



DERBY DOLLS



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Roller Derby is one of the fastest growing sports in the world and if you've ever seen the movie Whip It, you'll know that it's all about girls getting rough and tough on their rollerskates. A bunch of local ladies have cottoned on the sport and formed the Coffs Coast Derby Dolls. We catch up with president, Belinda, and coach, Sass, to find out more.

PRESIDENT - BELINDA

Who are the Coffs Coast Derby Dolls?
Coffs Coast Derby Dolls was initiated to provide an extreme sporting event for local women, so we encourage individuals to join, or form a team and join. No matter whether it's the social exercise of training, learning of new skills with motivated companions, or the sheer competitive thrill of the grand parade that is Roller Derby, become involved. Work your way through the training regime from "Fresh Meat" to "Derby Doll".

Women from 18 years and up are eligible to compete, but as a family sport the chance for the kids to dress up as their favourites and form cheer squads means everyone becomes involved. Although Roller Derby is a female team sport, blokes are welcome. Put your skating skills to use... become a Coach, Referee, Skate Tech, or join the Cheer Squad and try to outdo the Dolls in the Derby fashion wars.

> How did the group come about?
Coffs Coast Derby Dolls Inc was established in May 2010 and is the result of much hard work by Allison Lowden and a bunch of dedicated Coffs Harbour women. Coffs Coast Derby Dolls' aim is to provide a fun, empowering and exciting new sport to the women of Coffs Harbour and surrounding districts.

A strong family friendly sport that provides excellent opportunities to develop high levels of fitness with the added bonus of a chance to adopt a character role in this exciting and colorful sport

> Tell us about your upcoming event.
It's the first Modern Roller derby Bout to be played in Coffs Harbour. A not to be missed event, as the runners up in the Great Southern Slam let loose on the track.

This is the league that came second to the best in the Southern hemisphere, here to demonstrate that their fearsome reputation is not to be taken lightly.

For those that have never seen the spectacular that is Roller Derby, be prepared for Live Music, crazy intermission acts, a carnival of colour and mayhem all centered on the ACTION that is ROLLER DERBY!

> Can anyone come along to the event?
The event is open for all ages! Live music, merchandise stalls, half time entertainment and the opportunity to meet the Coffs Coast Derby Dolls. The mighty Sun State Roller Girls and Skate Salvage will also be making the trip down for the event. Check out our website for more info - www.coffiscoastderbydolls.com

> How do people get involved with the Derby Dolls?

We welcome ALL women from 18 years onward to come and train with us! You do not have to have any previous experience. We are all very different in tastes, appearance and personality. Which is why Derby is such a great sport! It brings people together. You do not have to compete to join us, some will just be training with us for the pure fun and fitness aspect. Although, if you've got a competitive streak, we'd love you on the track!

Things that you WILL need to acquire in order to train and compete in Roller Derby:
 ■ Roller Derby Quad Skates ■ Padding – elbows and knees ■ Helmet ■ Wrist Guards ■ Mouth Guard

We can be contacted by email - info@coffiscoastderbydolls.com - or via our website - www.coffiscoastderbydolls.com

COACH - SASS

> Roller Derby is becoming quite popular...

Roller derby is the fastest growing womens sport in the WORLD at the moment. The 'boom' really hit Australia this year and there's now around 50 leagues in australia. We're proud! Roller Derby is a full contact, action packed, 'chick' sport. There are some co-ed leagues, but CCDD are, like most, a women's only league.

I guess the fascination starts with the fact that the chicks are getting rough and TOUGH! Roller Derby attracts ALL sorts of women, from timid women just starting out on skates to ex speed and figure skaters, to 'alternative', strong minded, creative types. It also attracts women that are searching for their 'something' in life, women that may be looking to get stronger - physically or otherwise, women that are looking for solid friendships or simply like minded people...and all of whom are in search of awesome fun! There's a saying around the Roller Derby traps: "Roller Derby Saves Lives", and i've seen it with my own two eyes. Women join that may be struggling with the challenges life presents us with, have encountered abuse, are a little 'lost' and searching for meaning, are lacking good friendships, and more. Roller derby transforms. It brings women out of their shell and builds strength, obviously physically, but emotionally and mentally too. It build friendships, and the 'sisterhood'

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stretches nationwide these days, as leagues get closer and bouts (games) get more frequent.

