

Jr. DRAGSTER's Beginners Guide:

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR ROOKIE RACING SEASON

The most common Jr. race is a member track points race. The race is planned and run entirely by the track itself, and the races are used to determine the track's champion. Contact your track for a list of racing events. There are also regional events each year, which are planned by NHRA officials. The largest are the NHRA O'Reilly Auto Parts Eastern and Western Conference Finals. In addition, each of the seven divisions hosts Jr. Championship events. Each division has its own format for the races; contact your division office for details.

When should I arrive at the track?

Be there when the gates open: you will get through tech inspection quicker and have more time for time trials.

How do I find out when the races are?

How do I earn points, and what are they used for?

Points are used to determine track (or division) standings at season's end. Simply, the driver with the most points wins. How points are calculated is up to each track, so contact your track for information.

What happens at the track?

First, you and your parent or guardian will sign a waiver and pay the track's racing fee. Then you will find a place in the pits and unload your car. After you unload the car, you will go through tech inspection. The inspection will focus both your car and your safety equipment (helmet, jacket, etc.) — make sure you take everything with you. Inspectors will also ask you for your JDRL participant card. During inspection, let them know you are new. Some tracks will put a strip of tape on new cars so officials can watch out for you and help you if there are problems. Some tracks also give rookies single runs during time trials so they can adjust to the track.

Basic safety equipment, such as an approved helmet and a jacket, are required for all racers, and these items will be looked over during tech inspection.

After tech inspection comes the time trials, then the race itself. For the race, you will need to determine your dial-in (the time you estimate it will take you to go down the track). Use your times from time trials to determine the dial — this gets easier as you make more runs.

You will race in an age group determined by the track. The track announcer will call for each group individually and tell you which lane to go to. Listen carefully for your group to be called. The best way to hear announcements is through the track's radio frequency if one is in use. In the lanes, pay attention to the track officials, who will direct you to where to go. If you win the round, the process starts over.

Listen carefully for announcements calling your class to the staging lanes. Once in the lanes, watch racing officials for instructions on where to go.

