

ROLLER DERBY DOLLS



TEACHERS' NOTES

- What are the rules of roller derby? Make an instruction booklet on how to play the game, popular strategies, objectives, set-up (two teams of five women, a pivot, three blockers and a jammer), etc. See the Australian Roller Derby website for a downloadable beginner's guide (See references).
- What are the most common injuries sustained in roller derby?
- Why do some people like to do things in which they may be hurt?
- After watching the film, does roller derby appeal to you, either as a sport you might consider participating in or as a spectacle you would be interested in attending? Why/why not?
- Design a marketing campaign to launch a new roller derby league. Consider which aspects of the sport you would promote; who you would pitch it to; possible sponsors you might approach; alternative promotional avenues; etc. Annotate your campaign outline, fully articulating the reasoning behind your choices and decisions. Include a poster for an upcoming event.
- Design a board game based on roller derby.
- Construct a diorama of a roller derby event.
- Devise your own roller derby league, with four teams. Give the teams and their members names, costumes, identities, attitudes, personal and professional backgrounds, etc.
- How has the sport changed since the 1960s/1970s?
- What are the key differences between men's and women's roller derby?
- In pairs, present an interview to the class, where one student is an American roller derby legend and the other is a TV journalist. What questions would you like answered?
- Write a commentary of a roller derby game. Consider tactics for making it exciting. What adjectives might you use? How might you heighten suspense? Perform this commentary to the class.
- Describe the 'do-it-yourself' ethic that characterises the organisation and administration of roller derby. Is this part of its charm?
- Devise a program for a weekend roller derby camp.
- What sorts of skills would the women practise at their training sessions?
- Where do you think Australian roller derby might be a decade from now? Do you think Evil Doll and the women featured in this film will still be skating? What other interests might they be pursuing?



Talkin' The Talk: Roller Derby Slang

Blockers: Each team has up to three blockers on the track. They make 'holes' in the pack for their jammer to get through and block the opposing team's jammer.

Booty block: The art of using your derrière to block the jammer.

Bout: A roller derby game.

Can opener: A lethal block.

Cutting the track: Crossing the inside track boundary to rejoin the pack after a fall.

Fishnet burn: A stippled effect that comes from falling while wearing fishnet stockings.

Fresh meat: The affectionate term for new recruits who will eventually need to pass a skills test before being placed on a team.

Jam: A two-minute scoring session.

Jammer: Sprint skater (marked by a star on her helmet) who breaks through the pack and scores points by lapping opposing team members.

Lead jammer: The first jammer to break through the pack calls an end to the jam by putting her hands on her hips.

Pivot: Blocker (marked with a striped helmet) who sets the pace of the pack by skating in front. Pivot's also play offence and defence with the jammers.

Rail hugger: A skater who won't let go of the sides of the track.

Wall: Several blockers skating together in a line across the track to block the jammer.

Whip: A move a blocker uses to 'sling-shot' a jammer through the pack.

- Invent some of your own terms of derby slang.
- Why is it offensive for a man to call a woman a 'bitch', while it is almost a term of endearment with these women? If time permits, teachers could introduce Lenny Bruce into this discussion; his work turns on the very nature of obscenity.

ROLLER DERBY DOLLS TEACHERS NOTES

Anita Harris (ed), *Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism*, Routledge, New York, NY, 2008

Melissa Joulwan, *Rollergirl: Totally True Tales from the Track*, Simon & Schuster, Touchstone, 2007

Catherine Mabe, *Roller Derby: the Greatest Sport on Wheels from the Great Depression to the All-Female Revival*, Speck Press, Denver, 2006

Websites

Australian Roller Derby
<http://rollerderby.com.au>

Australian Sports Commission/Australian Institute of Sport
www.ausport.gov.au

The Evolution of Women in Sport
www.femail.com.au/womeninsport.htm

Sport and Recreation Victoria – Active Communities – Active Women & Girls
www.sport.vic.gov.au

Womens Flat Track Derby Association
<http://wftda.com>

Womensport & Recreation NSW
www.womensportnsw.com.au

Articles

John Bailey, 'It's a bruising sport, but every day is derby day for the rink and file girls', *The Age*, 20 May 2007, www.theage.com.au/news/national/bumpandgrind/2007/05/19/1179497342353.html

Andrea Burns, 'Cruising For A Bruisin': Roller Derby is Back', *Herald Sun*, 24 February 2008, www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,23263530-5012948,00.html

Vanessa Croll, 'America's Roller Derby Craze Comes To Brisbane', *Courier Mail*, 6 May 2008, www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,23648469-23272,00.html

Emma Vuletic, 'Roller Derby Revival', 17 March 2008, <http://travellaustralia.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=392968>

Roller Derby Blogs & Periodicals

Derby News Network (US) – a roller derby news blog with multiple regular contributors, www.derbynewsnetwork.com

Rollergirl Q/A – a Q&A blog for roller derby players, www.roxyrockett.com



ROLLER DERBY DOLLS

A Film Australia National Interest Program in association with Freshwater Productions and the Pacific Film and Television Commission. Produced in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Director **Phoebe Hart**

Writers **Phoebe Hart, Erin McBean**

Producer **Vickie Gest**

Executive Producer for Film Australia **Mark Hamlyn**

Executive Producer for Freshwater Productions **Trish Lake**

Duration **26 minutes**

Year of Production **2008**

Teachers notes written by Kate Raynor, ATOM.

All photographs by Jimmy Malecki © Film Australia.

For information about Film Australia programs, contact:
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia
Sales and Distribution

PO Box 397 Pyrmont NSW 2009

T +61 2 8202 0144 | F +61 2 8202 0101

E: sales@nfsa.gov.au | www.nfsa.gov.au



FILM AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL INTEREST PROGRAM



Pacific Film and
Television Commission

ABC
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Television