Roller Derby is a sport first and foremost, but there is so much more to it! It's about fundraising, organising BIG events (bouts), learning learning learning (with 40 pages of rules!), social events, and friendships. Leagues are run by committees, which is also an amazing and challenging experience to be a part of. Some Roller girls go on to Coach, like myself, which presents many a challenge and plenty of self development, learning HOW to effectively and safely coach others. Others join as, or become, officials, Refs, Sponsorship or Merchandise organisers and much more. There's something for everyone!

Tell us about some of the comps you have been in.

I have played in 4 Bouts, whilst with Gold Coast Roller Derby, and been to many others as a spectator. Bouts are drawing crowds in the thousands these days and are major events to plan. Events committees are formed to work the load, and provide the skaters with the chance to concentrate on the skating. Pre-Bout prep starts months prior and is grueling! But we love it. It's what we train so hard for! Bouts usually consist of not only the game itself, but pre-game bands, half time entertainment, raffles, prize draws, market stalls selling all sorts of cool goodies, crazy spectators that dress the part and wave handmade supporter signs, cheering for their favorite team, or skaters! The first Australian Roller Derby National Competition hit this year. It got every Aussie Roller girl grinning from ear to ear, squeeling down the phone, drenching facebook in Derby talk, frantically buying new wheels, cleaning bearings, creating their 'boutfits', hunting down flights and accomodation and doing everything possible to get their butts to the first ever nationals! I missed out, and the disappointment was crazy! Next year I WILL be there, skating my little heart out.

> Do things get a bit rough out there? Have there been any injuries?

Of course! Its a ROUGH sport! I love to quote my 5 year old son because he nails it: "Mum, if you wana play rough, you gota be tough" ! Yes you do! I like to be completely honest and tell my Freshmeat (beginners) that Roller Derby hurts, that there WILL be injuries, that if you're lucky enough to not suffer one, you'll probably witness some.

Lets face it, Roller Derby could be fatal, but whats gain without risk, right? This is why we wear extensive protective gear. A helmet, knee pads, elbow pads, wrist guards and a mouthguard are essential. Anything extra is a bonus, and up to the individual. Personally, i've had no serious injuries yet *touches wood* (besides a major hand bruise, playing tambourine all night at an after-party!), but whilst playing against another league, one of my girls took out a skater from the other league who suffered a spiral leg break, resulting in 10 pins and a metal plate! She had MANY visitors for the weeks she was in hospital and even more helpers offering support during her recovery. Was it worth it? Hell yeah. Will she play again? Her first question for the surgeon was "WHEN can i skate again?". Roller Derby is rough....and we ARE tough!

Obviously, the girls like to dress up. Do you have a uniform/what makes your look stand out?

As yet, CCDD dont have a 'uniform' as such. Like most leagues we have a logo, unique to us, and we're in the process of printing T shirts for each member of our league, and also for sale to our supporters. Within leagues, there are teams and these have either a uniform, or more of a 'theme', giving skaters the opportunity to create their own style, yet still unifying the team. With Gold Coast Roller Derby, we had themes, and i thoroughly enjoyed delving into the creativity that comes from one very excited roller girl preparing for a bout! It's ALL about the 'boutfit' !! I would pull out all the stops! Some girls go all out gore, fake blood, freaky face paint and the likes. Others go sporty, cutesy, or plain crazy. Personally, i try to express my derby name 'Sass n Hyde', and im big on the make up, getting creative with crazy colour and funkying it up, something different for every bout. Of course, there's always the 'unofficial' uniform of a roller girl, which might include fishnet stockings, short shorts, knee high coloured socks, maybe even some fishnet fingerless gloves. Helmets become adorned with stickers and colour and skates are modified with different coloured parts, toe protectors and laces. There's a whole derby market out there and people are well and truly tapping into it now. Hey...we may be tough roller derby skaters, but we're still chicks...and we LOVE to dress up! Oh and shop...derby! lol. There's shops out there that ONLY sell derby gear, everything from skates and protective pads, to the coolest and latest accessories! Dressing up is part of roller derby and you can spot a roller girl a mile away, i reckon!
> Thanks girls, good luck!