

Auld Reekie Roller Girls to rock The Big 0



Fresh from their success at the ECDX tournament in Philadelphia last year, Auld Reekie Roller Girls' Twisted Thistles team has been invited to play in 'The Big 0', a major derby tournament held annually on the West Coast of the USA. This year it's taking place on 2 – 4th May, and Auld Reekie will be winging their way to take on some of the finest teams in America!

The Big 0, hosted by the Emerald City Roller Girls of Eugene, Oregon [link: <http://www.thebigotournament.com/about.html>], is an annual flat track roller derby invitational tournament featuring women's, men's and junior roller derby. Established in 2012, last year's tournament featured teams travelling from as far afield as Australia, Canada and the UK. A WFTDA (Women's Flat Track Derby Association) approved event, the scores will influence Auld Reekie's place in the global rankings. Currently ranked number 3 in Europe and 103 in the world, this tournament will be a vital opportunity for Auld Reekie to take on some of the USA's toughest teams, gain some valuable experience and raise their profile in the worldwide roller derby community.



The bouts will be streamed live on the internet, meaning Auld Reekie's loyal supporters can cheer their team from afar, and Scotland can get behind one of their most successful sporting exports.

Auld Reekie took the USA by storm at ECDX this year, winning all three of their sanctioned bouts and coming out of the blue to surprise the American roller derby community with their

success. Can they do it again in 2014 and – along with Glasgow Roller Derby – raise Scotland's profile as a major presence in the international roller derby scene?

Roller derby is an all-female sport that involves teams competing on an oval track in a series of 'jams' – two minute periods that see teams of five players each battling to score points. During each jam, one player on each team is designated as the 'jammer' who scores a point for every member of the opposing team she passes.

The sport requires a punishing array of agile and athletic skills, from zig-zag blocking moves to body slams to all-out speed-skating. To perfect these manoeuvres, skaters commit to several hours of practice every week, paying for gear and practice space out of their own pockets.

While it has its roots in sports-entertainment-style exhibition bouts going back as far as the 1930s, modern roller derby has reinvigorated the game with a grass-roots DIY ethos that puts the passion for athleticism front-and-centre.

The trend finally reached Edinburgh in 2008, when a small group of women founded the Auld Reekie Roller Girls. The Edinburgh league now averages over 80 skaters, and is run purely on the volunteer efforts of its members. ARRG became full members of the Women's' Flat Track Derby Association (WFTDA) in 2011.

Are you a derby skater who is aiming high and wants to improve their skills? Want to play in America yourself some day? Some of Auld Reekie's finest skaters will be coaching at the 'School of ARRG Knocks 2 – Even ARRGER!!!' roller derby bootcamp in Edinburgh on Saturday 23rd November. Take advantage of the expertise on offer and come along!

<http://arrg.co.uk/events/event/school-of-arrg-knocks-2-even-arrger/>