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Pummel This!

Jersey City roller derby team grinds up the rink

When Alix Zimmerman moved to Manhattan, she spent her nights after work flicking through TV channels on her comfy couch – until one day she heard about the resurgence of roller derby. So she clicked through Craigslist and spotted an ad to become a roller girl. “I didn’t have delusions of grandeur,” she says. “I

Smackdown, and is captain of the year-and-a-half-old team **Jersey City Bridge & Pummel** – a play on the “bridge and tunnel” stigma. “This is something to be proud of,” Zimmerman proclaims, “and if you have a problem with it, we’re going to show you how we feel about it.” The team burns rubber at the Branch Brook Park Roller Skating Center in Newark and is part of the Garden State Rollergirls league.

Zimmerman and her teammates – whose skate names are Jenna Jamitin, Lady Vengeance, La Comandanta, Eva Fangoria, Sorority Slaughter, Pinstripe Punisher, Punchy Brewster and The Oriental Express – are moms, students and young professionals who trade in their daytime attire for campy costumes in their transformation from girl to *grrrl*. They line their lips in ruby red, kohl the rims of their

“We are a **REAL SPORT**, not just girls pulling each other’s hair.” – Alix Zimmerman, aka Layla Smackdown

hadn’t had roller skates on in years. I was just looking for like-minded people.”

Now Zimmerman, 27, resides in The Heights, rides the rink instead of surfing the tube, goes by the skate name Layla

eyes, and slip into thigh-skimming, skintight dresses and torn fishnet stockings. Some do up their hair in pigtailed, and each etches her player number in black marker on her bicep.

PHOTO: KAT DEEM

