

What is Bracket Racing?? Bracket Racing 101

Bracket racing is a form of drag racing that lets everyone, regardless of budget participate in the greatest sport on earth.

Bracket racing is based on a handicap system similar to golf. This handicap system allows slower cars to race against faster cars with no real advantage to either one. No more, the person with the most money wins.

How does this work you ask:

To explain:

Format of a Bracket race.

Most bracket races are made up of two components:

Time Trials/ Qualifying - this is where the driver gets the required info to determine a dial in.

Eliminations - This is where two drivers square off in competition. Dial ins determine head starts. All drag races are based on eliminations. The winner of the round advances to the next round and the loser is out/eliminated.

Time Trials or Test Passes:

Prior to the race (eliminations) actually taking place all competitors will be given the opportunity to make some time trials. The reason for the time trials, are to make sure that your vehicle is performing up to your expectations and to get a baseline as to what your vehicle will run that day in either the ¼ mile or the 1/8 mile.

Staging process/Starting Line/Christmas Tree Timing system

Staging the car.

After a driver has been motioned into the water box. The area on the track that is sprayed with water. This is where the back tires get wet and this allows the racer to heat up the rear tires in an attempt to maximize traction.

Once the burn out is completed the driver will roll up to the staging lights. There are two beams of light that shine across the starting line. These lights are 3" off the ground and roughly 6 inches apart. These are referred to as the Pre Stage and Stage beams. When the driver is ready, they roll the car up to these beams. Once the front tire intersects the beam and breaks the beam, the Pre Stage light come on. This is two yellow lights at the top of the tree. Once the driver has turned on the Pre Stage light, they are 6" inches from starting the race. When ready they slowly creep forward. Once the second set of lights are turned on the driver is ready for the race. Once all four lights are lit, the drivers 2 and the opponents 2 the race is ready to start.

Christmas Tree.

This is the device that is at the starting line that the drivers react to, to start the race. In bracket racing the tree system is a sportsman or full tree. This means that after the two cars have completed the staging process (lighting the two sets of small bulbs on the top of the tree) they are ready to race. When the tree fires the first of the three amber bulbs will illuminate. The other two amber bulbs will light up 1/2 a second later in sequence. 1/2 a second after the third amber light has gone out the green light will come on. The goal of the racer in each lane is to try and coordinate the car leaving the starting line at the exact moment that the green light comes on. In the past a perfect light was .500 (decimal for 1/2 a second). If the racer is successful and leaves exactly 1/2 second after the last amber goes out, they would have a perfect reaction time. However, if the driver leaves the starting line prematurely then the red light will be triggered. The red light indicates that the driver left the starting line prior to the 1/2 second time frame being up. So, in the past a perfect light was .500. A red light is anything .499 or less. If the driver records a .540 light that means that they reacted .040 seconds after the green light came on. In the early 2000s the sanctioning body's changed the way that reaction times were displayed and now a perfect light is .000. A red light is any number with a negative sign in front of it. A good reaction time is anything .000 or slower. If you leave prior to the green coming on you are eliminated from competition as long as your opponent did not red light worse than you. Eg. If you red light - .003 and your competition red lights -.045 you will win because your light, even though it is premature is closer to .000 than your opponent.

Dial in.

What is a dial in? This is a number that you will see on the passenger side window of all of the cars once the eliminations begin. In most cases it is written in shoe polish on the window. The dial in is a predicted time that the driver thinks the car will run based on the information that was gathered in the earlier time trials. So, for example: If the car ran 14:28 and 14:30 in the time trials, the racer will make an educated guess and predict the time that they think that the car will run in the 1st round. In this case the driver may decide that he/she is going to dial 14:28. When that driver pulls up to the burn out boxes their match up will be determined. At that point the racers dial in will be entered into the computer. Those dial in will appear on the score boards prior to the two cars staging. It is the driver's responsibility to check that the dial in on the board matches what they have written on the car. This is where the handicap parts come into play. If racer 1 is dialed 14:28 and racer 2 is dialled 11:28 then racer 1 will have a 3 second head start. This head start is built into the Christmas tree. Racer 1 lights will come on 3 seconds before racer 2. The goal is then to beat the opponent to the finish line without going faster than your predicted time (dial in).

Breaking out:

What is Breaking out? A break out is when one of the drivers goes faster than their dial in. For example, if racer 1 is dialled 14:28 and the car runs 14:25. In this case the racer has gone .030 faster than predicted and has broken out. However, running faster than your dial in does not necessarily mean that you lose. If racer 2 is dialled 11:28 and he runs 11:20. Racer 2 has run .080 under his dial in meaning that racer 1 will win even though he broke out because racer 2 broke out worse.

Ways to win.

There are a number of ways to win a round in a bracket race.

Fouls

- Your opponent can red light handing you the win.
- Both racers can red light but the worse of the two loses
- You can both be green on the tree but opponent Breaks out. Goes faster than their dial in.
- Both racers can break out but the worse of the two loses

Getting beat the old fashioned way!

This is where the bracket racing math class kicks in. Bracket racing is just a big math problem. A drag race that is won with out your opponent fouling in any way is based on the comparison of the racers packages.

What is a drag racing package???

A drag racing package is how far away from perfect are you? Perfect? What is perfect? Perfect is cutting a .000 light and running the dial in with a zero. If that happens it is considered a perfect run. This is an extremely rare thing to happen and most racers will race their entire career and never accomplish this.

An Example

Racer 1

.010 Reaction time

14.28 Dial in

ET on the run 14. 288

Racer is .010 away from perfect on the Reaction Time

Racer is .008 away from perfect on the Dial In

Total package. Amount away from a perfect light + amount away from a perfect run
In this case total package is .018

The only way that racer 2 can beat racer 1 is to have a total package that is better. For example, if racer 2 is .017 or better they win. If they are .019 or more, they lose.

In conclusion.

These are the basics of bracket racing. If you have any additional questions feel free to ask any of the racers. They will all be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Enjoy the races!!!

Classes raced at WMM.

Quick 8

Bracket style race that is made up of the 8 fastest cars that are on the property that day.

Lucky 16

This class is made up of 16 Racers that are close in time on the property. Example there can be a group of 16 that have a dial in time of 10.0 to 11.0 or a group that has a dial in time from 14.2 to 14.8. This group is determined by the Tower in charge of racing. This is also run with the bracket format

Modern Muscle - GEN 3 Hemi Class

This class is made up of any vehicle that has a modern hemi in it. Common cars in this class are newer Challengers, Magnums, Chargers as well as some older cars that have had a modern drivetrain installed in it. Bracket Style

All Run

Class that allows everyone else that does not fit into one of the categories above to race their car. Bracket style.

Run What Ya Brung

This is a class that is aimed toward the crowd that does not want to bracket race but would like to run their car down the track. We are hoping that some of the show cars will participate in this. A very reasonable cost to get to make runs on the track in a controlled safe environment. We are going to encourage match races. Let's settle the score that has been

discussed over coffee for years. Time to put up or shut up! The question is do you have it in you to try!!!! We sure hope so. This will be run with a Pro tree. This means that once the two cars are staged all of the lights come on and off the cars go. This is as close as we can get at the drag strip to a flag or a flashlight start.