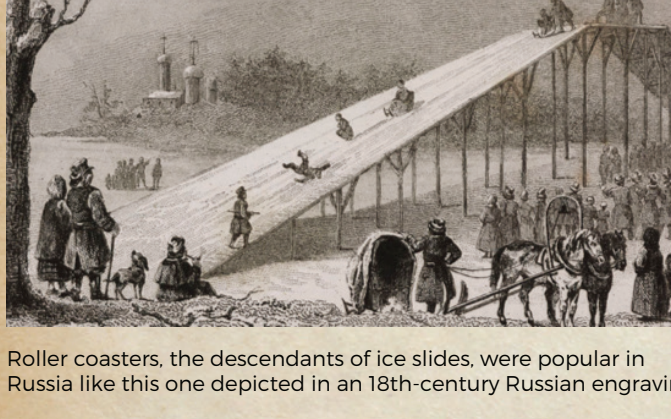


LET'S TAKE THIS TIME TO LOOK BACK AT OUR INDUSTRY'S RICH HISTORY AND FUTURE!

## THE DEAL DIARIES

### THIRD CHAPTER: ROLLER COASTERS

#### ARE YOU READY FOR THE ADRENALINE RUSH?



Roller coasters, the descendants of ice slides, were popular in Russia like this one depicted in an 18th-century Russian engraving

#### THE ORIGIN:

Fasten your seatbelts, take a deep breath and there we go! Roller coasters have a rich, long and fascinating history, which today's youngsters will seldom realise. These roller coasters are the direct ancestors of monumental ice slides which were long, steep wooden slides covered in ice, some were as high as 21 meters and these were very popular in Russia in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Riders shot down the slope on sleds made of wood or blocks of ice, and then crash-landed in a sand pile. These slides were invented in the 17th century and became very popular with the Russian upper class.

In fact, Catherine II of Russia was such a fan of this idea that she had a few built on her own property. The oldest roller coaster dates back to the 'Russian Mountains', which were specifically constructed hills of ice that were located around Saint Petersburg, Russia.

#### IDEA MOVES TO FRANCE

Roller coaster historians in the past have shared their viewpoints on the exact evolution of these ice slides into actual rolling carts. The most widespread account is that a few entrepreneurial Frenchmen imported the ice slide idea to France.

The warmer climate of France tended to melt the ice, so the French started building waxed slides instead, eventually adding wheels to the sleds. The French continued to expand on this idea, coming up with more complex track layouts, with multiple cars and all sorts of twists and turns.



#### NEXT STOP: AMERICA

The first American roller coaster was the 'Mauch Chunk Switchback Railway', built in the mountains of Pennsylvania in the mid-1800s. The track, originally built to send coal to a railway, was reconfigured as a 'scenic tour'. For a nickel, tourists got a leisurely ride up to the top of the mountain followed by a wild, bumpy ride back down.

Near the town of Mauch Chunk, a short railroad line transported coal from the top of Mount Pisgah to the canal in the valley below. Initially, mules would draw the empty cars up the slope of the mountain and then board a special car. Once the coal was loaded, the mule train would coast down the slope toward the canal. At the time, this railway was known as a switchback and was in operation until the mine was closed in the 1870s.



Mountains of Pennsylvania in the 1800's

Over the next 30 years, these scenic rides continued to thrive and were joined by wooden roller coasters similar to the ones we know today. These coasters were the main attraction at popular amusement parks throughout the United States, such as Kennywood Park in Pennsylvania and Coney Island in New York. By the 1920s, roller coasters were in full swing, with some 2,000 rides in operation around the country.

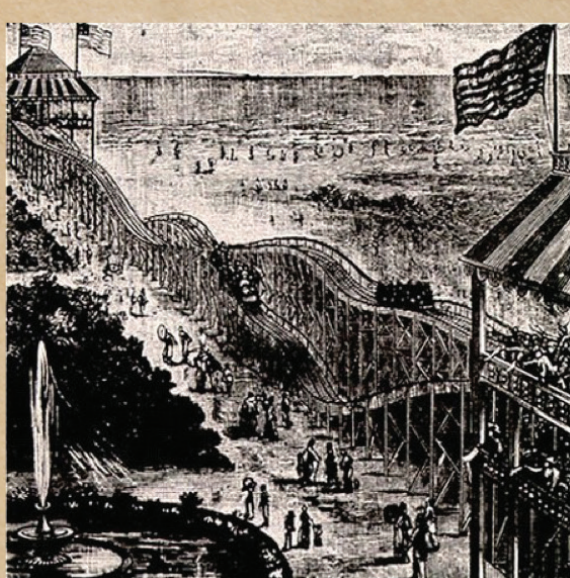
The abandoned railway was then converted into a railroad of enjoyment. The switchback railway gained popularity and in 1873, the notion to sell the idea was put in order and around 35,000 passengers paid a fee of five cents per ride. This railway carried passengers until 1938.

