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January-February 2012

## Join the Roller Revolution.....15

Are you front and center or are you waiting in the wings? The industry's national Make a Skatement marketing campaign is quickly gaining momentum, and current rink members are benefitting greatly from both "bricks and mortar" and online marketing tools provided by the campaign. Read on to find out about the group's newest promotion and how to use the marketing tools in your rink.

## Roller derby is unstoppable!..1, 9, 17, 23

Team numbers continue to grow, and interest expands yearly from women's to juniors and now men's teams. Women's derby just participated in their first ever World Cup, with teams from all over the globe. In this issue, we've got derby covered.

## Roller skating on your TV.....27

Skaters and rinks are currently being cast for a new jam skating "talent" show to air in 2012 on television nationwide.

## First ever Women's Roller Derby World Cup a huge step forward for the sport

By Suzy Weinland

The first ever Women's Roller Derby World Cup took place Dec. 1-4, 2011, at The Bunker in Downsview Park, Toronto, Canada. More than just another sports competition, this was the making of history, as women from thirteen countries and all walks of life gathered to roller skate, compete for the title of best roller derby team in the world and to forge new friendships.

After ten years of growth in the United States, six in Canada and even fewer in other countries, the Cup was an opportunity for derby teams to show off their wide range of skills and experience and do their best to achieve that top spot of world champion.

The Roller Derby World Cup was presented by the popular Blood & Thunder Magazine and brought together the 31,000 rollergirls, 1000 leagues and 36 countries that make up the international roller derby community today. In addition to the U.S. and Canadian teams, derby leagues and fans came from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, England, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland and Sweden.

The U.S. team kicked off the competition on Dec. 1 with a Stars vs. Stripes bout. The 28 best roller derby skaters in the United States were divided into two teams that skated it out in the friendly-fierce fashion that is women's flat track roller derby.

The remaining days' bouts resulted in top wins for the United States (1st), Canada (2nd), England (3rd) and Australia (4th). (For more stats by bout

and country, go online to <http://www.derbynewsnetwork.com/recaps.>)

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*The U.S. top 28 women's roller derby skaters faced off in a Stars vs. Stripes bout to kick off the first ever Women's Roller Derby World Cup. (photo courtesy Jules Doyle)*



*The U.S. skates against Australia during the Women's Roller Derby World Cup, Dec 1-4, 2011. (photo courtesy Jules Doyle)*

## Is your rink Making a Skatement?

By Dionne Obeso

If you haven't yet taken the step to join the Make a Skatement/Roller Revolution campaign, then you are missing out on an opportunity to help your own rink and the skating industry as a whole. The effort, led by non-profit Roller Skating Rocks, Inc., is taking steps to bring skating to the national stage. They are bringing rinks and suppliers together to benefit everyone in a huge, coordinated national

advertising and promotional campaign.

If you're not "making a skatement" yet, you should be, according to rink owners Luke Boston, Wendy Sherman and

try it; it doesn't hurt to try it once and see how it goes for you. The more people who get involved, the more benefits there will be for everyone. See how much you can benefit before you say no."

Sherman, who co-owns the Gambriels, Md., Skate Zone, joined after hearing some of the organizers speaking about the campaign at a seminar and was instantly intrigued by the idea of a unified roller



Denise Pearson. "It has so much potential benefit," Sherman said. "I think you should

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**Roundup (cont'd from page 1)**

skating campaign.

The Make a Skatement campaign is being led by 35-year industry veteran Ron Creten, who said in a press release about the camapaign, "We want to ignite a national movement to make roller skating more top-of-mind with young people and their families across the country. When you look at research, America's youth like to hang out with friends, listen to music, be active and go to social events. That's roller skating! It's our job to remind them of that."

Any rink owner should be interested in the promotion of roller skating as a fun, cool activity, but sometimes it can be a challenge to see the forest for the trees, and operators might be asking themselves, "how does this benefit me, today?" Boston, of Indianapolis, Ind. Roller Cave, has the answer. "One of the hardest things to wrap your head around in a campaign like this is not seeing direct results. It's not quantifiable, and not the kind of thing where you anticipate quick results. It is a long-term commitment from the industry, and they hope that they see more of the roller skating brand in use in other advertisements and with other prod-

ucts," Boston said.

In other words, while you might not see an immediate uptick in sales as a result of joining the Roller Revolution, you will hopefully benefit from a general rising trend in the industry. This campaign isn't a quick wave breaking; it's the tide coming in.

"National awareness of roller skating as a whole has always been a concern for operators, and getting suppliers and rink operators to link together is something that was needed. This is something that they have been able to accomplish through the campaign, for the first time that I know of, at least on this scale," Boston said.

To promote the campaign, Roller Cave has had shirts printed up with the Make a Skatement logo, and awards them as prizes to a specially chosen "promo team" of kids who skate at the rink. What are the prizes for? Generating ideas for the Make a Skatement campaign.

At Denise Pearson's Fun Spot in Belleville, Ill., promotional materials are up and the campaign is rolling along. "We're very excited about people being out there promoting roller skating on a national level," Pearson said. She

has jumped in with plenty of enthusiasm herself; all of the flyers going out to local schools for things like their skate nights have 'Join the Roller Revolution - Make a Skatement' prominently featured, and their weekly newspaper ad has been redesigned to feature the phrase as well. "It's over now, but over the summer we also bought an ad on the local movie screen." It is Pearson's hope to get the Skatement in front of the kids as much as possible.

