

SHRINKING THE TRACK

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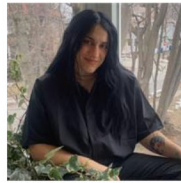


Returning to Roller... ×



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1. SHRINKING THE TRACK



Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-02-2022 12:41 PM

I know in the latest WFTDA announcement regarding the back on track initiative there was a mention of exploring flexibility.

I am curious if there has ever been some sort of push or discussion to shrink the track slightly with the intention of opening up venue options. I know many leagues including us lost their primary space and as we explore and find new spaces, many of them being roller or ice hockey venues I think having a track+ref lanes fitting within this preset domain would be wildly beneficial.

I feel like this would help a lot of leagues especially when it comes to WFTDI risk/coverage. I haven't done the math but I assume it would range from a 7 foot reduction max in width. For example a rink here is 58 feet wide instead of 65.

#ReturningtoRollerDerby

Palig Mouradian

WFTDA Rules Theory

Boston Roller Derby

2. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Roulette Wheels

Posted 05-03-2022 03:29 PM

Interesting thought! We are also having trouble finding a new venue. We have a great spot offering us a sweet deal, but it's just shy of having sanctioned bouts there due to the slightly smaller size.

Naptown Roller Derby

3. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



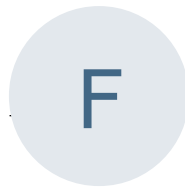
Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-03-2022 04:25 PM

I just feel that this would make derby more accessible in a very impactful way.

Palig Mouradian
WFTDA Rules Theory
Boston Roller Derby

4. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK

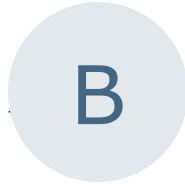


Fresh Step

Posted 05-03-2022 11:50 PM

Also, canting the inside track boundary relative to the outside (instead of the current canting of the outside relative to the inside) would help a bit.

5. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Brawn F Kennedy

Posted 05-04-2022 12:50 AM

You can rotate the track like that already, it's just a pain because you either have to modify the setup steps carefully to not mess it up, or be very careful with angling your semicircle marks at the start.

Atlanta Roller Derby

6. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Reverend Riot

Posted 05-04-2022 09:17 AM

This is getting off-topic, but something else to note if/when doing this is it can make CW blocks harder to call, because every line in the building goes from being parallel to the direction of gameplay (or at a 90 degree angle to it) to being slightly off, and the brain takes some work overcoming that.

Gotham Roller Derby

7. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Whacks Poetic

Posted 05-04-2022 08:39 AM

Rules looked into it awhile ago. I would check with Bones and Bitey but I believe a 5% decrease would mean it could fit in a basketball gym with safety lanes.

Minnesota Roller Derby

8. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



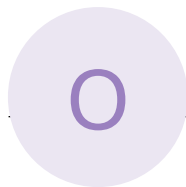
Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-04-2022 10:03 AM

Oh awesome, I will!

Palig Mouradian
WFTDA Rules Theory
Boston Roller Derby

9. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK 



Olive Havoc

Posted 05-04-2022 09:45 AM |  **view attached**

I've attached an image of our practice track and how we had to modify it to make it fit. As a vet skater of 12 years, I don't notice the difference at all.

Black Rose Rollers

10. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-04-2022 09:57 AM

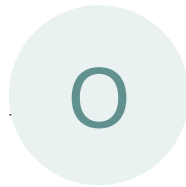
Thank you Havoc!

My thought is also, we no longer have much allegiance to banked track, flat track exists in it's own right and was initially motivated by making derby more accessible without relying on a huge skating structure.

Shrinking track to fit a basketball court would not hurt the game that much and can help reignite growth post-covid. There are basketball courts literally everywhere and the outdoor ones are great to skate on imo.

Palig Mouradian
WFTDA Rules Theory
Boston Roller Derby

11. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Olive Havoc

Posted 05-04-2022 12:01 PM

I agree. If we were able to play sanctioned/regulation bouts in our space we would be doing so much better as a league. To bout, we have to pay \$450 for 3 hours and for a small local league like ours, that's a big chunk of change. As I

stated before, there is such a small difference, that if we don't mention it to drop in skaters, they wouldn't know.

Black Rose Rollers

12. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-04-2022 12:35 PM

Absolutely understand. We were planning on hosting open scrimmages and games on Saturdays at this rink but now we can't which forces us to use our venue space where we only get 50% of the sales.

A leaguemate is working with an architect to adapt the track as best as possible for a basketball court with 5 foot ref lanes. Once she shares it, I will post it here and maybe reach out to the BOD.

