



Joining Twin State Derby: In a Nutshell

What is Twin State Derby (TSD)?

Twin State Derby (TSD) is a women's flat-track roller derby league in the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont. Also known by the name of our travel team, the Upper Valley Vixens, we have played teams throughout greater New England since 2010. The league was accepted as a full WFTDA member league in December 2016. TSD is composed of about 30 members currently and is continuing to grow. Our members include skaters, officials, and volunteers. The league is run through the leadership of five board members and seven committees; all dues-paying members must serve on at least one committee.

What is Roller Derby?

Modern roller derby is a fast-paced, full-contact sport that requires athleticism and strategy--and did we mention--it's a hell of a lot of fun, whether you're screaming in the stands or dishing it out on the track. Roller derby leagues require more than just skaters to play the game; leagues need skating & non-skating officials (NSO) as well as volunteers in order to participate in this sport. There have been many versions of roller derby in past in movies and on TV; modern roller derby of the past 10 years is a quickly evolving and growing, serious sport for both women and men. For a full understanding of how the game is played, take a look at your Derby 101 page or find the WFTDA Basics of Flat Track Roller Derby video on YouTube. There are many rules and skills to know before playing roller derby, but don't worry, TSD is fully prepared to guide you through a comprehensive training to get you prepared!

When can I play roller derby and how long will it take?

Before you can play this full contact sport with our league, each rookie skater needs to participate in a training period in order to learn the rules and skills needed to safely and effectively play roller derby. In general, the process is: learning to perform basic skating skills, pass a basic skating skills assessment, learn full contact and strategy skills while on skates, pass a contact skills assessment and a rules test, scrimmage experience, and then you will be eligible to be rostered for the team! Every person is different in how fast he/she progresses through this process, the most important thing is to stick with it!

What if I want to be an official?

We LOVE our officials! Without officials, derby would be a chaotic mess without rules, scoring, and very unsafe to play. We are very proud of our officials; they have the responsibility of understanding the rules thoroughly and also have the badass confidence to back up penalty calls. If you are interested in becoming an official, you can either decide to train to be a skating official or a non-skating official or both! Some of our members play derby AND officiate! Skating officials initially go through the same training as a beginner skater to get all the basic skills down, after they graduate their focus shifts to how to officiate on skates and really master the rules. There is a separate set of assessments to reach a certain level of officiating, and there are tons of officiating opportunities at every level of training. We have a fabulous core group of skating officials that work on these skills at each practice. Our non-skating officials train to learn how to operate in the various NSO positions such as penalty tracking and timing, jam timing, scoreboard and scorekeeping, etc. We also have several dedicated officials that train new NSOs. We highly encourage our new league members to pursue training for different officiating roles because it is one of the best ways to learn the sport.

What are R1 and R2 assessments?

TSD assesses WFTDA Minimum Skill Requirements for all skaters. R1 assessments are focused on individual skating skills (no contact). These are the skills that will be worked on and assessed during your first 8 sessions. There are about 20 or so skills that must be passed in order to move onto your R2 skills training. R2 skills involve learning how to safely interact with other skaters while giving or receiving contact. Training for these skills will take place over several weeks with an assessment taking place when you are ready. When trainers are confident with your safety you will be allowed to scrimmage at practice. Once you pass R2s and a written rules test, and have logged scrimmage hours you can play with other teams.

How do I make roster to play in a game?

Because we are a WFTDA Member, we need to follow certain guidelines about gameplay and how our teams are formed. A charter is a requirement we need to fulfill if we want our games to count as sanctioned and to be considered for rankings. Leagues are required to have a skater charter of 14-20 skaters. A

league may have only one chartered team, usually known as the "A-Team". However, a league may have many teams in addition to the chartered team which are not considered for rankings. Charters are updated periodically throughout the year. Once you have passed all of your preliminary assessments, rules test, and have scrimmaged for a while, there will be an opportunity to have a Charter Assessment (CAs) and receive feedback on your progress. CAss is conducted by coaches and captains and determines your relative skill level based on a set of criteria.

What if I don't make the charter?

Never fear! Even if you don't make the charter, there are plenty of opportunities to scrimmage, guest skate for other teams, and play in

B-team games. Not all of our games are sanctioned and, therefore, we can create a different roster as long as the skaters meet all the requirements to be rostered. We currently don't have an official B-team yet that is separate from the Vixens, but with the way we are growing, we will soon!

What is the time commitment?

At first, you will only need to attend practices twice per week for about an hour for the first month. As your skills progress and if you make the decision to join TSD as a member, practice can total 2-6 hours per week

plus 4+ hours of committee work per month. So at the very minimum, expect about 3-4 hours per week if you plan to join us as a member and are hoping to be considered for a game roster. Time commitment for officials varies. There are many opportunities to play/practice roller derby outside of our league and many opportunities to be a leader within the league which can translate to 10+ hours per week.

When are practices?

For your first month, you may attend Foundations practices 8:00-9:30 every Tuesday and Thursday. We encourage participants to arrive at 8PM to warm-up individually and gear-up to be ready to go by 8:30 for skate practice. Once you become a member,

added league practice times on both Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:30PM-8:30PM become available to you. You will also want to put on your calendar the occasional Saturday and Sunday for games and scrimmages. We have away and home games on Saturdays during the season so please check the schedule and plan on attending. Even if you're not skating or officiating, we do expect all members to help out at most home games. On Sundays, we occasionally will have interleague scrimmages and scrimmages with other leagues. We also offer weekly Supported Open Skate times to rookies. This is when new skaters can come to Great View's open skate time and a seasoned vet from the league will give you some one-on-one assistance with your skills. These open skate times are 2:30-4:00PM every Sunday and you pay the Vixens entrance fee.

