

What's Your Lucky Autocross Number?

How did you pick your autocross number? Is it your birth year, or graduation year? Was it your age when you started autocrossing? Or, was it because registration suggested it would be an easy number to make as in #1 or #11 (We aren't allowing blue tape as numbers or letters anymore but more on that later). Or, was it because of a famous connection, say a F-1 Driver, NASCAR, or IndyCar driver you like or root for? There have been many famous number connections in the racing world, and yours just might be one.

Formula 1 had no set way that it assigned numbers in the earlier years. It was not until the 1951 F-1 season that the reigning world champion would be assigned the #1, "usually". It was still not unusual to give the number to another car if the organizer decided to, as in 1963 when the Italians (at Monza) gave the lowest number to Bandini's Ferrari and the reigning champion Graham Hill #12. Or in 1964 when the Belgian organizers gave the reigning Champion Jim Clark #23 and gave Hill #1. So, even though the concepts were in place, the rules weren't in effect. It took many years of various numbering concepts to arrive at the current numbering system, where personal preference prevails. The number 1 is still reserved for the champion, but as is the case since 2015, the winner has opted to keep their own personal career number. Also, the #17 has been permanently retired after the death of Jules Bianchi and the #13 is not usually used because of superstition.

Unsurprisingly then, in F-1 history, the #1 has more wins than any other number, with over 180, but next would be #5 with more than 133. Of course, the current champion is Lewis Hamilton who campaigns the #44 on his Mercedes. Fan favorites are #77 Valtteri Bottas, #5 Sebastian Vettel, #16 Charles Leclerc, #10 Pierre Gasly, #33 Max Verstappen and #3 Daniel Ricciardo. Are you using one of these numbers?

But, what if you are an **IndyCar** fan? Well, what is the winningest number in Indy Motor Speedway history?

The #3 car has won 11 times with the #2 car winning 9 times. Last year's winner was Simon Pagenaud, who campaigns the #22.

The winning driver in the 2019 Indy car series was #2 Joseph Newgarden driving for Team Penske. From what I gather, Indy car basically has control over number assignment, but the official rules are that if a team owner had a number the previous year, he will be able to get it the next year. Seems like Penske likes 2, 3, and 12, but I am seeing that Joseph Newgarden is going to run #1 in this year's series. Other favorite drivers and numbers are #88 Colton Herta, #30 Takuma Sato, #28 Ryan Hunter-Reay, #27 Alexander Rossi, #15 Graham Rahal, #12 Will Power, #9 Scott Dixon or my favorite, #10 Felix Rosenqvist. Are you using your favorite driver's number?

NASCAR fan? I found a great current article on nascar.com that highlights every number used and every win for those numbers in a “premier-series” event. See if these are any of your lucky numbers.

Car #11 is the winningest number in Cup Series history, with 217 wins for 2024 starts, and top 10 finishes more than 50%. Most of those wins were with Cale Yarborough at the wheel, but Ned Jarrett, Darrell Waltrip, Junior Johnson and Denny Hamlin also drove #11 over the years.

Car #43 has 199 wins for the number, with the majority of those wins by Richard Petty.

Car #3 has 99 wins, with Dale Earnhardt driving 67 of those . #3 was also driven by Jr Johnson and Richard Childress.

Also, there is #2 with 95 wins, #24 with 93 wins, and #21 with 92 wins. Are any of these your lucky number?

Here are a couple of NASCAR numbers that seem to be the unluckiest with wins per starts - #36 zero wins/746 starts and #67 with zero wins/638 starts.

I looked at last years’ EESCC results and found that the most popular numbers were #7, #17, #25, and #66. At the start of my article I joked and wrote that some of you have numbers because we, at registration, have suggested those numbers because they are easy to make with blue tape..... **We have decided to actually follow our previously publicized rules and not allow blue tape numbers** except in extreme circumstances. Legal size numbers and letters with proper contrast is the new thing, NOT blue tape. You will not be able to pass tech until you have the proper numbers and letters in the correct size and contrast on your car. Please refer to the “EESCC Car number & Class Requirements” that is in the rules section on our website for guidance.

We are going to have available at registration magnetic numbers and letters for sale at a very reasonable price. The numbers are a gloss black on a rectangular white magnetic surface. Price will be \$3 per number and \$2 per Letter. For \$20-\$24 you can get a quality set that allows you to run at any autocross, including SCCA events. If you know you will be needing to purchase these to be allowed to run this year, please contact me at registrar@eescc.org to let me know what you need. If you don’t already have an assigned number, I can help you with a number and class. You can do this on your season pre-registration online also. I would encourage you to pre-register if you can.

Here’s to a great season of autocrossing!

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