

# SOAP BOX DERBY REFERENCE GUIDE

1. Overview - The Soap Box Derby is a youth racing program which has run nationally since 1934. The world championship is held every July in Akron, Ohio, at Derby Downs. Participants become eligible to compete in the World Championship through winning their Local Race or by accumulating points in the Rally program. The Greater Cincinnati Soapbox Derby was formed in 1934 and was held most years until 1978. The club reformed in 2006 and today, the GCSBD Local race has two racing divisions - Stock division for children ages 7-13, Super stock Division for children ages 9-18. The derby car kits are purchased through All American Soapbox derby at [soapboxderby.org](http://soapboxderby.org).

We have developed a quick reference to provide you with some information that might be handy on race day and the events leading up to race day. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the race committee or race directors. We hope you have a great time and good luck.

2. Heats and Lanes- Before the race begins, a race official will complete heat sheets for each race division. This is done by a blind drawing for fairness. Each racer will race in Lane 1 and Lane 2 which is considered a heat. Two racers will be paired to race per heat. An official will call the car numbers of the paired racers for each heat. The racer will be handed a "Heat Ticket" with the car number of who will race in Lane 1 and Lane 2. The racer designed Lane 1 is responsible for giving the Heat Ticket to the official at the top of the hill. It is required to provide the official with the Heat Ticket to be able to race.

The local race is a "double elimination" race. Which means you have to lose two heats before being eliminated from the race. A heat is broken down in parts -Phase A is your first time down the track with an opponent and Phase B is your second. You will change lanes and swap wheels before going down the track for a second time.

The track has two areas for loading your car on trailers to be transported to the top of the hill - Phase A and Phase B. Once you race down the track the first time (Phase A), you will stay in your car to the end of the track. When your car comes to a stop, quickly jump out so your car handler can remove it from the track and to take it to the Phase B area for loading onto the trailers.

During the race, you must stay in your lane at all times and not interfere with your opponent. You are not allowed to drive on or over the center line during the race. At the end of the heat, the racer with the fastest time will advance to the next heat. The opponent will continue in the challengers bracket unless he or she has lost (2) heats. Always check with a race official before leaving a race to insure you have been eliminated.

3. Race Position - For maximum aerodynamics, it is important to drive your soap box derby car as low as you can get into the car and still see the track. We refer to this as "Race Position". You will sit in your car and try to push your bottom to the back of the car while bending at your waist to lower your head and chest. Grasp the steering with your palms up, only hold the steering with your fingers. Your helmet should be secured and it is recommended to wear eye protection. You want to drive in "Race Position" from the ramps to the finish line.

4. Race Gear - Depending on the weather, usually sport shorts and a t-shirt are recommended with a sand/water shoe. For the local race, an official T-shirt will be supplied for you to wear during the race. The clothing that you choose to wear must be worn during "weigh in" and during the actual race. It is also recommended to wear a pair of goggles to help reduce the risk of bugs or dirt getting in a driver's eyes during a race. You will be provided an approved Soap Box Derby helmet to borrow for race day that must be worn during all races. Helmets should be placed in the assign car in between races so it doesn't get lost. Drivers must also wear footwear that have a continuous sole from toe to heel.

5. Weighing In - In this section, we are going to talk about the weights for the cars and weighing in.

In the stock division, the car plus the driver must weigh no more than 200 pounds. In the super stock division, the car plus driver can weigh no more than 225 pounds. Additional weight can be placed in the car to make up for the difference. The derby cars and participants will be weighed in at impound the week of the local race. Special scales are used during the weigh in procedure. Once the car is checked in at impound, no weights may be moved or changed unless there are safety issues or under the direction of a race official. Race directors have the right to weigh a car and driver during the race at their discretion.

6. Lifting Cars – The cars are surprisingly heavy. It takes two people to carefully lift a car off and on the trailer. Never pick the car up by the axles. Reach under the front nose and the back of each car for lifting.

7. Wheel Swap – These were mentioned briefly during our discussion on "Heats and Lanes". Race regulations requires a wheel swap with your opponent prior to starting Phase "A" of a race. The wheels to be swapped will be revealed by the Race Director on the morning prior to the start of Local race. This rule is for fairness of both racers.

Once the Race Director determines which wheels will be swapped, be sure to write it down. This will be the swap for the entire day. The combination can be both front wheels, both back wheels, both left wheels, both right wheels, or a combination. For this purpose, we are going to say that the two front wheels (LF, RF) are to be swapped for the Phase “A” portion of the race.

If your car number is called by the race official, you will need to retrieve the Heat Ticket and proceed to the Wheel Swap area. **BE SURE TO CHECK THAT YOUR WHEELS HAVE THE SAME NUMBER AS YOUR CAR AND ARE IN THE CORRECT LOCATIONS.** Carefully, slide the wheels off the spindle and hand them to your opponent. They, in turn, will hand you their wheels. Place the wheels in the proper location on your vehicle. Be sure your wheel pins are locked into the spindle for major safety reasons. Do not spin the wheels or touch them again after the wheel swap. Remove your car from the crate and roll it to the loading area and onto the trailer.

After you have raced your opponent (Phase A), you will proceed to the Phase B loading area. Do not touch your wheels. Load your vehicle onto the trailer and head to the top. The Phase B wheel swap will take place at the top of the hill.

For the Phase B wheel swap, wait until your opponent is ready, you will swap the opposite of what you swapped for Phase A. You and your opponents will stand behind your cars. Remove the wheel pins and slide your wheels off the spindle. Hold the wheels in your hands and walk behind your opponent and slide the appropriate wheel onto the opponent’s car and he/she will do the same. Check to be sure you have all four wheels belonging to your opponent by checking them with his/her car number. If there is a problem, have a race official to resolve the issue. Return to your car, put your wheel pins in place and unload your car. Proceed to the ramps to race the Phase B of your heat.

**At the end of the race, shake hands with your opponent and return your car to the pits. Place your car on a crate or blocks and return your opponent’s wheels and they will do the same.**

Be sure to check that you have all (4) wheels with the same number as your car. If not, have a race official help you resolve this matter.

8. Sportsmanship – It is expected that all participants conduct themselves in a kind manner to other racers. **At the end of each race, racers should shake hands and offer some type of encouraging words to each other such as “Good Race” or “Congrats”. Any acts of anger will not be tolerated.**

9. Akron World Championships – The winner of each division in the Local Race become eligible to race at the championships in July each year. The Local Winners will have the **OPTION** to attend the All-American World Championships in Akron and participate in Race Week activities. Confirmation with Akron has to be made within 24 hours of the Local Race finals. If a first place winner elects not to attend the World Championships, the offer will be extended to the 2nd place finisher in that division. Once the racers confirm their attendance, championship information will be provided to their family in the coming days and AASBD will be notified. All-American Soap Box Derby will be supplied the information regarding each winner. You will receive an email registration notice following the Local race which must be completed within 2 -3 days of receipt.

The cars driven by the winners in each division will be impounded at the end of the Local Race. The Race Director is required to secure these vehicles until they are ready to ship to Akron, Ohio, for inspection before the championship. The Race Director will contact you to schedule a time to meet to prepare your car for the race.

Race Week in Akron starts on a Sunday and ends the following Saturday the week of July 16th. There is racing in the Local Division during the week. Discounted hotel reservations can be made by the Local Race Winners and their families. That information is part of the packet from Akron. The expenses for Race Week are the responsibility of the winners' families. If sponsors to help offset race week expenses are obtained by a driver decals can be made to affix to the race car prior to shipment to Akron.

You will receive a schedule from All-American Soap Box Derby office for the Race Week Activities as race week approaches.