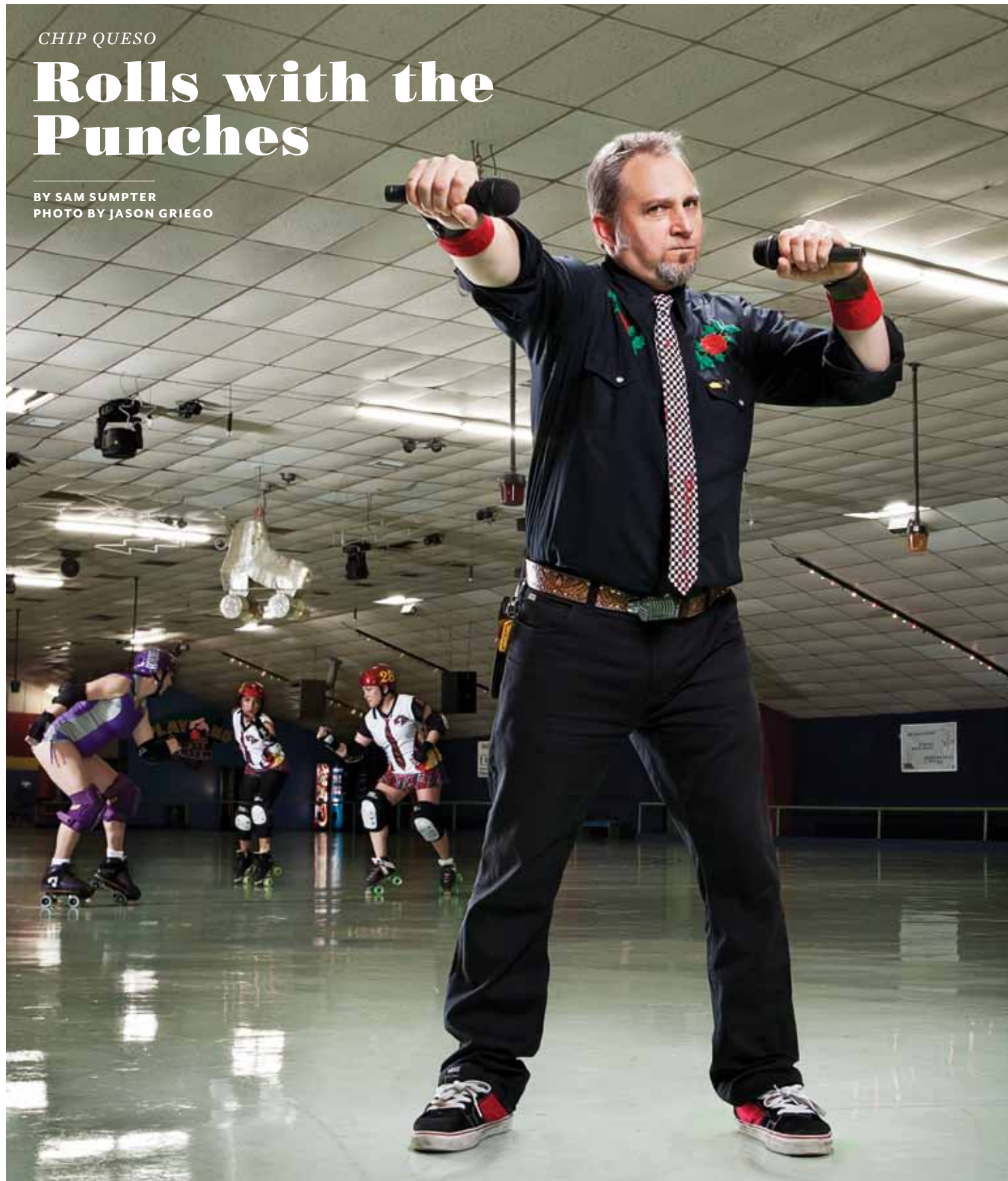


CHIP QUESO

Rolls with the Punches

BY SAM SUMPTER
PHOTO BY JASON GRIEGO



As the lead announcer and bout coordinator of the Texas Rollergirls, Chip Wright—aka Chip Queso—brings gusto to a sport already full of enthusiastic fans and fervent competitors. With nearly a decade of experience and near-celebrity status (he's been recognized at the grocery store), the man behind the mic is passionate about every aspect of the sport he describes as "X Games-meets-rock concert-meets-circus." See him for yourself when the All-Star Texecutioners clash with The Wheels of Justice from Portland, Ore., on May 19 at the Austin Convention Center.

What's the trick to being a good announcer? In derby you've got to describe the action short and sweet and at the same time paint the picture without giving away strategy, without doing what we call "coaching on the mic." So there's a fine balance in the combination of live venue announcing and TV or radio announcing. It's an art.

How did you come up with your announcer name? At one of the first practices, the girls said, "You gotta have a derby name." I told a story about how I got to be known as "Fondue" in college because I was so cheesy. One of the girls, Kitty Kitty Bang Bang, said, "Fondue... that's like cheese...that's like queso. Chips and queso! Hey—Chip Queso!" Done.

How tight-knit is the derby community? I can go anywhere in the country and Facebook a team, and I will have a couch to sleep on and somebody to hang out with that feels like your friend down the street.

What's the best thing about being an announcer? We're the only ones who sometimes get to have a beverage during the bout. And we don't have to work out like the girls have to. ■