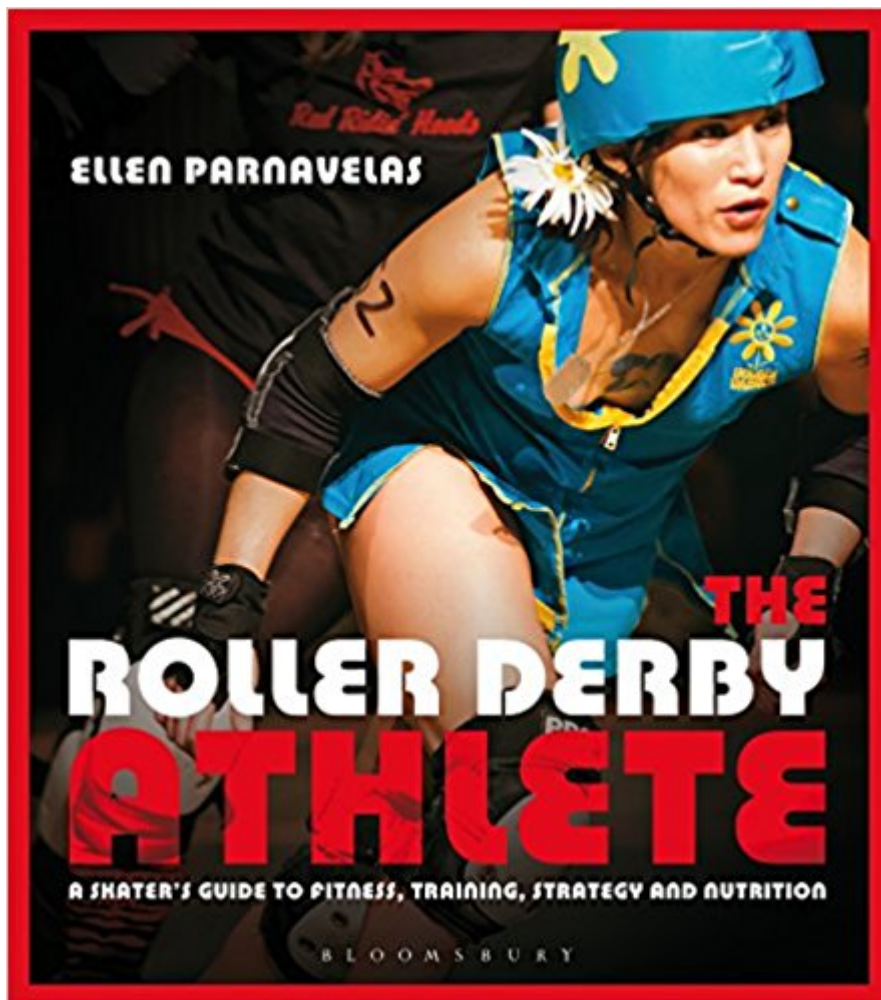




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# The Roller Derby Athlete



## Synopsis

Roller derby is a unique, fast-paced, female-dominated sport that is taking the world by storm. It originated in the USA in the 1930s but it is the revival that began in 2001 that has inspired this new book. Roller derby has become one of the world's fastest-growing new sports and there are now more than 1000 leagues worldwide - in the USA, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, Latin America and Asia - with new adherents coming to the sport all the time. As the popularity of roller derby has grown, the demand for information about the sport and how to play it has grown too. As leagues become more experienced, and players more advanced, tactics and game play have grown in sophistication. There are many online forums and social networking sites devoted to training, tactics, fitness and nutrition, but up till now, no single source which gathered all the information together. This new book is the first to cover roller derby from a practical sports perspective and offer advice on tactics, fitness, training, injury-prevention and nutrition. Chapters include: An introduction to the game, its history and rules. How to play the game - strategy and tactics. Fitness requirements - strength, endurance, and plyometric exercises for balance. Training - practical training programmes both on and off skates. Nutrition - what to eat before and after training, meal suggestions and supplements. The female athlete - specific training advice for women. Profiles of well-known roller derby players who share their top tips in all the above categories. The introduction has been written by Suzy Hotrod, one of roller derby's most renowned players and there is plentiful advice from many of the sports leading players.

## Book Information

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Bloomsbury Sport (December 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1408832399

ISBN-13: 978-1408832394

Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,047,791 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Rollerskating & Rollerblading #6924 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Communication & Media Studies

## Customer Reviews

Ellen Parnevelas writes the popular roller derby blog [secretdiaryofarookierollergirl.com](http://secretdiaryofarookierollergirl.com). She has written *Flat Track Fashion: The Roller Derby Look Book* for the Visual Arts list (March 2012). She plays for London Rollergirls Recreational League. Ellen also writes for the UK roller derby magazine *Inside Line*.

This book might be helpful for beginners, but it manages to skim the surface without delving into details, so if you've played derby, or really any sport at all ever, this is not a very helpful book. For example, it will say that power is good to have, so you should do exercises to improve power. Well of course! The question is, Which power exercises? How often? How much? It's also a shame that it spends so much time on basics at the beginning. I'm just thinking that if someone is buying a book called "roller derby athlete" then chances are they know what a jammer is. It might have been better if the whole first three chapters could have been nixed and instead go into more detail on things like specific drills, specific recipes, specific timelines for training, that kind of thing. Or else call the book something like "derby for beginning athletes" or "derby for dummies." I did really like the interviews, though. And the information that it had was at least correct as far as I know. Except for the rules, of course. Sorry about that.

