

FANTASY NASCAR DRAFTOLOGY 2009

A collective presentation of FANTASYDRAFTHelp.COM,
SPORTSOLOGY & CARD CORNER CLUB

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Rick Morris/Russ Cohen

The FantasyDrafthelp.com Draft Philosophy: You Win By Obtaining Value With Every Pick!

We at FantasyDrafthelp.com always emphasize the wisdom of our VIP approach to drafting: information and process lead to value. Of course, value is the single most important component of drafting or auctions. Even in the fantasy industry, this point is often overlooked.

In most cases, titles are won by patiently accruing value throughout a draft or auction. During the Information stage, fantasy owners compile information about players at individual positions. Process involves comparison of players across positions.

We put a tremendous amount of hard work into our draft board, and you do as well. As such, you need to trust the fruits of these labors and adhere to your draft board as much as possible. The surest way to be able to extract maximum value is to prepare extensively ahead of time and then refrain from jumping around on the board on Draft Day. Approach the draft with an actuarial mindset, determined to squeeze maximum value out of every pick, and you will be poised for success.

Table of Contents

Page 1: Draft Philosophy Overview, Draft Board Decoder, Lessons of "The Stat"

Page 2: Draft Board

Page 3: 2009 Overvalued and Undervalued Drivers, Don't Be That Guy

Page 4: 2009 Mock Draft & Analysis

Page 5: 2009 Sleepers, Suggested League Guidelines

Page 6: 2009 Press Pass racing cards overview

FantasyDrafthelp.com & TheFDHLounge.com

Draft Board Decoder

The FantasyDrafthelp.com draft board contains all the information you need right at your fingertips. Our board contains a wealth of materials in a condensed space.

* Players are color-coded by their value by round in a 6-team draft. 1st round is gold, 2nd round is silver and 3rd round is bronze.

* The "Exp" column shows how drivers rated on an "Experts' Draft Board" compilation of other leading industry sources. The "Stat" column shows how each player performed on our standard deviation from the mean statistic in 2008 (stat details to the right).

* The placement of each driver in the final standings for the past three seasons is listed, with numbers shaded in grey indicating the driver qualified for the Chase for the Championship. The ranking for each driver on the five different types of tracks over the past season is shown also as compiled on our aforementioned standard deviation from the mean statistic.

Evaluating Production Across a Spectrum: Lessons of "The Stat"

Our "UQB" (Ultimate Quantitative Baseline) category on our draft board calculates the standard deviation from the mean for all drivers. In simple English, imagine a spectrum going across from left to right, with negative numbers on the left side, a "zero" in the middle and positive numbers on the right side.

We use this statistic for football, baseball, basketball, hockey and hoops as well as NASCAR. For NASCAR, we use a breakdown of how each driver has fared on each track type, with the numbers weighted proportionally to reflect the number of races held on each track type.

A driver's performance in each category is plotted on one of these spectrums, with the most valuable players putting up most of their numbers on the positive side. Then, we add up the totals of every category, positive and negative. By using this tool, we can identify not merely how they performed, but how valuable their performances were in each category. Truly, this statistic serves as the ultimate baseline for the previous season's production.

2009 FantasyDrafthelp.com Fantasy NASCAR Draft Board

Drivers	UQ			O8 Rk	O7 Rk	O6 Rk	Interm-24	Restr-6	Short-6	Super-4	Road-2	Sports Talk Network Dot Com
	B	Rk	Exp									
1 Ky Busch	137	3	2	10	5	10	6	2	13	1	1	Your Town
2 Johnson	145	2	1	1	1	1	2	5	11	16	7	
3 Edwards	147	1	3	2	9	12	1	15	6	22	4	
4 Biffle	122	6	4	3	14	13	3	20	9	29	11	Your Teams
5 Kenseth	72	14	5T	11	4	2	9		20		5	
6 J Gordon	99	9	5T	7	2	6	7		2		11	
7 Harvick	126	5	10T	4	10	4	5	11	3	13	20	Your Passion
8 J Burton	135	4	7T	6	8	7	4	4	10	12	10	
9 Hamlin	81	13	9	8	12	3	13	13	4	20	19	
10 Earnhardt Jr	98	10	7T	12	16	5	11	8	7	6	15	The FDH Lounge
11 Bowyer	111	7	14	5	3	17	12	3	4	3	9	
12 Martin	107	8	10T	28	27	9	7	23	1	18		
13 Ragan	85	12	13	13	23		10	22	14	5	28	Nothing Is Off Topic
14 Stewart	93	11	12	9	6	11	14	5	8	8	3	
15 McMurray	37	27	20	16	17	25	16				15	
16 Ku Busch	67	15	19	18	7	16	22	1	26	13	21	The FDH Lounge Dot Com
17 Vickers	53	18T	16T	19	38	15	19	18	29	9	11	
18 Kahne	60	16	15	14	19	8	14	17	19	17	26	
19 Truex Jr.	55	17	18	15	11	19	17	24	12		6	Fantasy Drafthelp Dot Com
20 Newman	45	21T	16T	17	13	18	18		15	21	14	
21 B Labonte	53	18T		21	18	21	20	10	29	10		
22 Montoya	39	24T	23	25	20	NA	26		17		2	Complete Coverage Of Major Fantasy Sports And The Largest Array Of Niche Sports Coverage Available Today: We Promise You That!
23 Stremme			21									
24 Logano	1		26T	63								
25 Menard	48	20		26	34		29	14	28	4		The FDH Lounge Dot Com
26 Mears	45	21T	22	20	15	14	23	28	23	23	8	
27 Sorenson	11		26T	32	22	24		21		27		
28 Kvapil	38	26	28	23			24		16	28	29	Complete Coverage Of Major Fantasy Sports And The Largest Array Of Niche Sports Coverage Available Today: We Promise You That!
29 Sadler	40	23		24	25	22	25	16		19	15	
30 Reutimann	13		24	22	39			26	21			
31 Gilliland	31	29	29T	27	28		26		25		21	Complete Coverage Of Major Fantasy Sports And The Largest Array Of Niche Sports Coverage Available Today: We Promise You That!
32 Riggs	39	24T		31			28	19		7		
33 R Gordon	32	28		33	26	30		9		2		
34 Blaney	20			30	31	26	29				30	Complete Coverage Of Major Fantasy Sports And The Largest Array Of Niche Sports Coverage Available Today: We Promise You That!
35 Waltrip	7			29				25				
36 Hornish Jr	1			35	63							
37 Allmendinger	27	30	25	36	43		21				27	Complete Coverage Of Major Fantasy Sports And The Largest Array Of Niche Sports Coverage Available Today: We Promise You That!
38 Nemechek	4			37	37	27				29		
39 R. Smith	7			34					22			
40 Amirola	17		29T	42				27	18	25		Complete Coverage Of Major Fantasy Sports And The Largest Array Of Niche Sports Coverage Available Today: We Promise You That!
41 Speed				55								

