



SPEC PANTHER SERIES RULES

*Last updated March 2025 – **changes highlighted in yellow***

DRIVER SPECIFICATION

Driver must be in the Instructor or Advanced group. Drivers not meeting this criteria may petition the Chief Instructor for approval. Approval will include a review of previous HPDE/performance driving experience as well as in car evaluation.

Maximum of 4 people per team, one car per team.

FEES

TEAMS

- One car per team.
- Annual team registration cost of \$100.

RACERS

- \$40 annual licensing fee.
- Must be an Instructor or approved Advanced/Intermediate driver.

RACE REGISTRATION

- FREE for Senior or higher level instructors.
- FREE for those already registered for HPDE that day (*including Level 1-5 instructors*).
- Otherwise, \$100/race per team - includes all drivers but can only drive during Spec Panther sessions.

TRANSPONDERS

- **REQUIRED to use AutoInterests transponders – Included for Spec Panther sessions.**

VEHICLE SPECIFICATION

MODELS

- 1992+ Ford Crown Victoria
- 1992+ Mercury Grand Marquis
- 1991+ Lincoln Town Car
- Mercury Marauders are not allowed

WEIGHT

- Vehicle must weigh 4,150 pounds with driver directly after a race.
- A stock vehicle will qualify.



BODY AND INTERIOR

LIVERY: The mandatory series sponsor sticker pack must be displayed on each competing vehicle in accordance with livery guidelines.

BODY: All body panels must be in place. All factory glass must be in place. No exposed holes in firewall. Headlights, taillights, turn signals, brake lights and wipers must be in place and functional.

AERO: OE-style rear spoiler permitted. Any parts that increase downforce are prohibited. Hood vent for heat extraction is permitted.

BATTERIES: Must remain in OE location. Lead-acid or AGM batteries permitted. Lithium batteries prohibited.

HORN: Must have a functioning horn. Sirens may substitute traditional horn.

INTERIOR: Following OE-style components are required. A 200 lb. penalty will be incurred per missing item. Ballast must be secured in trunk.

- DASH
- DOOR PANELS
- HEADLINER
- CARPET/RUBBER FLOORING
- PASSENGER SEAT
- REAR SEAT or fleet plastic rear seat panel
- AM/FM RADIO
- HVAC (not required to be working, but must be in place)

ENGINE

ENGINE: Block, heads, rotating assembly, exhaust manifold, intake manifold and injectors must be OE-style Panther 4.6L 2V. Additional oil cooler permitted and recommended. Forced induction/nitrous oxide prohibited.

ECU: Computer must be OE-style Panther 4.6L 2V. Custom tuning is permitted. Additional control boxes or piggy-back systems are prohibited.

IGNITION: Higher output, OE-style ignition coils and/or plug wires are permitted.

FUEL: Readily available pump gas or E85. OE-style fuel injectors limited to 24 lb./hr.

AIR INTAKE: OE or aftermarket intake tube/filter permitted.

THROTTLE BODY: Single, OE-style. Maximum diameter 65mm.

COOLANT: Glycol-based coolant prohibited. Water is the only acceptable coolant. Non-glycol additives, such as Water Wetter, is permitted.

EXHAUST: Modifications behind the OE manifolds are permitted. Catalytic converters may be removed or modified.



DRIVE: Mechanical belt-driven water pump, alternator and power steering pump are required. A/C compressor is required to be present, but not required to be functional.

DRIVETRAIN

TRANSMISSION: OE-case AODE, 4R70W, 4R70E, 4R75W or 4R75E. Upgraded clutches, steels and valve body permitted. External fluid cooler permitted and recommended. Deep pan permitted.

REAR AXLE: Ford 8.8 solid axle. 28 or 31-spline axles. 2.73-3.55 gear ratio. 1-way, clutch-style limited slip differentials permitted. Aluminum diff cover with main cap supports permitted.

SUSPENSION

SHOCKS/STRUTS: OE-style, non-adjustable, off-the-shelf replacements permitted. No coilovers.

SWAY BARS: Non-adjustable. OE-style. No aftermarket bars larger than 29.5mm Front/17mm Rear.

CONTROL ARMS: OE-style, cast/stamped, non-adjustable. Alignment hardware for camber adjustment permitted.

SPRINGS: OE-style coil springs. Ride height can be adjusted by cutting coils. No aftermarket performance springs (Eibach, H&R etc.)

BRAKES

CALIPERS: OE-style FoMoCo calipers. 2-piston Front/1-piston Rear.

PADS: Any pad compound is permitted.

ROTORS: 1-piece rotor only. Vented, slotted/drilled allowed. Maximum diameter 305mm Front/295mm Rear.

FLUID: DOT 4 high-temp <3% moisture.

WHEELS

ADAPTERS: Wheel adapters prohibited.

