



# HOW TO DRAG RACE



## A Beginner's Guide to Drag Racing

Gainesville Raceway

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## Drag Racing Basics...



Simply, Drag Racing is defined as an acceleration contest between two cars. The cars race from a standing start down a precisely measured, straight-line track. A drag racing event is a series of two vehicle, tournament style eliminations with the losing driver of each race being eliminated until only one is left standing.

There are two types of Drag Racing: Heads-Up and Handicapped Racing. In Heads-Up competition, both drivers start at the same time and the fastest vehicle is the winner. Handicapped Racing is a little more complicated. The object of Handicapped Racing is to predict the amount of time it will take for your vehicle to cross the finish line.

A race is started by means of an electric device called a Christmas Tree, named so because of its multi-colored lights. Each Christmas Tree has seven lights on each side: two small lights, followed by three, larger, amber colored LED lights, then a right light, and finally a green light (See Diagram below).

The best way to get started is to attend a "test and tune" session, normally held on Wednesday nights from April through November. At a "test and tune" event you are given the chance to practice your starting procedure, learn how your car reacts to tuning adjustments, and make passes down the track without the pressure of competition. A "test and tune" also gives you a chance to observe other drivers and ask questions about how you can improve. Most drivers are eager to give pointers to fellow racers.

The Christmas Tree



## Getting Started...



- Gate Entry:** Pay & receive Tech Card for class you're running.
- Pit Parking:** You may park anywhere in the pits except behind tow rigs.
- Tech Inspection:** Fill out card completely and clearly. A track official will tech and give your vehicle a number.
- Staging Lanes:** After tech, proceed to staging lanes (numbered lanes that get you to the starting line). Listen to PA (88.5FM) or ask a track official to find out which lane to go to. At the head of the staging lanes, you will be pulled out and stopped so your car number can be recorded. Have all your safety equipment and be ready to race. Do not leave your car unattended.
- Burn Outs:** You will be directed to the burn out box. You can go through the water or around. Pay attention to track officials at starting line. They will let you know when to start your burn out and how to stage.
- Staging:** After burn out proceed to starting line. The 2nd set of yellow bulbs on the timing tree indicates you are staged and ready to race. The starter will start the tree and lights will start coming down.
- Finish Line:** Exit the drag strip at the gate in the right side guard wall. Do not turn in front of another vehicle. Do not back up or turn around on the track. Continue to the end of the pavement and exit to the right.
- Time Slips:** After you exit the track, follow the road to the time slip building. A track official will hand you your time slip with your times.

