



WFTDA COVID-19

Broadcast Return to Play Guide

A resource for leagues & events following social distancing & lockdowns.

Produced by WFTDA Broadcasting and Quad Media, Inc.

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Foreword

This is a collection of ideas and considerations for leveraging video live streaming and recording to re-engage audiences and the derby community after prolonged downtime due to pandemic related shutdowns. This guide extends the information and considerations provided in the “WFTDA COVID-19 Guidelines to Return to Roller Derby¹” and the “[Roller Derby Broadcast Guide.](#)”

Global health crises present a number of challenges to our international, team based sport and we hope that you’ll consider video broadcast as a means to overcome some of challenges introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ “COVID-19 Recommendations » WFTDA Roller Derby” 9 Jun. 2020, <https://resources.wftda.org/covid-19/recommendations/>. Accessed 16 Jun. 2020.

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Streaming for Fun and Revenue

Unique Challenges

Some considerations for entering the streaming market during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Issues are specifically related to the streaming industry.

Equipment Shortages & Prices: The new need for work-from-home support, shift to virtualized events, and supply chain issues have contributed to shortages of many of the tools we use for video production. Everything from consumer webcams & microphones to professional cameras & video switchers is experiencing lower than normal inventory and relatively higher prices. This is a bad time to buy the equipment necessary for putting together your own video streaming kit.

However: The availability of live video and event production vendors is high due to event cancellations and more enthusiast level providers are popping up as time goes on. While we don't recommend purchasing your own equipment to live stream, we do recommend working with a streaming vendor or equipment rental service to get yourself online.

High Audience Competition: As entertainment during pandemic lockdowns has shifted to in-home experiences, more producers are turning to online platforms & live streaming to engage audiences. Music, sports, comedy, and events are virtualizing and becoming part of the online entertainment industry. This means your stream offering is working against more alternatives than ever before. But this also means more viewers and potential fans are utilizing the streaming platforms and can be drawn into your content.

Consumer Network Congestion: Most residential internet connections are on shared, limited networks. With everyone home and consuming more online content than ever that means the home internet experience can suffer from poor download speeds which impact viewer experience- an especially big concern for Pay-Per-View events where a quality experience is required.

Video as Marketing

In lieu of in-person events, online social presence is an important way to keep your community and fans engaged. YouTube and Twitch should be part of your league's social media presence as they're great platforms to host videos and connect with audiences. Your streams and video content don't have to be gameplay. The online audience is hungry for any sort of engaging content so slice of life shows, practices, and any form of skating will gain traction.

[More about Twitch & YouTube for audience engagement.](#)

Replacing Seat Tickets with Watch Passes

A major concern for many leagues is how public admissions will work during and after the pandemic. Will you be playing roller derby in front of a live audience? Will audience sizes be limited? Seating required to be spread out? Will the public be willing to go out to sporting events with the risk of infection looming?

Live streaming your games with a pay-per-view admission fee may be a viable solution for your events. Fans can experience your games from the comfort and safety of their shelter-in-place. You control the price of admission on most platforms. There is no limit to the number of watch passes you sell and passes can be bundled into season passes just like your venue seating.

[Learn more about PPV and Revshare models.](#)

Things to Stream

We may not have competitive roller derby right away, but we still have our identities as athletes & leagues. I'm a strong believer in **more is better** when it comes to roller derby's presence online. Your roller derby related video doesn't conflict with my video; instead they both contribute to the presence of roller derby online and develop audiences together. Linking channels, sharing audiences, and chaining broadcasts can lead to a critical mass of roller derby online which helps to grow awareness and audiences.

Individual Shows

Get creative about how you can present information about your league and skaters to an online audience. Some leagues have been hosting public streamed video calls just chatting about roller derby and their experience solo-skating. We've also seen solo videos (live and pre-recorded) from skaters on [TikTok](#) and other platforms. This is an opportunity to express personality and get folks interested in more than just the gameplay.

Classes/Education

Whether these are wellness classes, workouts, general education, or skate maintenance, online how-to videos are a good way to produce engaging content. [Rose City Rollers](#) have leveraged their league's collective resources to host video conferences on everything from yoga, to home buying, to self defense. Gotham is regularly hosting skate maintenance workshops on [their Twitch channel](#).

Practices

Folks are hungry to see derby in any form. Whether you can lead a practice to the camera or just set up a bird's-eye view of your players circling the track, practice content is enjoyable for those of us who are still stuck inside.

Intra-league Games

WFTDA.tv tends to exclusively feature inter-league, ranked games but with travel restrictions and regional policy differences, those games might not be possible for everyone. Consider putting together a show where home teams and regional play to fill the gap left by playoffs.

Charitable Events

Fundraising for your league or a cause is absolutely a possibility with live streaming. Twitch has made live fundraisers simple through [customizable charity extensions](#). YouTube features a similar capability through their [YouTube Giving](#) program.

WFTDA Broadcast Planning

In early 2020 we began [gathering information about tournaments planning to stream](#) in hopes to begin aggregating streams and provide assistance to events who wished to stream. This effort was placed on hold due to COVID but our plans to expand derby streaming haven't gone away.

Please complete the [Derby Broadcast Planning Survey](#) to tell us about your broadcast goals for Return to Play!

Guidance & Technical Support

We're here to help answer questions and find the right solutions for your league. Check out the Broadcast Guide and send your questions to broadcast@quadmedia.tv

REMI Support

Quad Media can provide [REMI support](#) (switching, audio mixing, and stream encoding) from the same remote studio we utilize for our live shows. This includes connecting remote announcers, providing platform features, and even working with sponsors to round out your production. This lessens the burden on your event to provide technical elements and reduces overall cost.

Derby Platform

WFTDA Broadcasting has preliminary plans to provide a whitelabel streaming platform for leagues interested in Pay-Per-View streaming. This decreases the burden of individual leagues or events to enter into high-cost contracts for whitelabel features (private stream, pay-per-view, memberships).

Complete the [Broadcast Planning Survey](#) and indicate your interest in PPV/watch pass sales if your league is considering streaming as a means to recoup ticket revenue!

Virtual Tournaments

WFTDA Tournaments are a big part of WFTDA Broadcasting and they'll be sorely missed in 2020. As more leagues return to play we'll be reviewing options to host virtual tournaments via streaming. Example: A live game from Berlin followed by a live game from London then New York then Ohio then Denver then San Francisco all in 1 day just like our classic tournaments. We'll keep the community posted as this idea develops, but if you're interested and your league is stream-ready, we'd love to hear from you!