SPACERS: Wheel spacers are permitted, only when used in conjunction with longer wheel studs.

TIRES

Competition vehicles must run Kenda tires.

Minimum treadwear 200. Maximum width 285mm.



SAFETY

HELMET: SA2015 minimum rating.

NECK RESTRAINT: OE seat belts require either Simpson Hybrid S or donut neck collar. 5/6-point harnesses require Simpson Hybrid S or HANS.

SUIT: SFI 3.2A/1 minimum 1-piece suit or 2-piece jacket and pant.

GLOVES: SFI 3.3/5 minimum rating.

SHOES: SFI 3.3/5 minimum rating.

RESTRAINTS: OE seat belts or 5/6-point harnesses with harness bar. 4-point harnesses prohibited. Passengers require same level of safety equipment as driver.

SEATS: Any reclinable seat is permitted. Aftermarket seats must be quality construction (Corbeau, NRG, Sparco, Recaro etc.)

TOW POINTS: Minimum of 1 tow point at front and 1 tow point at rear. Tow points must be clearly labeled. Police push bars are acceptable as front tow points.

FIRE SUPPRESSION: Minimum 2 lb. hand-held extinguisher, 22 oz. FireAde or complete fire suppression system required. Must be within reach of driver.

SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED

Any modifications not specifically approved above are prohibited and will result in likely disqualification, so do not try to get away with unapproved modifications

EVENTS

Events will be conducted "Time Attack" style with competition based on lap times. This is not "wheel to wheel" racing, but race against the clock.

Lap times will be based on a best flying lap with times recorded by officials via transponder.

Laps can be run during any or all of the four designated 10-minute sessions held throughout the day's event.

A winner will be determined for each event based on fastest overall lap.

SCORING

The number of championship points available for a given event is based on finishing position. Only top 15 positions are awarded points. Points awarded will be as follows:



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1st - 30 points

2nd - 26 points

3rd - 23 points

4th - 20 points

5th - 17 points

6th - 14 points

7th - 12 points

8th - 10 points

9th - 8 points

10th - 6 point

11th - 5 point

12th - 4 point

13th - 3 point

14th - 2 point

15th - 1 point

Three (3) bonus points will be awarded to the fastest lap in each session.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

INDIVIDUAL

Each driver must participate in a minimum of 3 regular season races to qualify for the championship.

Points will be accumulated at each event to determine a season winner.

In the event of a tie, final position will be determined by most 1st place finishes. If still tied, most 2nd place finishes, then 3rd place finishes etc.

TEAM

Team championships will be determined by totaling the top finishing spot for the team, regardless of driver, at each event.

Team championship points are totaled for every event the car participated in.

This rewards teams who are able to field their car and be competitive at as many events as possible.

In the event of a tie, final position will be determined by most 1st place finishes combined for all drivers on the team. If still tied, most 2nd place finishes, then 3rd place finishes etc.



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PROTESTS

Any participant may file a rule protest against any other participant by submitting a written inquiry directly and in-person to the Spec Panther event/competition director, along with a \$200 protest fee.

Protests may only happen during the actual event wherein the car or driver in question is participating. Spec Panther officials will immediately review the request and make a determination on the inquiry.

If a participant is deemed to be in violation of the rules, a championship points penalty to be determined by the competition director will be assessed or they will be immediately placed in the exhibition class and the protest fee will be returned to the protester.

If the inquiry is found to be within the confines of the rules the protest fees will not be returned and both participants will be returned to the event.

Protests must be filed during the event and at least 30 minutes before the scheduled awards ceremony.

This is supposed to be a friendly competition; our preference is that the competitors talk to each other about misunderstandings before filing a formal protest.

CONDUCT

All competitors of Spec Panther series shall uphold the Basic Event Rules in order to promote, elevate and enhance the name, brand and reputation of the organization including its staff, directors, sponsors, volunteers and all those affiliated in any way with the Spec Panther series.

ANY act that is ruled to be detrimental to the event, series, sponsors or staff may result in a championship points penalty or removal from the event and/or series.

The competition director will have complete discretion to implement penalties for any reason.

Rules, infraction level, or "spirit of the event" interpretation will be at the sole discretion of the Spec Panther competition director, steering committee or event organizers, and all decisions are final.

Each participant is responsible for any and all cleanup and/or damages, including legal fees caused by themselves or their vehicle during any and all portions of the event. Entrants will not be permitted to compete in subsequent events until damages are paid in full.

Participants that drive unsafely or exhibit unsafe behavior will be immediately disqualified and removed from the event without the refund of any entry fees at the sole discretion of Spec Panther officials.

Any vehicle that spins, loops or leaves the track surface (4 wheels off) for any reason will be black flagged and required to report directly to the Spec Panther event steward as soon as safely possible. Multiple black flags issued to a participant will result in the loss of championship points or immediate dismissal from the event.