

Synopsis - Derby Baby

If you've attended a women's roller derby bout in the sport's post-modern incarnation, you've seen it, maybe even smelled it: the love, the pure addiction that drives tens of thousands of women around the globe to don fishnets and pseudonyms for the privilege of kicking each others asses.

There's a perfect storm of D-I-Y culture and women's empowerment in the U.S. and around the world, so it makes sense that this latest version of roller derby would take hold of busy women and their daughters everywhere — literally everywhere. One recent tabulation estimates the number of female league-affiliated skaters in the U.S. at over 20,000 and steadily rising, and the first-ever Roller Derby World Cup in 2011 had women from Auckland to Dublin strapping on skates to compete internationally.

But how is all this energy and passion evolving the sport? Why are the skaters and supporters willing to work for free when the numbers of paying fans are in the hundreds of thousands and growing steadily? What does it mean for the D-I-Y derby culture that promoters and sponsors are starting to capitalize on its popularity? Does derby need a "rock star" skater to catapult the sport into mainstream consciousness? Is women's roller derby a legitimate sport with a rightful place in the sports media spotlight? Or is it merely a fun pastime where women can make friends and be part of something bigger than themselves? And ultimately, will derby join the evolution of similar freak-sports turned street-sport turned professional sport, like skateboarding or snowboarding?

For the first time ever, the story of women's roller derby is covered from both a national and international perspective, as Emmy Award-winning filmmakers Robin Bond and Dave Wruck take you with them on their international quest to learn why women's flat track roller derby is the fastest growing sport in the world. *Derby, Baby!* explores the drama, the friendships, and the addictive nature of the women's flat-track roller derby, including never-before-seen bout footage of the international flat-track roller derby champions.

Narrated by Whip It star and actress/musician Juliette Lewis, who also appears on-camera, the *Derby, Baby!* story spans the most turbulent and exciting time for the sport in decades, featuring interviews with promoter Jerry "The Commissioner" Seltzer, whose father Leo Seltzer invented roller derby in the 1930s; and Chuck Morris, President of AEG Live Rocky Mountains and one of the most ardent promoters of modern roller derby. The film looks at the many incarnations of the sport since its invention 77 years ago, and explores the WWF-like legacy and over-played television coverage of the past that threatens the sport's image even today. Also featured are the new "rock stars" of roller derby, whose charisma and athleticism may be the key to pushing the sport over the "tipping point." Super-fans, critics, sponsors, prominent sports writers, authors and sociologists weigh in on the phenomenon that is roller derby, and the sport's organic — and possibly short-lived — growth as a unique athletic expression of women's empowerment.