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Mitten Mavens Give Killa Crew All They Can Handle in Close Bout ^[1]

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By:

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Physical contact plays a prominent role in roller derby, as seen here during a match between the Mitten Mavens and Killa Crew. (Photo by Sarah Spohn)

The East Lansing Roller Derby (ELRD) Mitten Mavens competed against the Killa Crew from Kalamazoo at Court One Training Center on June 22. The skater-run team ^[2], which encourages

health and physical fitness, good sportsmanship, and opportunities for personal growth, competed enthusiastically but still wound up on the short end of a 138-127 final score.

The Mitten Mavens are the A-level, most competitive team for the ELRD, with a roster of 15 skaters. Within the game, there are two 30-minute periods. Each period has "jams," in which both teams can score points if its jammer gets through the other team's blockers.

It is legal for skaters to block opponents with their hips, rear, or shoulders, but illegal to use the head, lower legs, or arms to block. If an infraction occurs, skaters must serve a 30-second penalty, similar to ice hockey.

"The most complicated part to our sport is pack-related penalties," said co-coach Ali Jahr, "when the group of people spread out, and they spread out too far" that's when they start going to the penalty box. When someone breaks the pack, then that can also be a penalty."

Following the game, Ali Jahr ("Jahrmageddon" is her derby name) spoke about the Mitten Mavens' performance. Jahr wears No. 22, is an offensive blocker, co-coach and the league president.

"That's a close game," Jahr said of the 11-point difference. "Overall, anytime you see a score that's that close" you know it could really go any way."

"I think there's some things we could have done better, but I also think their team outplayed us in a couple areas as well," Jahr said.



Skaters and coaches from both teams gather for a postgame picture. (Photo by David Lewis)

Key players for the Killa Crew included No. 7 ?Beetlejuice,? No. 11 ?Bicked Witch,? and No. 80 ?Blue Eyed Bruiser,? who was skating in her first adult game. ?She played junior derby before this, and I thought she had a really outstanding game. She had a great attitude, really good power, and is just a strong skater in general,? Jahr said.

Mitten Mavens? key players were No. 20 ?Crazy Diamond,? No. 2 ?Bam Bam Rebel,? and No. 45 ?Muther Tucker?.

?I think, despite penalties, Muther Tucker had a really good game,? Jahr said. ?It?s hard to say standout players, it really is a team sport. To say one person stands out sometimes can be a little bit tough.?

Currently, the ELRD is hosting a basic skills boot camp, inviting interested skaters, referees, non-skating officials and volunteers for future games. No experience is necessary. Approximately 80 percent of roller derby skaters start with no skating experience. To register, visit mittenmavens.net/join [3].

A portion of the proceeds from the June 22 ticket sales benefited Ele?s Place.

ELRD will host its next games on August 3 and September 21 at Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78 Road, in East Lansing.

Correction: The original version of this article misidentified legal and illegal forms of blocking. We also corrected the number under which Ali Jahr skates.

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