

Picking Your Team of Eight Drivers (or will it be sixteen Drivers?)

Historically in the Grand Prix League, race miles have been king, because without them there are no finishing or improvement points and obviously fewer lap points. Thus the key has always been to try and steer well clear of Drivers who are likely to be unreliable, either throwing it off the road themselves or because of their car's poor mechanicals.

Your initial selection will set the tone for your season, so when picking it try not to put all your eggs in one basket by having a mixture of constructors. Of course, as the adverts say, past performance is no guarantee of future performance; constructor's fortunes are cyclic as in any other sport.

Of course, the best insurance you can have is to have a Second Team. A Second Team works in just the same way as any other team and costs even less to enter. OK, so you will have to split the prize money but no one can take away your glory, not even me. So go on, indulge yourself and halve the chance of ritual humiliation.

Incidentally, you may not think it on Saturday evening but ironically, a poor qualifying grid position is often the opportunity for big points in the GPL. Conversely teams who "flatter to deceive" on Saturday tend to return fewer points on Sunday. Drivers who qualify badly but race well and cars unable to make best use of tyres in qualifying are both reasons to be cheerful for us.

Pit Stop Strategy

Hopefully you will have followed the rationale behind the Pit Stop System with the example shown in the Entry Form. If you are still struggling to come to terms with it, have a look at the GPL Pit Stops page for more examples.

Firstly, your starting selection will likely make or break your season, so choose carefully! If you have gone for a slightly risky selection of rookies you may want to consider a two-stop strategy in which case you will Nominate say five or six Rounds on your Entry Form. If you are more confident, or have gone for a steady selection, may be you will want to consider a one-stop strategy and Nominate ten or twelve Rounds on your Entry Form.

So although getting your Team right from the start is important, the Pit Stop system does allow you to rejuvenate your flagging Team. During the last four seasons we have seen some much-improved Teams with significant positional gains. As well as giving you the freedom to change your strategy depending how your Team fares, another benefit is being able to stop early to make a quick switch should say one of your Drivers be suspended or injured. In such an instance you would probably make up the extra penalty in just one race.

Managing Your Team through the season

Having picked your Drivers and nominated your Pit Stop Strategy, there is little else to do but enjoy the Grand Prix and wait for your first Pit Stop!

You should though keep an eye on how well your Drivers are performing and perhaps more importantly, how well they are performing compared to the other Drivers in their Group. You may not get too much of an impression from the first three races, but certainly at the return to Europe we should be getting a clearer picture of qualifying and racing patterns.

When your Pit Stop Signal arrives, you will be asked to change one Driver for another in the same Group. You will keep the points scored by your original Driver

and after your Pit Stop your new Driver will start scoring for you. Or (and no one spotted the change last year) alternatively you are allowed to carry on with the same eight drivers, much as in 2007 we often saw real F1 drivers opting not to change intermediate tyres at pit stops.