for evaluation for a league spot. These evaluations occur monthly. Once the skater is invited to the league they have 30 days to demonstrate good league citizenship (attendance, committee work, etc) and at that point may be invited onto one of the travel teams. However, a skater can join the Disorderlies with no intention of ever wanting to be on a team, this is fine! We believe roller skating and roller derby is one of the best ways to stay in shape and build confidence and hope the Disorderlies will provide an arena to make derby more accessible to more people. Disorderlies practices will be coached by a team of BHRG skaters in order to provide an eclectic training opportunity.

While 100% attendance is not realistic and therefore not expected, we do expect team skaters to attend as many practices and promo events as possible. This is in addition to committee work. BHRG is operated solely by the skaters and a handful of amazing volunteers. In order for the league to operate all skaters need to chip in through committee work. Committees typically meet once every two weeks.

How much does it cost?

It varies from skater to skater. Skaters purchase skates and all their own protective gear and they will have to pay dues. Please note that the dues amount may change but advance notice will be given if an increase is to occur. For information on where and how to get skates and protective gear, contact BHRG. All the girls have their favorite this, that and the other. Ask around. It's also a good idea to ask someone who is roughly your size about their preferred gear, especially when it comes to wheels.

Skates Range from \$50 (spend more than this please! ; you won't be saving money if you have to buy a new pair in two months) to over \$800; typically \$120-ish (**TALK TO KNOCK'R DOWN (susaroo@bluemarble.net)** about what skates you want and she might be able to find you a deal!)

Knee Pads Ranges from \$15 to \$75; typically \$30-ish
Knee injuries are one of the most common derby injuries. We recommend buying good knee pads such as Pro-Techs or 187's. Again, ask the girls what they like.

Elbow Pads Range from \$15 to \$65

Wrist Guards Range from \$15 to \$45

Mouth Guard Range from \$1 to \$65 (You can get great dentist-made ones for \$20)

Helmet Range from \$20 to \$60

Wheels Range from \$45 to \$300

Dues (time) Active Skater = \$30/month (\$75 for three months paid at one time)

Injured Skater = \$15/month

Referee = \$15

Meat Locker= per practice, \$5

Insurance \$55

Food If you start skating a lot, expect your appetite to double and thereby so will your grocery budget. Many roller girls note a distinct increase in their beer and cookie budget!

Boutwear Can range from the cost of your jersey (\$20-\$30) and what you can salvage out of your little sister's (or daughter's) underwear drawer to enough to require a second job.

What equipment do I need?

Skates, elbow & knee pads, mouth & wrist guards, helmets, scrimmage shirts and jerseys are required to practice and bout. Fishnets, hot pants and make up are totally optional but we strongly encourage you to figure out what attire it is that brings out the bad ass in you. As noted

above, ask the other roller girls what they like when it comes to equipment. Buying equipment can be overwhelming, we'll help you out. Also, Bloomington now has its very own shop dedicated to all things roller skating. Rolling Thunder Fun Factory is located at 820 W. 17th St. They are currently still building their stock but they do have some skates, wheels and other derby gear. Go check them out. It can be especially helpful to try on skates to decide what style you like and what size you wear.

Do I have to be a certain size to play?

Absolutely not! There are certain advantages to being either big (Tijuana Momma/Snide Piper) or small (Betty Wreckognize/Roxy Shox), short (X Libris/Scarlet Witch) or tall (Killer Kindness/Shock'N Roll), and our league has a variety of body types, as do most other leagues. When it comes to derby your body is always an asset in some way and that's one of the beautiful things about derby!

Do I have to be a great skater?

No. We can teach you how to skate. We all have different skill levels, but with lots of practice and hard work, our league will become full of terrific skaters!

How can I join Bleeding Heartland Roller Girls?

New recruits are highly encouraged to get their skating legs at an open session and observe a practice before they join. If you email us at bleedingheartland@gmail.com, we will let you know when we will be at open skating sessions, keep checking the website: <http://www.bleedingheartlandrollergirls.com> or the Facebook Page: Bleeding Heartland Roller Girls, LLC), and we invite you to contact us about observing a practice. After that, you can begin thinking about joining our Meat Locker.

Do I have to join a committee and how do I do it?

Yes. It is very important for our roller girls to be completely invested in our league. The league runs because of us, the skaters (that includes our amazing refs and dedicated volunteers). There is no "man behind the curtain". We do it ALL and we have to have participation from everyone in order to make it work. If you are a team skater committee work is required. If you are skating only in the Disorderlies, committee work is strongly encouraged but not required and only team skaters are eligible to be on some committees.

We always need volunteers to help us hang bout posters and promote so ask about helping out the Media/Promo committee if you have time and interest in the interim. This is also a great way to get to know the other skaters.

How much are dues, and what do they pay for?

Dues are currently set at \$30 per month, which pays for practice space, club insurance, website expenses, practice and bout equipment, legal fees, advertising, etc. This may change over time but if there is an increase, it will be slight.

When and how do I pay dues?

You pay dues by the last day of the month. The dues are for the following month. (For example, dues paid by the end of September will cover your practice expenses for October). You submit your dues to the head of the finance committee, and you can pay with cash, check or money order. For an additional \$1, you can pay via PayPal.

How do I register my derby name?

As a roller girl you get to choose a cool name. You will be referred to by your derby name at all practices, bouts and public appearances. When choosing a name, you have to make sure that you do not pick a name that has already been taken. The national register can be found at www.twoevils.org/rollergirls/. When you have made your final decision and have been a league member for 60 days then you will submit your name to the league name wrangler. We will let you know more about this when the time comes.

1. A team skater is eligible to claim a name after regularly attending practice for 60 days. At this time, the skater in question must have graduated from the Disorderlies, and must show dedication and follow-through with respect to taking a position with the league. Concerns about individual skaters will be handled by the Big Mommas. Disorderly skaters can pick a name but will not be eligible to be registered.
2. Skater must be responsible for checking her or his desired name against the official Master Roster to ensure originality prior to submission to Name Wrangler. If the skater has a concern about overlap or “copycatting” of her desired name with an already established person, concerns can be taken to the league’s Name Wrangler.
3. Quarterly during the training season, the Name Wrangler will accept names for submission to the Master Roster. It is each skater’s responsibility to submit her own name and number to the Name Wrangler during one of these call-outs.
4. While a skater should not feel pressured to submit a name early in the process, it should be understood that skaters should try to allow enough time for jerseys to be printed prior to their first game.
5. BHRG aims for a PG-13 tone for all home bouts and as such reserves the right to limit the Usage of any name that the Bout Production Committee feels is inappropriate. Limits may include: mentions over the microphone, printing in program, printing or wearing on uniforms, and may not be included in print or radio media.

Resources

www.bleedingheartlandrollergirls.com Our website, check it out!

www.facebook.com/bleedingheartland

www.wftda.com Women's Flat Track Derby Association (Read the rules!)

www.rollingthunderfunfactory.com Local roller skating shop

www.sincityskates.com Derby girl owned online skate shop

www.lowpriceskates.com Online skate shop. Often good deals but customer service sucks so beware.

www.derbynewsnetwork.com Great derby site with info on leagues, bout score, etc from all over the country

www.fiveonfivemag.com The official magazine of WFTDA. Good stuff. The subscription is worth it.

www.twoevils.org/rollergirls/ The derby name registry website

**Now, get your gear and prepare
to work hard, meet amazing
people and knock skaters down!**