A couple reviewers thought this book was for beginners, but I would say yes and no. If you're beginning roller derby, and you want to be an elite athlete in the sport and join an elite league, then this is a good starting point. If you're already say intermediate or elite, while this book is helpful, it does cover the basics and it doesn't go into too much detail on training exercises, but none-the-less, it's pretty comprehensive and covers a lot of territory. If you just want to recreationally roller derby, I think this book may be intimidating with all the talk about training six-days-a-week and all the high-intensity cross-training like P90X. You don't need all that, but yes, you do need some flexibility, strength-training, and core training at least to minimize injury. If you get into roller derby, I would first suggest reading *Down and Derby*. Once you decide it's for you, then I would read this book. This book is the ultimate training guide. While it does cover more tactics and positioning than *Down and Derby*, it's not a tactical book as much as a training book, and frankly, whatever sport you're in, you would benefit from this book. Apparently, roller derby must be one of the most holistic, well-rounded sporting events, because it incorporates everything including endurance, speed, strength, power, balance, agility, core strength, flexibility, physical toughness to give and take hits, and what they call proprioception what I used to know as kinesthesia, the awareness of one's limbs and bodily position. The author repeats again and again, that if you just skate,

you're not going to improve nearly as much as if you cross-train, and when you do nothing but skate in a counter-clockwise direction, you become unbalanced, and when you're unbalanced, you're more likely to get injured. This book is pretty comprehensive and reminds me of the stuff I studied when I trained in track bicycling trying to get every possible advantage I could. Unfortunately, back then, I was looking for shortcuts more than simply pushing myself. So I already knew about fast and slow-twitch muscles and anaerobic versus aerobic exercise. However, there were a lot of things I didn't know that this book covers. It truly is pretty comprehensive and intelligent covering the chemical reactions that occur when you break down proteins and carbs. The book also interviews top derby athletes in the field. It's interesting to note that many are former athletes in other fields. Perhaps it's obvious to say that the top athletes in roller derby are already quite athletic to begin with. I don't think a single person interviewed said they used to sit on a couch all day smoking pot and never did any high school sports and then found roller derby and became an elite athlete. At the elite level, they pretty much train as much and as hard as any top athlete. I'm not sure I'll have the time or honestly interest in training so much and so hard but who knows. I do know I'll be training hard and don't want just recreational roller derby. One criticism is that the narrator says pasta has a low-glycemic index, but I'm pretty sure it's in the middle and depends on the flour used, whole grain obviously being better than refined wheat flour. Another criticism I have is that the author tends to suggest too much carb-intake for a beginner or intermediate athlete. Certainly, when you get to the elite level and you have low body fat, you should take in a lot of carbs to sustain your energy output, but I'm sure a lot of beginners and intermediate athletes have sufficient fat they can burn off and don't need as much carbs. The author doesn't cover cutting weight, but as I learned in cycling, any extra fat you carry as an athlete is dead weight; it slows you down. If you really want to be an elite athlete, you need to cut weight, especially fat in the legs which slow you down more than fat in the torso or arms. If you're just starting out with roller derby, you should read this book but don't get turned off by all the super-athletes bragging about how much they work out. Unless you want to be an elite skater, you don't have to work out that much or hard. You get out what you put in, so if you just want to have fun, there are recreational leagues that are not really competitive. Then you have the more competitive leagues where players may or may not want to advance to the elite leagues. This book is intimidating, but it really is geared more for those who want to go all the way but beneficial for all. However, it doesn't mean that you can't benefit from cross-training and doing all the diverse array of exercises the author suggests, just less of it. Most importantly, cross-training, stretching, and weight training also help

reduce injury, so even if you're doing it recreationally, you can enjoy it more if you put in some effort to cross-train and be more well-rounded. Fact is, I hate getting injured. I broke my collar-bone twice in cycling. One thing perhaps the author missed is psychology. Psychological stress can hurt you more than physical exhaustion or stress. When your mind is somewhere else, you can twist and turn your body unnaturally or just get blind-sided, and when you're mentally stressed it really does create physical imbalance and lowers your ability to recover and build muscle.

This has helped me on a healthy and hopefully lower injury start with roller derby. While explaining the basics with visuals, experienced quotes from top world rollers, and honest knowledge I'm both positive and looking forward to enjoying my new favorite hobby. I would recommend this to anyone curious about what it takes to be a peak performer in a pair of quad skates. If you like me and prefer something with more meat than garnish this book is for you. It even has full workout and color skill photos, information on nutrition for vegans and meat eaters, I honestly can't say enough...I'm gonna be flipping through this virtual read for years! I'm looking forward to reading any other books from this author and her cohorts!

This book is a really good investment! It explains everything from the basics of roller derby to strategy and pack drills. It even interviews women and men who play roller derby. This is great if you're just getting started or if you have been playing for a while.

Like the other reviewer said, this is probably more aimed at beginners. I'm just starting my second bouting season but I still bought it for workout ideas. Although it doesn't really tell you when or how often to work out or lay out a specific plan, there are sections on plyo, stretching, ab exercises and other helpful stuff. I like how they show how to do different jumps/turns, that part is cool too. Also it breaks down all the muscles in the legs and gives you a quick and dirty nutrition talk. Basically if an alien landed on earth and asked what roller derby is, you'd give them this book. It goes into some detail and it's a good place to start with vocabulary and the interviews are good. I would definitely recommend this to fresh meat or someone working on putting together their own workouts at home.

Nice book great for fresh meat!!!

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