



INTERNATIONAL ROLLER SPEEDWAY Adaption for Roller Rumble

History:

Roller Speedway or Roller Catch as it was also known in Southern Europe skated games in Europe, the Philippines and North America from 1937 to 1952. A number of famous Roller Derby names such as Ann Calvello, Bert Wall and Buddy Atkinson Sr. started their careers in Roller Speedway.

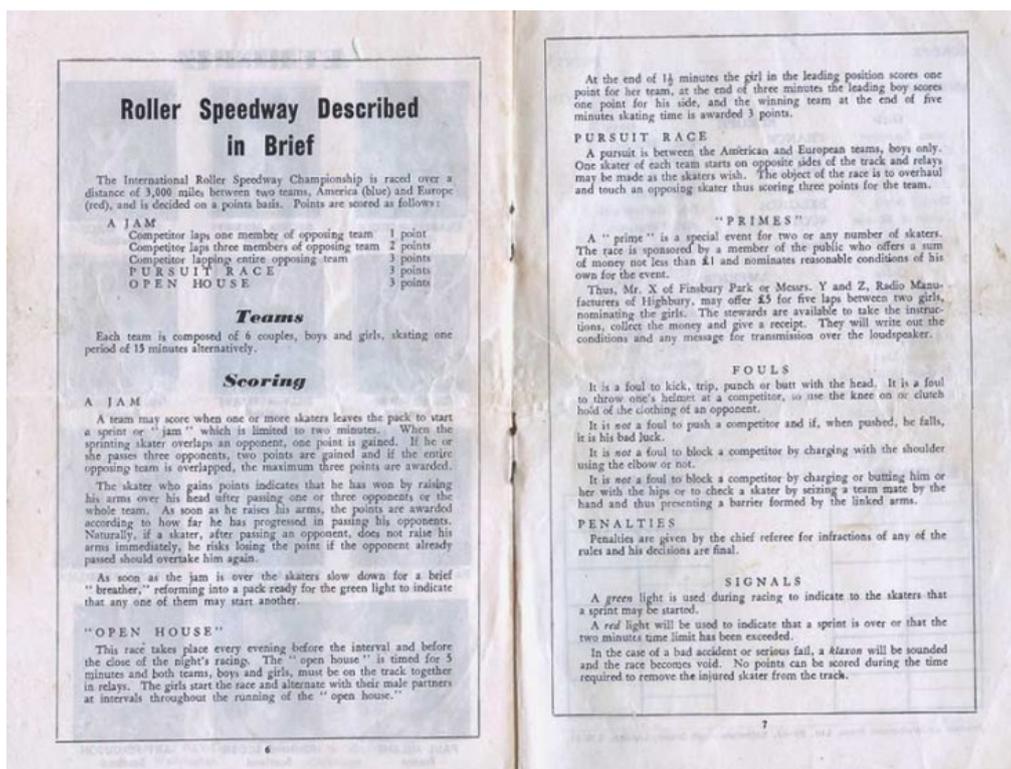
In 1949 an America vs. Europe series held in San Diego, California was used for the skating sequences of the movie "The Fireball" starring Mickey Rooney and Beverly Tyler. The movie was based on the life of real Roller Speedway skater Eddie Poore.

Unfortunately, no Roller Speedway games were ever televised but some old black and white newsreel footages of the games still exist. During all its years of operation no league championships were ever held, all individual contests between two teams (Blue vs. Red or America vs. Europe) were held over an eleven-day period with regular sell-outs and record attendances in France, Spain, Italy and England.

It is unclear why the league folded but after its demise a lot of its skaters joined Leo Seltzer's NRDL.

Rules:

The game itself was similar to Roller Derby but there were some variations. Below is a copy of an old rulebook from 1939.



A summary of the key rules is as follows:

The International Roller Speedway Championship was raced over a distance of 3,000 miles (11 days) between two teams, America (Blue) and Europe (Red) and was decided on a points basis.

