

The Blue Ridge Soap Box Derby

Official Rules as of March 6, 2024*

Race Categories

- Category 1 Classic: Age 7-12 (2 drivers/car) Must be in different age categories.
- Category 2 Classic: Age 13+ (2 drivers/car) Must be in different age categories.
- Category 3 Outlaw: Age 7+ (1 driver/car)

Race Registration Fees & Deadlines

Category 1-3 Race Fees shall be \$25 per driver. If registering for more than one class, the driver must complete an additional registration form and pay an additional \$25 fee. Perks include: one (1) event t-shirt (specify Youth or Adult size on registration form). **Registration Deadline** to receive t-shirts/badges: April 19, 2024. Late registrations will NOT be allowed at this time.

NOTE: Race fees are based on drivers entering the race, not vehicles. This allows families with one car and multiple children to participate without building each driver their own car (2 drivers/car max). Drivers racing the same car **MUST** race in separate age categories. This prevents the same car from becoming "pitted" against itself if it is the fastest.

Derby Car Guidelines & Rules

1. Driver Safety

1.1 All drivers **MUST** wear an approved helmet. Additional safety gear may be worn at the driver's discretion. If a driver does not have a helmet, there may be one available to borrow; however, it must be cleaned/sanitized and returned immediately to the Race Expeditor after the driver returns to the staging area.

1.2 Restraints are not mandatory but are recommended. Please consider the age and ability of the driver.

1.3 Drivers must be in a sitting position with their legs facing forward. Drivers may lean back for aerodynamics but may **not** lay headfirst.

2. Derby Cars (Category 1-2, Classic Cars)

2.1 The Classic Derby car is one of the “kits” provided by the Blue Ridge Soap Box Derby (BRSBD) and cannot be modified in any **functional** way to include, but not limited to, steering, suspension, wheels, or dimensions.

2.2 If the Classic Derby car has been modified and cannot be reverted to its original state, the car must be entered into the Outlaw Class.

2.3 Modifications to the paint scheme, or any other way that does not affect the functionality of the car are permitted. If you are in ANY doubt, contact a race organizer or official for clarification and approval PRIOR to April 30, 2024.

3. Derby Car Wheels (Category 1-2, Classic Cars)

3.1 The Classic Derby car comes with the same wheels as every other car in its class and must be used and not modified in any way.

3.2 Wheels MAY be lubricated (greased, etc.) to increase their performance; however, such lubrication may not interfere with the safety of the driver, other drivers, or spectators.

3.3 If the original wheels that came with the car kit are unable to be located and installed for the driver to compete in this category, they must either enter the Outlaw Class or acquire a set of original wheels from the BRSBD (for a cost).

4. Weight Limits

4.1 Weight limits for cars have been eliminated. Previous races showed that adding more weight **could** be a detriment to overall race time. You are encouraged to practice with different weights to find out what works best with your car and the weight of the driver.

5. Outlaw Class Derby Cars

5.1 Outlaw Class cars must be **completely** gravity powered. No other mechanical propulsion is allowed, i.e., springs, rubber bands, pedals, human propulsion, weighted drives, engines, or motors of any kind.

5.2 Outlaw Class Derby Cars must be no wider than 40”.

5.3 There are no other “rules” for Outlaw Class Derby cars regarding weight limits, dimensions other than width, wheels, etc. Please keep driver and bystander safety in mind regarding your vehicle. If your derby car cannot be placed on the Launch Ramp or if it will not clear the bottom of the launch ramp/pavement, it will be eliminated from competition. All other rules regarding Steering (par 6), Braking (par 7), and Decorations

(par 8) **DO** apply to your vehicle. Outlaw Class derby cars will be inspected for safety; and they must check in with the other cars on May 3, 2024. If the vehicle is too big to fit inside the school or doorways, the owner will be responsible for its overnight storage and return to the PITS on race day prior to the start of the Outlaw Class races.

6. Steering

6.1 All derby cars must have a reliable steering mechanism, with stops, to limit the movement to no more than 25 degrees, or any degree to prevent the wheels from contacting the vehicle body, in either direction.

7. Braking

7.1 All vehicles **must** have a braking system! All brakes must be friction based. Brakes can be applied to the tires, the axel, or to the ground (or any combination of the three). Any ground contact system must be rubber soled and cannot damage the ground surface. Braking systems must be completely controlled by the driver and cannot be a parachute or anchor system, (i.e., nothing can be dragged behind to slow the vehicle down).

7.2 Brakes **MUST** be checked often (before/after each heat) to ensure their functionality and stability. This is paramount to the safety of the driver, other participants and spectators. NOTE: Kit cars that have been modified with other wheels may have had their brake handle affected due to the height difference between stock tires and modified ones. It is the driver's responsibility to check for this and ensure their car can be stopped in a safe manner.

8. Decorations

8.1 Name of driver(s) and/or a "racing number" are encouraged on the cars to help organizers know which drivers belong to their car. Drivers are further encouraged to decorate their vehicle any way they want with certain exceptions (see 8.2).

