



Members of the Camel City Thrashers.

Submitted Photo

HECK ON WHEELS

Female roller derby team gaining momentum

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

A group of women are trying to bring the revelry of roller derby to the local scene. The Camel City Thrashers, as the fledgling Winston-Salem team is dubbed, is looking for some "fresh meat," or new members, to bolster its roster.

The sport, which was founded in America over a century ago, pits two teams against each other on an oval track. The members race on roller skates, vying to get their leader, or "jammer" as they're called, to the finish line first. Physicality is a must, but proponents of the sport say it is completely safe, save a few bumps and bruises.

Once a co-ed sport, roller derby today is enjoyed almost exclusively by women, and teams have cropped up in many parts of the world. Players adopt catchy nicknames, often plays on words, and are known for donning flamboyant costumes that reflect the playful nature of the sport.

"There's a bit of theatrics," said Lüzviminda Malibiran, who founded the Thrashers last summer. "... I think that's sort of fun for people because once a week, they get to be this other person."

Home healthcare professional Sarah Rutledge, AKA "Mia Meanie," joined the team last spring and says she fell in love with the sport right away.

"It'll make you feel better," she remarked. "It just gets those endorphins flowing."

Though she has played other sports over the course of her lifetime, Rutledge says that nothing compares to the euphoria she feels when she laces up her skates and hits the derby track.

Being involved with the Thrashers has greatly improved her quality of life, added the 25-year-old.

"I'm happier; it just gives you a break from the everyday routine," Rutledge related. "It makes you feel like you're doing something (of value) ... It gives you something to look forward to. I love it."

Rutledge has found her participation has yielded many fringe benefits.

"You meet people, you make friends - you can't help it," she commented. "You get into better shape - it's inevitable - I think just about everybody on the team has lost weight (since they started)."

The team provides a constructive outlet for those in the 20-something crowd and beyond, many of whom are looking for ways to get out

and meet people, said Malibiran.

"A lot of girls at this age go to bars (for entertainment)," she pointed out. "This is something a little more creative, a little more athletic, a little more positive."

Malibiran, who is otherwise known as "Tokoyo Cowgirl," a name she chose to reflect her diverse heritage, met a roller derby team a few years ago and was immediately intrigued.

"It seemed like a lot of fun," related Malibiran, 38.

Since there was no team in the area, Malibiran - who works as a piano teacher and owns her own company, mindmusicstore.com - decided to start her own.

But getting the Thrashers off the ground has not been an easy task. Currently, the team has eight members, but they need a roster of at least 15 in order to compete in most bouts, as the competitions are called. Finding a venue where the group can practice has also been a challenge, Malibiran says.

The team is open to any and every woman who wants to participate, she added.

"Beginners are welcome," she stated. "... It would just be great if we could get the support from the community, and it would be great to attract women that wanted to build this sports team."

The team is still working to boost its reputation and visibility within the community, Malibiran said.

"It's so fun when you go to a bout, and we would like

to bring that entertainment to our town as well," she remarked. "... (Roller derby is) such a good money maker; everybody involved seems to benefit from it. If it were to grow, it would bring a lot of money and a lot of attention to Winston-Salem."

For more information on the Camel City Thrashers, visit www.camelcitythrashers.org or contact recruiting officer Heather Alza at (336) 682-2613.

News Clips

Compiled from staff news and submitted reports

Women's Fund to hold annual luncheon

The Women's Fund of Winston-Salem, a growing community of female philanthropists who seek to improve the lives of women and girls in Forsyth County, has announced that Wake Forest University Provost Jill



Cook

Tiefertalher will deliver the keynote speech at its fourth annual luncheon on Wednesday, November 11, from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 460 North Cherry St. The event is open to the public. Tickets are \$25, and may be purchased online at www.womensfundws.org.

The first female to hold the position of provost in Wake Forest University's history, Dr. Tiefertalher, a professor of economics, will talk about the importance of economic empowerment for women and the difference that it makes in the world, drawing on her own research, personal experience working with low-income women, and some of the work that she

has done in public engagement with students and community partners.

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Tiefertalher inform and motivate our members and friends to improve the economic, educational, physical health, and emotional well-being of women and girls in our community," said Michelle Cook, chair of The Women's Fund and vice chancellor for university advancement at Winston-Salem State University.

Go to www.womensfundws.org for more information.

Credit Union supports home for pregnant teens

State Employees' Credit Union members, via the SECU Foundation, are providing funding for a \$500,000 zero percent construction loan to help build My Sister's House, a licensed group home for pregnant teens and their children in Greensboro, NC. The 4,500 square foot group home will accommodate a combination of 10 residents (5 teen moms and 5 infants) and staff. The facility will be licensed under the Department of Health and Human Services as a Residential Maternity Home.

SECU is partnering with the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) for this supportive housing project, which is sponsored by Youth Focus, Inc, a non-profit that provides a wide range of services to at risk youth and troubled young people ages 5-21. NCHFA provides permanent financing to help North Carolina

non-profits like Youth Focus, Inc to build housing for persons with disabilities and/or special needs.

Duke Energy, UNC join for wind project

In a pilot project designed to harness the power of the ocean breezes along North Carolina's coast, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke Energy announced they have signed a contract to place up to three demonstration wind turbines in the Pamlico Sound.

The pilot project builds on a nine-month study completed in June 2009 by UNC for the N.C. General Assembly which found "North Carolina is well positioned to develop utility-scale wind energy production."

These demonstration turbines may be the first turbines placed in water in the United States, providing UNC with a valuable opportunity for ongoing research about issues raised in its coastal wind study. Duke Energy will pay for the turbines and their installation. UNC will continue its research throughout the project.

"This project is a great example of how university research can expand our understanding of an issue - in this case, wind energy," said UNC Chancellor Holden Thorp. "Then an industry partner like Duke Energy can use that research to do what they do best and develop this on a larger scale."



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