THE TIME SLIP

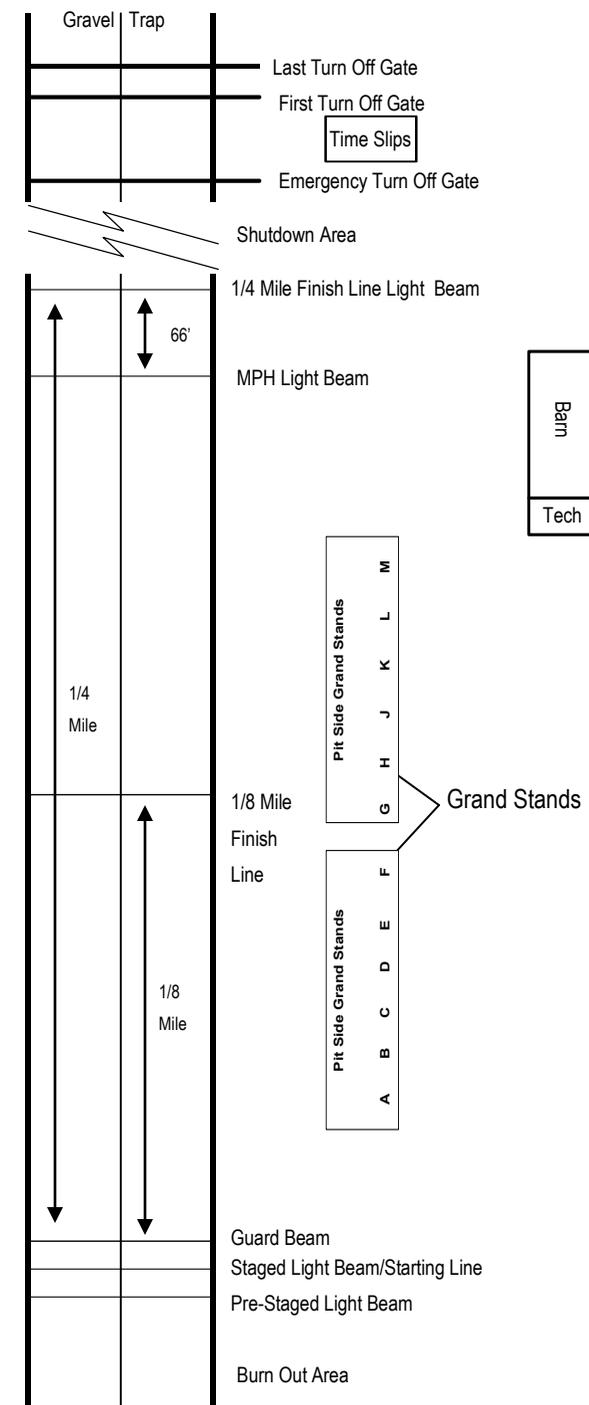
Welcome to GAINESVILLE RACEWAY			
2:29 PM 16/Nov/1979			
Lane	LEFT	RIGHT	
Vehicle's # - written on window	CAR #	735	29
Class: SPT, PROET, SPRO, MC	CLASS	PROET	PROET
Dial-In Time	DIAL	11.52	10.80
Reaction Time	R/T	.623	.505
ET & MPH Times	60'	2.467	1.493
	330'	6.375	4.359
Quarter Mile ET & MPH	1/8	9.454	6.820
	MPH	78.23	99.21
Margin of Victory	1000'	12.357	8.971
	1/4	14.801	10.812
Round: Type & Number E=Eliminations T=Time Trials	MPH	92.36	121.90
	Right 1st Right NOW Round # E2	4.107	
..... COMPU LINK STARTRAK			

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## Drag Strip Diagram..



\*\* Not to scale



## Drag Racing Terms...



**BREAKOUT:** Used only in handicap racing, refers to a contestant running quicker than he or she predicted. Usually, the driver who breaks out loses. If both drivers break out, the one who runs closest to his or her dial, or prediction, is the winner.

**BURNOUT:** Spinning the rear tires in water to heat and clean them prior to a run for better traction. A burnout precedes every run when using slicks or drag radials.

**CHRISTMAS TREE:** The Tree, as it is often called, is the noticeable electronic staring device between lanes on the starting line. It displays a calibrated-light countdown for each driver.

**DEEP STAGED:** A driver is deep staged when, after staging, he or she rolls a few inches farther, which causes the pre-stage lights to go out. In that position, the driver is closer to the finish line, but dangerously close to a foul start.

**DIAL-IN:** The elapsed time you think your car will run, up to hundredths of a second, used in handicapped racing. The number must be written in liquid chalk on the upper-right windshield, driver's side window and upper-left rear window.

**ELAPSED TIME (E.T.):** The time it takes a vehicle to travel from the starting line to the finish line.

**FOUL START (RED LIGHT):** The foul start is indicated by a red light on the bottom of the Christmas Tree when a car has left the starting line before receiving the green light, or starting signal.

**PRE-STAGED:** When a driver is approximately seven inches behind the starting line and the small yellow lights atop his or her side of the Christmas Tree are glowing

**REACTION TIME:** The time it takes a driver to react to the green starting light on the Christmas Tree, measured in thousandths of a second. The reaction time counter begins when the last amber light flashes on the Tree and stops when the vehicle clears the stage beam.

**SPEED TRAP:** The final 66 feet to the finish line where speed is recorded.

**STAGED:** A driver is staged when the front wheels of the car are on the starting line and the small yellow lights below the pre-staged lights on his or her side of the Christmas Tree are glowing. Once a driver is staged, the calibrated countdown may begin at any time.

## Ground Rules...



**SPEED LIMIT:** 15 MPH anywhere in the facility for ALL vehicles. Burnouts, trans-brake tests, etc. will not be tolerated in the pits, or in the staging lanes.

