

# BIG EASY ROLLERGIRLS PREVIEW: TIME TO LACE 'EM UP AND KNOCK 'EM OUT!

by sally asher

photos by scott stuntz [muttshotz.com](http://muttshotz.com)

**T**here's nothing quite like the sound of skates scraping against a hard surface before a full-body hit.

Roller derby, a sport that once played to sold-out crowds in Madison Square Garden, eventually plummeted to its death in the 1980s via wrestling-style fabricated storylines and alligator pits. In 2000, an upstart group of women from Austin, Texas resuscitated derby and reshaped the kitsch-heavy event back into a serious sport with some modernized additions: fishnets, tattoos, hot pants, an overabundance of skulls and crossbones, and women screaming to one another, "Pass the party!"

Roller derby found its way to New Orleans, debuting the fall of 2006 to a sold-out crowd at Mardi Gras World. Members of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association (WFTDA), the Big Easy Rollergirls follow the set of standardized rules voted on by more than fifty leagues nationwide. The jammers (identifiable by the star panties they wear on their helmets) score points for each opposing player they pass. The blockers score points from the fans for every opposing player they manage to knock in their laps. It's not wrestling. It's not scripted. There are no fake blood packets hidden in push-up bras; it's real.

If you still doubt the brutal legitimacy of the sport, ask PowerSnatch, who broke her ankle during the December bout, or Victoria von Doom, who tore her ACL in the May bout. Others players such as SmasHer, CHEAP THRILL and Vandal O'Riley racked up an impressive list of combined injuries during scrimmages: mild concussion, broken ankles, torn ligament, bruised tendon, pinched nerve and sprained thumb.

"You know it's real when you don't even bother with the lipstick," said Marquee de Squad, a co-captain for the Storyvillains, "and even though you know the dangers first-hand, you do it anyway."

A testament to the reality of the sport is this—if you're at a bout, chances are you'll see at least one rollergirl recovering from a particularly hard hit. But in true form, the Big Easy Rollergirls do it in style. On the mend from her broken ankle, Ms O'Riley eschewed the typical cane and instead used an iron crowbar—effective for balance and wielding against any potential stalkers.

Beyond the physicality of the sport, the dedication involved is equally onerous. The Big Easy Rollergirls is owned and operated by the skaters. They train each other, book the bands that play at halftime, sell the tickets, set-up the track, design the posters, order the merchandise, arrange the concessions, rent the space and work with such sponsors as Vespa of New Orleans and Swirl Wine. If it has "The Big Easy Rollergirls" stamped on it, it's a guarantee that least one derby skater spent

her free time producing it.

And if you're in roller derby, free time is hard to come by. Almost all derby women have full-time jobs. Beatrix sKiddo said, "When I meet new people through derby, they tend to ask me what I do for a living. My response, 'Well, in my spare time I work full-time in advertising.'" Some even tack on school and families. Luvinblood, a new skater this season and mother of three boys, welcomes the time-challenge, claiming roller derby is just "an added dimension to her hotness" as a mom.

The Big Easy Rollergirls hail from a wide geographic backdrop, including Canada, Russia, The Netherlands and South Africa. They work as artists, lawyers, actresses, architects, archeologist, graphic designers, and bankers. SmasHer notes the broad background the sport attracts. "Roller derby has that singular quality of uniting diverse women, who come together, for the purpose of kicking some ass. It's the sorority your mother never wanted you to pledge."

The league has grown to twice its first-season size, but still offers the same form of riotous entertainment. There is still food, drink and merchandise to be had. There is still quick-witted commentary from announcers Nutty McGillicutty and the Very Right Reverend Psycho Ward. There is still live music from bands at halftime, who in the past have ranged from the soulful garagabilly of the Bruisers, to the alternative, art-house noise of Liquidrone, to the progressive, neoteric-rock sound of the Tomatoes. And, of course, there are women dressed up in flashy costumes and on skates, and the sound of said skates scraping against a hard surface before a full-body hit. **AG**

## Monday, 10/8

Karaoke with the Rollergirls f/ a band with members of the Molly Ringwalds and Metal Rose, plus the Tomatoes, Southport Hall, 200 Monticello Ave., (504) 835-2903, [www.newsouthport.com](http://www.newsouthport.com), 8pm, \$7

## Saturday, 10/20

The Big Easy Rollergirls Season Opener (Doubleheader: Crescent Wenches vs. Marigny Antoinettes and Confederacy of Punches vs. StoryVillians), Halftime entertainment by Gal Holiday and the Honky Tonk Revue, Mardi Gras World, 223 Newton St., 6pm, \$15 in advance, \$18 at door

For more info on the Big Easy Rollergirls, go to: [www.bigeasyrollergirls.com](http://www.bigeasyrollergirls.com)

## CRESCENT WENCHES



**CAPTAIN:**  
Julie Jawbreaker



**CAPTAIN:**  
Pontchartrain BeAtch



L to R: Ez By U, Stinky Lafitte, Wit Vicious, Crusty McKnuckle, Fleur d'Lethal, Captain Pontchartrain BeAtch; Not Pictured: Mace M. Dixon, MILF Duds, Archbishop Pummel, Sugar Raye, Cooney Cococo, Captain Julie Jawbreaker, lacy nderalls, Louise ze Animal

**CONFEDERACY  
OF PUNCHES**



**CAPTAIN:**  
Orleans Perish

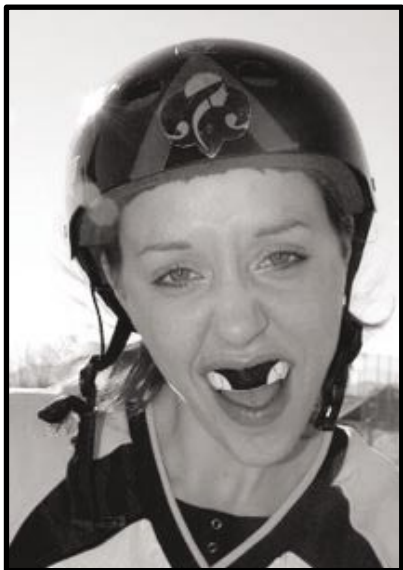


**CAPTAIN:**  
Bruise Springsteen



*L to R: Blaze Scarr & Big Sleazy, Captain Orleans Perish & CHEAP THRILL, Saucy LaRoux & Melpomeanie, SmashHer & ChessTosterone. Center: Captain Bruise Springsteen; Not Pictured: Buck Wild, Coalminer's Slaughter, Sophie Nuke 'Em*

**STORYVILLAINS**



**CAPTAIN:**  
Marquee de Squad



**CAPTAIN:**  
Shay-Bay



*L to R: AnnihilAsian, Jet Lisa, Galfreaka, Squirtalicious, Captain Shay-Bay, Victoria von Doom, Lush Fatale, LaBelle ReBelle, Captain Marquee de Squad; Not Pictured: Babycakes, Ivy Rased'ya, Jaws, Lt. Dan, Satanika, Scabigail, The House MADAM*

**MARIGNY  
ANTOINETTES**



**CAPTAIN:**  
Balls-Out Betty



**CAPTAIN:**  
Power Snatch



*L to R: Ruffit, Beatrix sKiddo, Captain PowerSnatch, Loco Bambino, Luvinblood. Center: Queen CinSational; Not Pictured: Anti Em, Captain Balls-Out Betty, Deb U Taunt, F.N. Trouble, Ibeatya Amber, Trixie la Femme*