Pearson's rink is also giving out prizes like party packages, with the winning child getting free admission on a certain day and 24 invitations to hand out to their friends and family that provide half-price admission. "When kids redeem their certificate, they get a white rubber 'Make a Skatement' bracelet," Pearson said.

At Skate Zone, a graphic designer was hired to sit in the rink and offer to put the Make a Skatement logo on shirts and skates, but the \$30 price tag was too rich for the majority of skaters. Still, she wont hesitate to pay the \$200 membership fee again, and continues to passively promote the campaign with posters in the rink. "It will be good for the whole country to benefit," she said.

For the cost of a single birthday party, you can help promote roller skating to the masses. And if you gain even one single party this year as a result, your membership will have paid off.

Still on the fence about getting involved? Pearson urges rink owners who are on the fence to come down on the side of getting with the program. "The fee to join the group is so minimal - it's the cost of one little newspaper ad - and you get this whole movement behind you promoting the industry and the sport of skating. I can't imagine anyone not wanting to be a part of something like this."

The benefits, Roller Skating Rocks hopes, will be rich and exciting for rinks all across the nation. According to president Creten, industry leaders are hoping for a five percent average growth rate every year for the next five years. "We recognize this is a journey that will take the next few years versus a quick sprint to the finish."

So how do you get your rink on board? Visit [MakeaSkatement.com/](http://MakeaSkatement.com/) participate to learn more about how you can get involved, and to become a member of the Roller Revolution.

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Derby World Cup (cont'd from page 1)

“The first ever Roller Derby World Cup was EPIC!” shared Julie Glass (a.k.a. Atomatrix, #3), U.S.A. team member and owner of Atom Wheels. “It far exceeded my expectations as a skater, businesswoman and fan of the sport. The camaraderie amongst the teams couldn’t be denied, regardless if we spoke the same language.”

Among the fans attending were individuals who can have a big impact in how far roller derby goes as a competitive sport. One such person in attendance was Roberto Marotta, president of FIRS (Federation International of Roller Sports). Glass said, “(He) was on hand to witness our great sport at an international level and superb production put on by Toronto Roller Sports.”

One huge highlight of the four-day event was when the New Zealand team performed the “haka” during the opening ceremonies and prior to their bout with the U.S. team.

According to Wikipedia, “Haka (singular is the same as plural: haka) is a traditional ancestral war cry, dance or challenge from the Māori people of New Zealand. It is a posture dance performed by a group (traditionally men, but also performed by other groups of women or children), with vigorous movements and stamping of the feet with rhythmically shouted accompaniment. The New Zealand rugby team’s practice of performing a haka before their matches has made the dance more widely known around the world.”

“It was very intense; definitely got us pumped up!” said Glass.

“The energy of the fastest

women’s growing sport is empowering to not only the skaters themselves, but the fans. Regardless of some of the scores, everyone knew we were a part of something bigger,” said Glass. “The explo-

sion of the sport in the U.S. will now be happening in other parts of the world, I cannot wait to one day play Colombia in a World Cup where skating is their No. 2 sport nationally to soccer. “



The U.S. Derby World Cup team flashed smiles after winning the Cup. (photo courtesy Jules Doyle)



An avid fan poses for a picture with a member of the winning U.S. team. (photo courtesy Jules Doyle)

Julie Glass: A roller skating maven

Julie Glass (a.k.a. Atomatrix, #3) is considered one of – if not the – top roller derby skaters on the scene today by peers and roller skating industry professionals alike.

Glass was first exposed to roller derby in 2006. She started in the roller derby wheel business, and needed to better understand what she and her husband, who own and operate Atom Wheels (www.Atomwheels.com), were selling (they sell speed and derby wheels and apparel). So, in 2008 she started a roller derby team, the Oly Rollers, out of Olympia, Wash., and, in Julie’s words, “We had a sort of Cinderella story. We were undefeated the whole (first) year and won Nationals.” To date, the team has only lost two games since they joined WFTDA in 2009.

She has been skating her whole life. “I have a huge skating background. I started out on quad skates, I have quad National titles. Then I went to inlines – won World titles on inlines.” But after all the competitions, when Julie settled down to start a family and a business, she found derby.

“Roller derby is the perfect balance for me to have a career and a family and still have a sport that I can be passionate about – in addition it is my husband’s and my livelihood.”

The Oly Rollers play mostly home games, which suits Glass well. “I could be on the road constantly. It’s my passion to skate and teach people derby, but I’m running operations of the business right now.”

But that still hasn’t stopped her from doing everything she can to aid in the growth of this popular roller sport. “Roller derby has exploded in the U.S. and it’s going to continue exploding all over the world,” said Glass. “You can never have skated before, or not have a sports background and still find a home in roller derby.”



The U.S. Roller Derby World Cup team was comprised of 28 of the best derby girls in the country. (photo courtesy Jules Doyle)



A group of French fans shout it out for their team. (photo courtesy Jules Doyle)