**FLUID DISPOSAL:** All waste motor oil and solvents are to be disposed of in the specified containers provided. Trash barrels are for trash ONLY. Please contact track personnel if you cannot locate a fluid disposal container.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES & DRUGS:** Alcoholic beverages are permitted for spectators only and are NOT permitted in the staging lanes at any time. Use of alcohol or drugs by a driver will result in automatic disqualification and possible suspension of competition privileges.

**P.A. & RADIO:** Racers should monitor the track P.A. system, which is simulcast on 88.5 FM radio, for instructions, lane assignments, or changes and general information.

**PIT VEHICLES:** All vehicles, ATV's, scooters, etc. will be operated only by licensed drivers (except for Jr. Dragsters). Vehicles will obey all speed limits, parking regulations, and other rules pertaining to vehicles. Vehicles must display the competition number assigned to the driver's vehicle. Pit vehicles will be impounded if left in the staging lanes and the driver may be disqualified. A designated area will be provided for these vehicles.

**RESTRICTED AREA:** Area beyond the competition line at front of the staging lanes requires a Restricted Area Pass/Wristband. Unauthorized transfer of pass/wristband will result in ejection from property. All vehicles in this area must have windows up, seat belt on, and A/C off.

**TECH INSPECTIONS:** Required for all vehicles prior to any run on the track.

**DIAL-INS:** Dial-in time must be placed on right front and tower side of all vehicles in bracket races. Dial-ins may be changed between rounds; they may not be changed after the vehicle has crossed the competition line at the front of the staging lanes without approval of staging coordinator. The driver accepts any dial-in displayed on the scoreboard once the run has been initiated.

**STAGING LANES:** Drivers are to remain with the vehicle when in the lanes. Failure to be prepared to run when instructed could result in a loss of time trial session or disqualification.

**BURNOUTS:** Do not cross the starting line under power during a burnout, except at direction of the starter.

## Race Class

### Specifications...



#### NON ELECTRONICS / FOOTBRAKE

- Long pants and full T-shirt (no nylon or nylon type), full shoes and socks (no open toed shoes). No tank tops.
- Fire jacket required for 11.49 and quicker
- At 13.99 or quicker must have Snell 2005 or newer helmet
- A roll bar is mandatory in any full-bodied car running 11.00-11.49 and convertibles running 11.00-13.49
- A roll cage is mandatory 10.99 and quicker; chassis certified 9.99 and quicker

#### ELECTRONICS / PRO CYCLE

- All requirements above
- High top shoes or boots (leather) - cycles
- Full face helmet with clear face shield - cycles
- Full leathers meeting SFI spec 40.1/2 mandatory on all motorcycles running 120mph and faster - cycles
- Fire suit 32A/5 & neck collar required 9.99 and quicker
- 9.99 and quicker NHRA competition license and chassis certification required

#### TRUE STREET / STREET CYCLE

- 100% street legal
- Full face helmet, leather jacket, leather gloves, leather shoes above the ankle, and long pants for cycles
- Full leathers meeting SFI spec 40.1/2 on all cycles running 120mph and faster
- Ignition cut off switch with lanyard mandatory 10.99 and quicker - cycles

\*These are only references and is in no way intended to supersede the General or E.T. requirements in the current NHRA rule book. NHRA rule books are available at the track.

## Gainesville Raceway

### Programs...



#### WEDNESDAY NIGHT TEST AND TUNE & STREET LEGAL DRAGS

- \$25 to Race, \$5 to Watch
- Children Under 12 FREE
- Gates open at 6:30pm; Run 7:00 pm-10:30 pm
- 1/4 Mile

#### SATURDAY DAYTIME TEST AND TUNE & STREET LEGAL DRAGS

- \$25 to Race, \$5 to Watch
- Children Under 12 FREE
- Gates open at 11:00am; Run 11:30am-3:30 pm
- 1/4 Mile

#### 1/8 MILE SUMMIT ET RACING SERIES\*\*

- Adult Spectators & Crew \$10
- Children Under 12 FREE
- Electronic and Footbrake: \$45 Car and Driver
- Street Cycle and True Street: \$25 Car/Bike and Driver
- Junior Dragster: \$25 Car and Driver
- Open Comp\*\* \$45 Car and Driver

\*\*Schedule of race dates, racer payout and point system information located on the website. ([www.GainesvilleRaceway.com](http://www.GainesvilleRaceway.com))