Each team was composed of 6 couples, skating a period of 15 minutes alternatively.

Points were scored during regular Jams and special match races.

Jam:

Lapping 1 member of the opposing team = 1 point

Lapping up to 3 members of the opposing team = 2 points

Lapping up to the entire opposing team = 3 points

Open House:

This race took place before half time and before the final period of the evening. The Open House was timed for 5 minutes and men and women were on the track together in relays. At the end of 1.5 minutes the woman in the lead scored 1 point for her team, at the end of 3 minutes the man in the lead scored 1 point for his side and the winning team at the end of 5 minutes was awarded 3 points.

Pursuit Race:

A pursuit race was skated by the male teams only. One skater of each team started at opposite ends of the track and relays with teammates could be made. The object of the race was to overhaul and touch the opposing skater thus scoring 3 points for the team.

Here are the home-brewed rule adaptations for playing a Roller Speedway contest with Roller Rumble:

Teams:

You will have noticed above that a Roller Speedway team had 6 skaters on the track at any given time. Thus, place 2 skaters in one space (away team chooses first). The qualities of both skaters are added whenever a FAC calls for action in the particular space.

Duration:

To simulate the 11 days of competition we equaled 1 period with 1 day thus, a Roller Speedway game lasts 11 periods with the men skating the first one. Before the 6th period and before the 11 period an Open House race takes place. The Pursuit Race takes place after the 6th period.

If the scores are tied at the end of the 11th period a Pursuit Race will determine the winner.

Add 9 FACs per period to compensate for the longer 15 mins. periods.

Open House Race:

Use 18 cards from the FAC. Select 2 women and 2 male skaters and place them on the game board leaving one space empty. Now resolve the action as per regular gameplay moving the team button from Start towards Power Jam. After 6 cards the leading skater gets the point as per the rules above and again after 12 and 18 cards. If the position is equal after each 6 cards set the team that reached the position first will get the point(s). If there was no progress on the positions within the 6 cards the trailing team gets the points and if the scores are tied the home team gets the points.

Pursuit Race:

Nominate 1 male skater per team and place him in any one space from 1-5 (away team chooses first). Use all FAC cards and resolve the action as per regular gameplay ignoring all results of empty spaces. The skater who reaches the Power Jam space first is deemed to have caught his counterpart and wins the Pursuit Race. If a penalty is called against a skater he is disqualified and loses the Pursuit Race.

Jam Points:

As described above Roller Speedway points equal the following FAC card points:

FAC 1 point = 1 point

FAC 2 points = 1 point

FAC 3 points = 2 points

FAC 4 points = 2 points

FAC 5 points = 3 points

I tried to create 2 team sets based on The Fireball but I found that there just weren't enough skating action scenes in the movie to come up with realistic skater qualities. Thus, you will have to play with other skater/team sets but for those of you who are interested, the line-ups in 1949 were as follows:

Team America:

1 Paul Milane

2 Charles Rocco

3 Gene Young

4 Lawrence Butts

5 Tommy Letts

6 Louis Franks

7 Bud Dornbos

8 Bill Ledbetter

9 Bob Clark

1 Joan Lemke

2 Dottie Piper

3 Marilyn Young

4 Frieda Hopkinson

5 Pat Vostry

6 Pat Nesbitt

7 Marge Beaudoin

8 Dorothy Mathews

9 Mary Jo Irwin

Team Europe:

10 John Cazar

11 Don Hoffe

12 Ben Mann

14 Amando Adame

15 Bert Wall

16 Lonnie Krenz

17 Louis Gentile

18 Charlie Keller

10 Joyce Bullock

11 Dolly Hanson

12 Betty Vance

14 Jackie Gonzales

15 Margie Floyd

16 Dee Rogers

17 Rosa Garma

18 Gretchen Yarber

I am sure some of you will recognize Paul Milane who is Mike Gammon's father and the great Bert Wall who became a major star in the NRDL.