



ROLLER DERBY DEMOGRAPHICS:

Results from the Second Annual Comprehensive Data Collection on Skaters and Fans

Women's Flat Track Derby Association
Published March 2011

Methodology

Data for this survey were collected online during the month of January 2011. Participants (roller derby fans, skaters, and volunteers/affiliates) accessed the survey via links provided by the WFTDA and its affiliate leagues' websites, social media (Facebook, Twitter), email lists, and message boards.

The 2011 survey data set consisted of 10,403 total responses, roughly half from fans and half from sport participants, including current skaters (female and male), retired skaters, junior skaters, league volunteers, and league business partners. (For comparison, the 2010 survey data consisted of 9,781 respondents, with a similar split between fans and direct participants.)

Survey responses came in from fans around with world, with Americans comprising 91% of the results.

Fans

Basic Demographics

Overall, most WFTDA fans are female (66% to 34% male; 2010 results: 59% to 41% male). Fans 24 years old and younger are more likely to be female (88% versus 11% male). As the ages of fans increase, the gender split decreases; for all fans at 35 years old and over, the female/male split narrows to 57%/42%.

Avid fans (defined as those who have attended three or more bouts in the past year) exhibit a similar split between genders (60% female, 40% male).

Eleven percent of fans are 24 years old or younger. The coveted 25-34-year-old demographic comprises 42% of fans, while 35-54-year-olds make up another 41%. Only 6% are 55 or older. These figures are nearly unchanged from the 2010 survey results.

Four out of five fans identify as straight; the remaining identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other (a figure unchanged from 2010). Thirty-four percent of fans are single and 38% are married. Eighteen percent live with a partner and 9% are divorced or separated. Less than 1% are widowed.

Roughly a quarter of fans (27%) live with children under 18 in their household.

Eighty-six percent of fans have at least some college education; 63% have earned a degree. Twenty-nine percent have attended graduate school and 20% have a graduate degree. Six percent have a vocational certificate or degree.

The 2011 survey was the first to question fans and skaters about their professions. The most popular field among fans is education (9%), followed by health care, retail sales, and computer systems and projects (5% each). Students comprise 7% of the fan base, and only 1% reported as unemployed. Thirty-three percent are salaried professionals, 14% are employed at a managerial level, and 6% own their own business.

Attracting Fans

Roller Derby is still very much a grassroots sport in terms of attracting new fans. Word of mouth is responsible for attracting the majority of fans, either by having a friend or family member involved (32%) or hearing about it through a friend (22%), both nearly identical figures from the 2010 survey. Print advertisements bring in 10% of fans, and radio or TV advertisements are responsible for approximately 1%. Only 5% of fans report hearing about roller derby through national or local press coverage.

Recent mainstream media attention through films and documentaries such as “Whip It!” and “Hell on Wheels” and/or the A&E show “Rollergirls” was responsible for 12% of fans hearing about roller derby, up from 4% in 2010. The increased presence of roller derby in the general media continues to drum up interest which trickles down throughout the sport community.

Sponsor Interest

Roller Derby fans have spending power. Nearly a third (31%) of fans have a household income of at least \$75,000 per year. Ninety-seven percent of all fans agree that roller derby bouts provide good entertainment value for their money.

Businesses would be smart to get the attention of roller derby fans by sponsoring a league. Seventy-nine percent of all fans know the businesses that support their local roller derby league, and nearly 95% hold a favorable opinion of these businesses. Over 72% have patronized businesses that sponsor their local league. These figures all represent increases over the 2010 survey results.

Sports Interest

Fifty percent of fans reported attending two or more sporting events other than roller derby in 2010. Conversely, this means that the other 50 percent of fans are a relatively untapped audience in terms of sports marketing—fans who sports marketers might otherwise find challenging to reach.

Roller Derby fans keep up with sports through several outlets. Within the last year, 69% have watched sports or sports-related programming on TV. Over half (59%) keep up with sports by visiting websites, and just over a third (38%) listen to sports-related programming on the radio. Forty-four percent accessed sports scores or information on their cell phones.

Skaters

Basic Demographics

Even with the emergence of male roller derby leagues, women make up 95% of active adult roller derby skaters (down from 98% in 2010). However, men make up 59% of league volunteers, including referees. The majority (60%) of female skaters are between the ages of 25 and 34. Twenty-five percent of skaters are older than 35, and 13% are 24 or younger.

Seventy-six percent of adult female skaters identify as straight; the remaining 24% identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or other. These figures are unchanged from the 2010 survey.

One-third of skaters are single, slightly more (37%) are married, and a quarter (25%), live with a partner. Seven percent are divorced or separated.

Thirty-one percent of skaters live with children under 18 in their household.

Eighty-six percent of skaters have at least some college education and 64% have earned a college degree. Thirty percent have some graduate education, and almost 20% have a graduate level degree. Seven percent have earned a vocational certificate or degree.

Attracting New Skaters

Almost half (46%) of skaters first heard of the modern roller derby revival through a friend or someone they knew who was involved. Eleven percent saw a print advertisement. Seven percent of current skaters saw links or stories on the internet, and 9% met skaters at an event. As with fans, grassroots methods currently shoulder the most responsibility for spreading the word about roller derby to potential skaters.

Level of Involvement

Seventy-eight percent of current skaters attended four or more bouts in the past year, and 98% of skaters plan to attend three or more bouts in the coming year. Two-thirds took at least one 2010 road trip to another city for a roller derby event, with a third of the skaters reporting over five trips in the last year.

Almost 57% of skaters agree that it's important to them that a bout they are considering seeing is a WFTDA bout. Even if it is not a formally sanctioned event, 94% say that it's important to them that roller derby bouts are played under a nationally agreed upon set of rules such as the WFTDA rules set.