Palig Mouradian
WFTDA Rules Theory
Boston Roller Derby

13. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



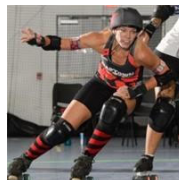
Roulette Wheels

Posted 05-04-2022 02:19 PM

We would LOVE this idea worked up and presented to the BoD. I know safety is a concern for refs, so maybe we can get their perspective too. I'll check with Bambi Lance.

Naptown Roller Derby

14. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



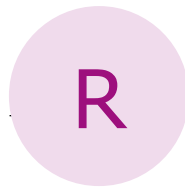
Roulette Wheels

Posted 05-04-2022 03:22 PM

Bambi responded that it would depend on the venue and that it had been discussed for Europe. She said it still has to be decided and insurance has the ultimate say for the U.S.

Naptown Roller Derby

15. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Riff Reff

Posted 05-05-2022 02:45 AM

There was actually a working group that explores the possibilities of having a different, for example more flexible track design. For exactly the purpose of making access to venues easier.

The conversation has moved to the group working on the overall competitive structure. If you want to join the working group, please contact Bones.

The biggest obstacle, however, is not just the size. For sanctioned play we need 15' clearance around the track. That is an insurance issue.

Riff Reff

Dublin Roller Derby

16. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Bones

Posted 05-05-2022 08:44 AM

Hi everyone!

Yes - this is the case. Our working group is still around and we were planning on doing some testing before the pandemic, then had to wait for people to start up again. We do have the blessing of the BOD to do this work as we recognize that the size of our track makes it hard for leagues to find spaces and our Risk guidelines are not globally relevant (as hard as we try to make them so). Additionally, I do want to look at our games policies such as the requirement for rope and tape as those are resources that are hard to source sometimes and add expenses. I am really excited to start these conversations with you all!

Now that there is no sanctioning, it's a perfect time for leagues to test things out and report back to us. **Without sanctioning, the Risk Management Guidelines are required for any league holding WFTDA Insurance and are strongly recommended for everyone else.** This means that if you do not meet the track

requirements in that document and you have an insurance claim, your claim may be denied. Any league not holding WFTDA insurance should follow the requirements of their insurance and/or local safety requirements.

I shared this post with the rest of the team to let them know that people are interested in working on this with us. If you do any changes or testing, feel free to share it on this post or to ask us questions here. If there is another way to work together on this, we'll let you know what to do. I just need to talk to them about how best to organize things!

Karen Kuhn

WFTDA Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships and Global Programs

karen@wftda.com

17. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-05-2022 10:29 AM

Bones, thank you so much for your post.

One question, if we plan to betray the track geometry to ensure we are 5 feet from any wall, is that good to go for insurance claim? As long as we prioritize

that clearance?

One remark, Boston will post the modified track here and then we can lay it down and run scrimmage on it and let people know how it went. In meantime, maybe some other leagues could try same thing.

Last question, what would your committee/BoD need to seriously consider this shift? I can write a thesis lol

Palig Mouradian
WFTDA Rules Theory
Boston Roller Derby

18. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Bones

Posted 05-05-2022 10:35 AM

That's correct - the clearance needs to be respected for insurance.

Theses are appreciated but not required! Basically we were thinking that we or people could propose alterations to the track. Then people would play on it and report back to us about how it affected the game, and could even share some stats. (If anyone used that fab Derby on Toast heat map - that

would be a super cool tool to use to compare the game between tracks too.)

And it's not up to us to approve variations to the track. As an org we are totally open to it. We just need to work with you all, the skaters and officials, to determine what kind of track is still "WFTDA derby". How much of a variance and what kind of variance works? There will be a big difference between a track with a different apex vs one with a shorter straightaway. Do we still need an offset?

We're open to trying things out and then having a conversation as a community on what works and what doesn't work.

Karen Kuhn

WFTDA Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships and Global Programs

karen@wftda.com

19. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-05-2022 10:46 AM

This is great news.

We can work on modified track to fit a basketball court and see. It looks like Havoc/Black Rose Rollers already have had a good experience with it.

So maybe second step is sending the plan directly to the BoD?

Palig Mouradian
WFTDA Rules Theory
Boston Roller Derby

20. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



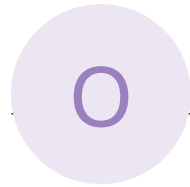
Bones

Posted 05-05-2022 12:07 PM

You can try it out and report back here. The workgroup will gather all the information and will work with the board on it. If there's a different place to share info, I'll update it here but this thread is perfect!

Karen Kuhn
WFTDA Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships and Global Programs
karen@wftda.com

21. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Olive Havoc

Posted 05-05-2022 04:00 PM

I'd be happy to send more of an official report on our experiences to whomever you need.

