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Down And Derby: The Insider's Guide To Roller Derby



Synopsis

When most Americans hear the words "roller derby" today, they think of the kitschy sport once popular on weekend television during the seventies and eighties. Originally an endurance competition where skaters traveled the equivalent of a trip between Los Angeles and New York, derby gradually evolved into a violent contact sport often involving fake fighting. But after nearly dying out in the nineties, derby has been making a comeback. From a mere handful of leagues in the United States just a few years ago, there are now more than 17,000 skaters in more than 400 leagues around the world, with hundreds of thousands of die-hard fans. Down and Derby will tell you everything you ever wanted to know about the sport. Written by veteran skaters as both a history and a how-to, Down and Derby is a brassy celebration of every aspect of the sport, from its origins in the late 1800s, to the rules of a modern bout, to the science of picking an alias, to the many ways you can get involved off skates. Informative, entertaining, and executed with the same tough, sassy, DIY attitude; leavened with plenty of humor; that the sport is known for, Down and Derby is the first and last book on derby you'll ever need.

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Customer Reviews

As someone who has been around roller derby all of about 8 weeks, I wanted to learn whatever I could about the sport and its revival. I got this book last Friday and got through it over the weekend. It's an entertaining and informative read - essential reading for anybody who wants to get up to speed on roller derby.

Being the founder of a new league it's sometimes hard to put the fun where it needs to be. Derby is

a serious, athletic, full contact sport but above anything else - it's FUN! Starting a new league from scratch is hard work with many ups and downs. This book is the perfect thing to remind you that all the work IS going somewhere, all the downs you experience have been experienced many times before you and that it's absolutely going to be worth it. Down and Derby is an informative and often times comical book. I purchased several copies and used them with my skaters as incentive to do things they normally don't enjoy .. the endurance training. It put in that element of fun they all need to get through it. I love this book and am so glad I found it.

I'm fresh meat, a feminist, and an athlete. I think this book is incredibly informative and certainly asserts the pro-female camaraderie within modern roller derby. I am, however, disappointed that this book persistently claims that derby girls are both athletes and hard drinkers. Any serious athlete will tell you that when you start training with intent, drinking disappears- there is no time to waste on headaches. To be an athlete is to be a warrior, and this takes a certain asceticism. Down and Derby tells us that along with strengthening our bodies, we need to be ready to weaken our livers in order to fit in with the after party. Personally, I like staying sober and alert so that when bad things happen someone is actually there to bare witness or hold back the hair of our drunken derby wife. They do mention one sober skater throughout the entirety of the book- Betty Ford Galaxy. Where I admire her sobriety, I do not feel that people who refuse to drink should be alienated or alienate themselves by denoting their state with a name that points it out. (Note, it's called Alcoholics ANONYMOUS for a reason) Drinking does not make people normal, not drinking does not make one weird. Please, for those of us who are fresh meat or hard-living vets: do not feel obligated to drink because it's part of a role you need to fill. This is called peer pressure, and this book lays it on hard. Why is it that in order to be a "bad ass" you must immediately have bad habits? Why don't we look up to the people who live life through clear eyes, no analgesic in sight? Let's re-adjust our perspective. Party responsibly.

Whether you play Roller Derby or have no idea what it is, whether you go to every bout in your hometown or haven't watched a game since it was on TV in the seventies, this is the ultimate Roller Derby book. Fun and funny, while being totally informative, Axles of Evil and Kasey Bomber have written everything you could possibly want to know about Roller Derby. From its inception to its modern form, there is a history of the sport itself, a definition of terms and introduction to the game as it is played now. Interviews with players sprinkled through provide opinions and answers to the most important questions. And my personal favorite, the derby commandments give every aspiring

derby girl and outline of what exactly it means to be down and derby. If you don't know if you are a derby girl, there's a quiz for that too! Great book, buy it now!

An absolutely necessary, fun, well-written, and especially encouraging book on starting, learning more about, supporting and playing roller derby! It encourages me so much as a cadet and I very often refer to this book for help on derby rules, supporting the team, and just delving more into the sport you wish to learn more about or one you choose to pursue! A must-by and a very good introduction book for anyone curious or even a vet.

This is a great history of derby with some "do's" and "don'ts" about getting involved in derby. It reads a little like a sports history written by a player as opposed to a writer, but it's still readable and well edited.

I have been in Roller Derby for just under a year and so many of the comment, interviews etc in this book just made me smile (and maybe get nearly teary) as this book is so perfectly real. I loved the interviews and while I knew most of the history already, this is a great book for anyone in derby or just interested in derby. You should buy this book... and I don't tell people that very often.

I bought this as a Christmas present for my best friend last Christmas because she was part of a roller derby team. She LOVED her book!!! She said she could not put it down and finished it within the week. She even let her sister read it, and she fell in love with it too! I haven't read it but since they loved it so much, I decided to give it 5 stars!

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