Current female skaters show a greater support for men's roller derby than those not involved in the sport. Twenty-eight percent of skaters support men's roller derby at least on an equal level as women's roller derby, significantly more than the 13% of fans who express equal or greater support for men's roller derby.

Only 6% of skaters agree that they would enjoy roller derby more if skaters used their real names.

Forty-three percent of the adult female skaters polled reported an intention to buy *Jam City Rollergirls*, the first WFTDA-licensed console game for the Nintendo Wii (from Frozen Codebase, released in early 2011). Thirty percent of fans declared the same intention.

Careers

The most popular careers among current active skaters include education (10%), health care (practitioners and technical) (7%), and office and administration support (6%). Four percent of skaters report careers in accounting and financial operations, arts and design, food service, health care (support), retail sales, and homemaking. Seven percent are full-time students, and 1% report as unemployed.

Further, 35% are salaried professionals, 15% are employed at a managerial level, and 5% own their own business.

Twenty-four percent report 2010 income exceeding \$75,000 USD, and 44% exceed \$50,000. Thirty-nine percent of skaters report having spent over \$500 USD on roller derby in the past year.

More Information Available

The 2011 survey also contains league-specific breakdowns for each league's demographics, as well as fan opinions about the presentation of the sport in their local area. The global results are generally reflected in local markets, but with pockets of deviation. Contact the WFTDA or your local WFTDA league for more detail about the fans and skaters in your corner of the world.

About the WFTDA

The Women's Flat Track Derby Association is the governing body for women's flat track roller derby, and a membership organization for the leagues to collaborate and network. The organization created and maintained the first standardized rule set for the flat track game, which is now in its fourth edition. The WFTDA also serves as the sanctioning body for flat track roller derby games, hosts regional and national tournaments, sets safety standards, provides insurance to athletes and leagues, and serves as a networking venue for flat track roller derby leagues to share resources and get advice. There are currently (as of March 2011) 109 WFTDA member leagues.



ADDENDUM - SUMMARY RESULTS

February 2011 WFTDA Demographic Survey

Total sample size: 10,403. Participant volunteers took a 42-question internet-based survey.

- 3,312 current female adult roller derby competitors surveyed
- 5,360 roller derby fans surveyed
- 1,006 league volunteers surveyed
- 725 former skaters, male skaters, young adult skaters, retired skaters, and other sport partners surveyed

88% surveyed are American fans/skaters (2010: 89%)
 12% surveyed are international fans/skaters (2010: 11%)

Fan Gender: 66% female, 34% male (2010: 59% female, 41% male)

Fan Age:

< 25 yrs:	11%	(2010: 10%)
25-34 yrs:	42%	(2010: 41%)
35-44 yrs:	30%	(2010: 30%)
45-54 yrs:	11%	(2010: 11%)
55+ yrs:	6%	(2010: 7%)

Skater Age:

< 25 yrs:	13%	(2010: 15%)
25-34 yrs:	60%	(2010: 63%)
35-44 yrs:	23%	(2010: 22%)
45-54 yrs:	2%	(2010: 2%)
55+ yrs:	< 0%	(2010: < 0%)

Fan Education Level Achieved:

Some high school	1%	(2010: 1%)
High school diploma	7%	(2010: 9%)
Vocational degree	6%	(2010: n/a)
Some undergraduate	23%	(2010: 27%)
Undergraduate diploma	33%	(2010: 34%)
Some graduate level	9%	(2010: 9%)
Graduate degree	20%	(2010: 21%)

Skater Education Level Achieved:

Some high school <	0%	(2010: 1%)
High school diploma	7%	(2010: 8%)
Vocational degree	7%	(2010: n/a)
Some undergraduate	22%	(2010: 25%)
Undergraduate diploma	34%	(2010: 37%)
Some graduate level	10%	(2010: 10%)
Graduate degree	20%	(2010: 19%)

Fan Marital Status

Single	34%	(2010: 37%)
Married	38%	(2010: 37%)
Living With Partner	18%	(2010: 16%)
Divorced/Separated	9%	(2010: 8%)

Skater Marital Status

Single	32%	(2010: 33%)
Married	37%	(2010: 36%)
Living With Partner	25%	(2010: 24%)
Divorced/Separated	7%	(2010: 7%)

Fans living with children 18 or younger: 27% (2010: 24%)
Skaters living with children 18 or younger: 31% (2010: 31%)

Fan Sexual Orientation: 80% straight, 19% gay / lesbian / bisexual / other (2010: 82/18%)

Skater Sexual Orientation: 76% straight, 23% gay / lesbian / bisexual / other (2010: 76/24%)

Fan household income before taxes:

Less than \$15,000	8%	(2010: 8%)
\$15K up to \$25K	9%	(2010: 9%)
\$25K up to \$35K	12%	(2010: 12%)
\$35K up to \$50K	19%	(2010: 18%)
\$50K up to \$75K	21%	(2010: 21%)
\$75K up to \$100K	15%	(2010: 15%)
\$100K up to \$150K	11%	(2010: 11%)
Over \$150,000	5%	(2010: 5%)

Skater household income before taxes:

Less than \$15K	9%	(2010: 7%)
\$15K up to \$25K	12%	(2010: 13%)
\$25K up to \$35K	14%	(2010: 15%)
\$35K up to \$50K	21%	(2010: 21%)
\$50K up to \$75K	20%	(2010: 20%)
\$75K up to \$100K	12%	(2010: 13%)
\$100K up to \$150K	8%	(2010: 9%)
Over \$150,000	4%	(2010: 3%)