8.2 Topics that include politics, guns, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or otherwise controversial topics **WILL NOT BE ALLOWED** on any derby car. If you are unsure if your chosen theme fits this rule, please contact a BRSBD Official. During derby car check-in and on race day, BRSBD Officials will enforce this at their discretion.

9. Vehicle Inspections

9.1 To maintain fairness, vehicle inspections will occur. All cars must be at the Fannin County Middle School between 5-7pm on **May 3, 2024**, for inspection (certain hardships will be considered if you cannot make the time frame, but you must contact a BRSBD official to make arrangements for this inspection **PRIOR** to the event start time). After cars are inspected *and pass all requirements*, they will be moved into the school facilities

and stored overnight. No modifications can be made to the cars after a passing inspection, except for safety and adjustable weight modifications under the watch of an inspector/official. Cars failing the initial inspection will be allowed to exit the facility for modification and allowed to be re-inspected for entry into the race.

9.2 On race day, cars may be inspected at ANY time at the discretion of an official or judge. At the end of each category, cars in 1st through 4th place **may** be inspected prior to announcement of winners and distribution of prizes. Play fair--as you and the vehicle may be disqualified!

9.3 If anyone suspects another driver/team of cheating, please address a BRSBD official immediately and let them investigate and handle the situation. Trust the officials to do their investigation and handle the situation appropriately as no follow-up will be provided to the person making the report.

10. The Soap Box Derby Race

10.1 Races (or “heats”) will be held in a bracket style within each race category; the first bracket will be a “best of three” race (the driver winning 2 out of the 3 races will advance to next bracket); each additional bracket (up to the final) will be determined by ONE race with the winner advancing (lane choice will be determined by registration number); the championship bracket will be determined in best “two out of three” runs with a coin flip determining the first lane choice after which racers will alternate lanes until a winner is determined.

10.2 Races will be held on a side by side “track” with two cars racing against each other.

10.3 Cars will be launched from the top of a declined ramp. Launch occurs when the “gate”, a metal plate that rests against the front wheel, is lowered at the direction of the launch official. The winner of the heat will be the first vehicle whose front wheels break the plane of the finish line. Finish line judges will use their best judgment to determine the winner of the 1st or 2nd run if it is “too close to call”; if a “tie” is called upon the third run, a fourth run will be required.

10.4 Participants will be assigned a registration number at the May 3, 2024, inspection (ideally, in order of check-in). These numbers will be drawn (at random) to decide the race brackets. **NOTE:** This assigned number will be your official race number, not the number that may be on the side of the car and are only used amongst BRSBD Staff.

10.5 Lane Choice: During the First and Final Brackets (when the best 2 of 3 heats are in effect), the lower of the two registration numbers will have first option of lane choice. Consecutive runs will switch lanes to determine the best two out of three winners. If at any time, lane choice becomes an “issue” amongst drivers or officials, the launch ramp judge will decide lane choice.

11. Not Applicable.

12. Derby Car Adjustments / Repairs

12.1 We are aware that derby cars may require adjustments and minor repairs during the race. If needed and available, there *may* be a designated work area with basic power access. Racers are encouraged to bring their own power tools and back-up supplies as there may not be extras available. Please do not be alarmed if an official inspects your derby car after you've worked on it.

12.2 Past repairs have included brake handles and steering cables. A limited supply of these will be on hand; however, they are not a guarantee, and you are encouraged to have spares of any parts you may need on hand. (Contact the BRSBD in advance if you need to have spares made for a very small cost.)

13. Prizes

13.1 **Category 1-2:** Winners shall receive the following prizes.

- 1st Place - \$250 cash
- 2nd Place - \$100 cash
- 3rd Place - \$50 cash
- 4th Place - \$25 cash

NOTE: If the winning racer is driving a “school car” (one provided by the school), a check will be written to the school’s STEM teacher for fair disbursement.

13.2 **Category 3:** Outlaw Class races shall have **ONE** winner who receives a “prize package” and will be a mixture of cash and donations from Sponsors.

13.3 **Best of Show:** Winners will be decided from a panel consisting of one member from each of the 5 Executive Sponsors (or their designee). First Place = \$100, Second Place = \$50, Third Place = \$25.

14. Event T-Shirts & Badges

14.1 All drivers are encouraged (but not mandatory) to wear their Event t-shirt on the day of the event—event shirt will be given to driver upon vehicle check-in on May 3, 2024, between 5-7pm. For individuals who have made prior arrangements, they can get their Event T-shirt on race day during driver check-in. Whether the driver chooses to wear the event shirt above or below safety gear is the choice of the driver (if it does not impede with their safety gear). Additionally, event t-shirts may be available for purchase on race day while supplies last.

14.2 Anyone entering the vehicle staging area, racetrack, and other official event areas **must** display an event or staff badge or be wearing their current Event t-shirt. All other personnel, including parents/spectators, must remain outside of the area to avoid chaos, prevent safety issues, and minimize liability and accidents.

** NOTE – Blue Ridge Soap Box Derby Board Members reserve the right to change these rules at any time they see fit to promote reasonable and fair play.*