I know of another area league (not WFTDA) that also plays on a modified track very similar to ours (I sent them our layout to use)

They've hosted multiple open scrimmages and just recently hosted a regulation game against a WFTDA league. I can also ask both leagues for these input and experiences.

Black Rose Rollers

22. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Wednesday Atoms

Posted 05-06-2022 10:23 AM

Havoc, could you post that here? Then we will too and hopefully Naptown?
Let's see if we can get more input!!

Palig Mouradian
WFTDA Rules Theory
Boston Roller Derby

23. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Bones

Posted 05-06-2022 12:07 PM

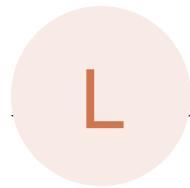
Next time I do an email out to reps I'll mention this thread and the testing so
we'll see how much info we can get.

Karen Kuhn

WFTDA Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships and Global Programs

karen@wftda.com

24. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



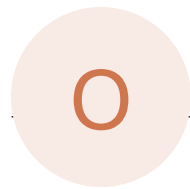
Lahapa

Posted 05-10-2022 03:38 PM

Fort Wayne is very interested in this topic. We also lost our primary practice space from the lockdowns and are currently practicing in a hockey rink on sport court. That won't last long though, before the rink puts ice down again and our "next" space will very likely be a basketball court.

Fort Wayne Roller Derby

25. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Otto Korreect

Posted 05-11-2022 01:28 PM

I'm not opposed to anything being discussed here, but I do have a few hesitations.

For indoor spaces, the basketball hoops (which are at regulation 10ft high) would have to be retracted or otherwise lifted to meet with RM Guidelines section 3.3 Infield, Skating and Competition Surfaces which states: "No structures, speakers, lights or other objects shall protrude overhead above the INFIELD

and SKATING SURFACE (Zones A, B, C, D and E) within 10 feet (3.05 meters) of the floor". Most indoor facilities will have that ability, so not as much a problem there but for outdoor spaces, I think it's safe to assume that the basketball hoops are attached permanently to the ground on non-adjustable poles, and those poles may not be outside of the runoffs, which also raises concerns about section 3.3 again: "Posts may be present in the INFIELD (Zone A) if padded. Padding should be dense foam and a minimum of 3 inches (7.62 centimeters) thick. Posts may not be present in zones B, and C.

Posts may be present in zone D only IF there is a barrier > 5 feet (1.524m) from the OUTER

TRACK LINE of zone C, and the post is located outside the barrier. Posts may be integrated

into the barrier if they do not present additional risk to participants.

A basketball court that has run-offs is 32m x 19m (104.987 ft x 62.336ft), and outdoor spaces may not have runoffs if the planners/builders wanted to save money and leave that space as grass or other non-skateable surfaces.

I'm basing this just on my locality, but most of the outdoor spaces here are not full sized courts with runoffs, and all of the indoor basketball facilities refuse to allow roller derby on their floors for fear of damages. I think this is 100% worth exploring and we could (and should) find a way to make derby more accessible, but it may involve changing the track size as well as gameplay to achieve (for example, reduce to 3 blockers per team for narrower track, eliminate drawbacks to allow for narrower safety lane, perhaps reduce to 2 OPRs because hey, less skaters less staffing). My league is in Wisconsin, so even if we could get approval from the city council for an outdoor event with this noise level and crowd size, we would still only have around 4 months of appropriate weather for outdoor events and/or practices. It could actually hurt us in the long run while we look for a new spaces, as renters would tell us to go play outside instead.

Again, I'm not necessarily opposed, just unsure of how many spaces would open up for leagues in my area/climate without a more impactful change to the track and/or gameplay.

Chippewa Valley Roller Derby

26. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Sticks & Stoner

Posted 05-12-2022 01:55 AM

I think the basketball court was a size idea more than anything else. In Europe we have a lot of multi-sport centres whose hall is usually about the size of a single basketball court. We can use them to train, but can't have sanctioned bouts, and scrimmage with a full ref crew isn't really an option either. Lots of us have tracks painted at various 90% plus sizes in these venues.

Bigger halls are rarer, more expensive and less likely to allow skating. For example, there are less than 5 sports venues in the UK which can fit a double track set up.

Sticks & Stoner (Lauren Stoner)

Rebellion Roller Derby

British Roller Derby Champs

Pronouns: she/her

27. RE: SHRINKING THE TRACK



Dar the Star

Posted 06-06-2022 12:53 AM

We actually played in a non WFTDA sanctioned tournament, Best of the West, that was played on a short track with modified rules/points. Surprisingly it didn't feel all that different.

I believe it was rollergirl in Vancouver who had all the info/rules/plans.

It was a fun tourney and the track would work well in a smaller space.

Eves of Destruction