What equipment do I need, how much does it cost and how do I maintain it?

At the very least, you will need to the following items to skate at practice: roller skates, elbow & knee pads, wrist guards, helmet, and a mouthguard. You will not be able to participate in practice if one of these items is missing. There are other items you may

decide to purchase such as: knee gaskets, padded shorts, skate accessories, etc. When you are ready to purchase your own equipment, members of the league are always willing to point you in the right direction and even take you shopping! The initial cost of investing in your first pair of skates and set of gear can range anywhere from \$200-\$500 depending on the type of skates you purchase. You can also buy your gear in pieces and continue to borrow other pieces to spread the cost out over time. Generally, a typical skater replaces pieces of their gear every 1-3 years depending on the wear. We will show you how to clean and maintain your gear so that it lasts longer.

Does TSD have any equipment I could borrow?

TSD does have a supply of used gear gathered from our members. These items include skates, pads, helmets. We are limited on the number of skates and sizes we have. If we do not have skates available in your size,

you will need to rent a pair of skates from the rink for a couple dollars each time you attend practice. If we do have skates and/or gear for you, we will keep it at the rink for you in a bag marked with your name in our gear closet. You

may not take borrowed gear home or out of the rink as others may need to access it and we cannot risk losing our supply. Finally, the expectation is that you will begin purchasing your gear once you become a member, even if is a little at a time.

What is the cost to join TSD?

Your first practice on skates is FREE! After this, you are required to pay a one-time fee of \$50 for the remaining sessions of your initial training program. This \$50 pays for the rink rental space, our insurance, and any equipment maintenance. At first, you will only attend 90-minutes, twice per week. After our 8 session training program, you have the option of becoming a dues-paying member at \$50 per month. Eventually, you will want to also purchase roller derby insurance, which is about \$75 per calendar year and also a requirement for TSD membership.

What do my dues pay for?

All roller derby leagues have operational costs. The top five costs for TSD are: practice & game venue rentals, game and event supplies, equipment (practice/first aid), insurance, and merchandise. Renting space for the league to practice is our top expense and we typically pay for at least 20-30 hours of rented space per month.

Who should I ask for....?

Each member plays a very important role within TSD and can answer questions you might have or point you in the right direction. Members that hold certain administrative and training roles to be aware of are:

- The TSD Board: President (Bertha Blue Blazes), Interleague Coordinator (Her She Bad), Secretary (Violet O’Fender), Treasurer (Princess Leia You Flat), & Membership Coordinator (Bertha Blue Blazes)
- Rookie Trainers: BioHazarJess, Wild Rumpus
- Rookie Liaison: Belle of the Brawl

How does the league communicate?

We primarily use email and Facebook to keep updated and stay in touch with each other. You will be added to a Google group after your first practice and this will keep you informed of what’s going on within the league. Once you become a member, you are added to our league email group and to our private Facebook groups.

What happens if I need to miss a practice or take a leave of absence?

If you need to miss a practice or two, please let someone on our training committee know so that we do not expect you at practice. If you need to take a longer break but do plan on coming back to practice, please let our Secretary know. Trainers will be updated and know not expect you at practice and we’ll help you figure out if you should continue paying dues during your absence. Be aware that if you pass a set of assessments and then do not skate for 60+ consecutive days, you will be asked to re-take these assessments.

Can I bring guests/my kids to watch practice?

Occasionally, you may bring close adult friends or family members to come observe a practice or two. Please keep the group small; about 5 or less. In the case of kids, **all children ages 12 and younger MUST be supervised by a person off skates who is 16 years or older.** This person must not be participating in any other activity other than supervision of the child(ren). We cannot make any exceptions to this policy as it is a condition of renting the rink.

When do I get to pick a derby name?

Derby names are a fun part of the sport’s culture. Many leagues have different “rules” or expectations around derby names. We invite you to go by a derby name and number of your choosing once you make the commitment to become a member of our league. The only rule we have is that you cannot pick the same name or number, or even too similar, to a name that someone may already have in our league. It’s also nice to consider other regional leagues as well because it can be awkward to play against someone who has your name. If it’s a player out in CA, for example, that’s OK. Some may decide to wait until they pass their first round of assessments and they are “contact ready”. However, there is no obligation for you to pick a name besides your legal name.

Anything else I should know?

Never give up and always bring a positive attitude to practice! Some practices will be harder than others, but determination and persistence always pays off! Everyone in our league is always eager to help, so always ask as many questions as you can.

Great Websites to Explore:

Twin State Derby: <http://twinstatederby.com/>

Twin State Derby Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/twin.state.derby/>

Women's Flat Track Derby Association (WFTDA): <https://wftda.com/>

Men's Roller Derby Association (MRDA): <http://www.mensrollerderbyassociation.com/>

Bruised Boutique (Nashua, NH): <http://www.bruisedboutique.com/onlinestore/>

Derby Warehouse: <http://www.derbywarehouse.com/>

909 Treblemaker Blog: <https://www.treblemaker909.com/>

Roller Derby Athletics: <http://www.rollerderbyathletics.com/>

The .GIF of Roller: <http://gifofderby.com/>

You should be watching more roller derby (tumblr): <http://rdjunkies.tumblr.com/>