

Something New

We were looking for a family-friendly activity to do with our kids on Saturday. The zoo was out since we're chaperoning a Girl Scout field trip there next Saturday. Our original plan was to take our very furry and smelly dog to get groomed, but when we called around for prices, the quotes were much more than we wanted to spend on something that will just have to be done again in a few months.

So my husband searched around and found [this: Roller Derby](#). Do you remember Roller Derby? It was popular in the 70's and 80's, and there was a recent movie about it called [Whip It](#), which was also Drew Barrymore's directorial debut. We saw the movie not too long ago, and it was enjoyable, but now I'm going to have to watch it again after seeing the sport played live.

Roller Derby is a sport played on roller skates by women. I asked my husband why men don't play, and he said they'd get carried away with the aggressiveness and kill each other. I think there are some men's leagues, but they aren't professional like the women's league. So anyway, a basic game of Roller Derby has two periods separated by a halftime. Each period has several "jams". Basic game play consists of a pack of skaters skating around a circular track. There is one "jammer" on each team, and she is supposed to break through the other teams' pack of players, scoring a point for each opposing team member she passes. There's more to it, but those are the basics. The action is fast, the sport can be brutal, and fights occasionally break out. It's a lot of fun to watch!! Especially if you're brave enough to sit in the "suicide seats" where you sit on the floor next to the track. Our friends were brave enough to try, and they came out in one piece! If you are interested in watching a bout or maybe even trying out to be a Derby Girl, check out the website of the [WFTDA – Women's Flat Track Derby Association](#) – they have a

list of teams so you can find one near you. Here is a video from their website explaining the very basics of Roller Derby:

It was a great time – fun for the whole family, and I highly recommend it as something different to do. Tickets are pretty cheap – we paid \$12 for each adult and \$7 for my oldest daughter – the rest of the kids (5 and younger) were free. For that, we got about 5 hours of entertainment. The atmosphere is family friendly (despite some of the dirty innuendos some of the players' names imply that would go right over most kids' heads), and there are clowns running around providing additional entertainment. At halftime, my kids got to go out in the arena and play a racing game with the clowns, and they also do skits and make free balloon animals. Each kid gets a little noise maker when they walk in the door, and they also have a Hokey Pokey time and do the bit where they throw beach balls around the audience. While it was family friendly, my little ones were bored at times (they didn't understand the sport) and our little guy, who is not even 2, kept us from watching much of the action with his shenanigans. The lady who was waiting for me to finish with the changing table in the bathroom said, "I'm never bringing her to something like this again!" as she pointed to her little girl who looked about my son's age. So you might want to prepare yourself with lots of snacks, activities, and candy if you bring your kids. The kids ended up having a lot of fun, mostly because of all the yummy concessions Dad bought them and the little toys they got to take home. Hubby and I are going to check out a bout sometime for date night without the kids though so we can actually get into it and watch the game. And hopefully, there will be closer scores with a little more excitement – we witnessed two blowouts. In the first game, the Fort Wayne SWAT team got creamed by a team from Rockford, IL (where we used to live, what a coincidence!), and we left the second game early since it was getting late and the score was Fort Wayne – 154, Dayton – 13. OUCH!!