With the Great Depression and World War II, roller-coaster production declined, but a second roller-coaster boom in the 1970s and early 1980s revitalized the amusement-park industry. This era introduced a slew of innovative tubular steel coasters. Some of the most popular ride variations, such as the curving corkscrew track, saw their heyday during this time.

#### SO, WHO BUILT THE FIRST ROLLER COASTER?

There are disputes regarding when wheels were added to the carts for year-round operation. Some believe that the roller coaster was built under the orders of James the 3rd in the Gardens of Oreinbaum in St. Petersburg in 1784. Other historians, however, believe that the first roller coaster was built by the French.

Les Montagnes Russes à Belleville - The Russian Mountains of Belleville, was constructed in Paris in 1812 and the Promenades Aeriennes both featured wheeled cars that were securely locked to the track, guide rails to keep them on course, and higher speeds. The idea for this invention known as the roller coaster began in Europe. However, a primitive kind of roller coaster was unintentionally being also invented in the state of Pennsylvania.



Roller coasters, the descendants of ice slides, were popular in Russia like this one depicted in an 18th-century Russian

However, the ride that we know today was later developed and designed based on the Mauch Chunk Switchback Railway in the United States by inventor and 'father of the roller coaster', Marcus Thompson. He was assisted by fellow inventor, John A. Miller, known as the 'Thomas Edison of the roller coaster'.

Miller earned more than 100 patents related to coaster technology and rider safety. Thompson, however, was generally credited with having invented America's first roller coaster in 1884, at a park in Coney Island, New York. Thompson built a 450-foot steel and wood track on which the cars moved at six miles per hour. Additionally, Thompson patented his idea for the 'Roller Coasting Structure' in 1885.

Aside from Thompson and Miller's work on their version of the roller coaster, there were also a number of early roller coaster patents, both switchback and circular that date back as far as 1872. Despite these claims of Thompson and Miller bringing the idea of the roller coaster to life in Coney Island, historians believe that inventor, John G. Taylor, of Baltimore was issued one of the first patents.

In order to stay competitive, La Marcus Thompson continued to make improvements and build larger rides. From 1884 to 1887, Thompson was granted close to thirty patents, which all lead to the advancement of the gravity ride. Today, from the original idea of the roller coaster that was conceived in Russia to the invention of the first roller coaster in America, the history of this ride has had its 'ups and downs' but we can credit the ingenuity of these great inventors for giving us a thrilling and exciting ride known as the roller coaster.

#### BIRTH OF THE MODERN ROLLER COASTERS:

People all around the world have been enjoying the thrills of roller coasters whether they are big or small for quite some time. We have all been there one time or another; you are safely buckled into your seat as you slowly start to climb what seems to be a never ending incline only to drop at fast rate of speed through dips, twists and turns.

Finally, in 1955, the opening of Disneyland in Anaheim, California, signalled the advent of the modern theme park and a rebirth of the roller coaster. Disneyland's success sparked a wave of new parks and coasters. By the 1970s, parks were competing to create the most thrilling rides. In 2005, Six Flags Great Escape in Jackson, New Jersey, introduced the Kingda Ka roller coaster, the world's tallest (at 456 feet) and fastest (at 128 mph).

By the mid-1960s, the major amusement parks at Coney Island had shut down and the area acquired a seedy image. However, in recent decades it has been revitalized and remains



a popular tourist attraction. It's still home to the Cyclone, a wooden coaster that made its debut in 1927. Capable of speeds of 60 mph and with an 85-foot drop, the Cyclone is one of the country's oldest coasters in operation today.

The amusement park industry has experienced a coaster boom of sorts in recent years. New catapult launching techniques, hanging-train designs and several other technological developments have opened a world of options for designers. There are now coasters that give riders the experience of flying, and those that shoot riders down long stretches of spiralled tracks. 'Fourth dimension' coasters spin or rotate seats as the ride twists, turns and free-falls. Keep reading as we loop you in on all the newest features and innovations in roller coaster.

#### FORMULA ROSSA - FASTEST ROLLER COASTER IN THE WORLD ENTERS UAE



Did you ever imagine that you could catapult into space at 240km/h in 4.9 seconds on the world's fastest rollercoaster?

Formula Rossa, the world's fastest roller coaster, in Ferrari World, Abu Dhabi, UAE, scales heart-racing heights of 52 metres.

One can feel the surge of 4.8Gs in the pit of the stomach as you scale these gravity defying heights. UAE made the headlines for this amazing roller coaster in 2010.

Built high above the Abu Dhabi F1 track, Formula Rossa aims to accurately recreate the sensation of driving an F1 car. At 240kph, it retains the title of the fastest roller coaster in the world, and its record-breaking status has guaranteed huge media attention worldwide.



Formula Rossa, the world's fastest roller coaster, in Abu Dhabi, UAE