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 Wednesday nights from 7-10 PM (EST) on SportsTalkNetwork.com

2009 Overvalued Drivers

Dale Earnhardt, Jr. (10th on our draft board, tied for 7th on the experts' draft board): With only three wins since 2004 and an average finish of 11th place on intermediate tracks (which account for 2/3 of total races) last year, he's still a legitimate Chase candidate, albeit a lower-tier one.

Kasey Kahne (18th on our draft board, 15th on the experts' draft board): With a prohibition on testing this year (for a team that really needed more of it) and the departure of Ray Evernham, a step backwards from last year's 14th place finish seems likely.

Casey Mears (26th on our draft board, 22nd on the experts' draft board): Another change in rides will hinder, at least in the short term, Mears' quest for stability and thus, growth.

Ryan Newman (20th on our draft board, tied for 16th on the experts' draft board): A year in transition at Stewart-Haas is unlikely to conjure up memories of the magical '03 season.

David Reutimann (30th on our draft board, 24th on the experts' draft board): He may take a step back behind some of the other up-and-comers as Toyota's acclimation process continues.

2009 Undervalued Drivers

Clint Bowyer (11th on our draft board, 14th on the experts' draft board): He's one of two drivers to place 12th or better on every track type on average in 2008. Don't overestimate the transition to a new crew with this steady driver in '09.

Kurt Busch (16th on our draft board, 19th on the experts' draft board): He's getting a rap as an underachiever, but still won last year and nobody was better on the restrictor plate races in '08.

Kevin Harvick (7th on our draft board, tied for 10th on the experts' draft board): Many fantasy touts prefer flashier drivers, but Harvick just gets it done relentlessly, year in and year out — and he made the Chase the last three years with fourth place finishes in two of them.

Bobby Labonte (21st on our draft board, not in the Top 30 on the experts' draft board): Talk about steady but not sensational: 21st place in the standings in '08, 18th in '07 and 21st in '06. Show some faith in this veteran.

Jamie McMurray (15th on our draft board, 20th on the experts' draft board): Reunited with crew chief Donnie Wingo, McMurray is poised to build off of his strong finish to the season.

Paul Menard (25th on our draft board, not in the Top 30 on the experts' draft board): He battled through tough surroundings at DEI to race strong on restrictor plate tracks and superspeedways. Now this youngster has to up his game on the other types of tracks.

Don't Be That Guy in Fantasy NASCAR This Year!

Don't Be That Guy that "marks out" for his favorite driver. If that driver happens to be a good "value pick" on the board, so be it. But if you reach for a driver for personal reasons, you'll live to regret it. More than in any other sport, fantasy NASCAR owners make foolish picks for reasons of personal fanhood and smart competitors always benefit ...

Don't Be That Guy that doesn't pay enough attention to track types when drafting. You can't win without a number of drivers who run strong on intermediate-length tracks, because they account for 2/3 of the races — but keep your team balanced overall aside from that ...

Don't Be That Guy that overrates "Little E." You know who you are!

2009 FantasyDrafthelp.com NASCAR Mock Draft & Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Jeff Maslanich	Rick Morris	Jason Jones	Jeff Weber	Samantha Jones	Mike Ptak
1	Johnson	Ky. Busch	Edwards	Biffle	J. Gordon	Earnhardt, Jr.
2	Bowyer	Hamlin	Harvick	Burton	Kenseth	Martin
3	Stewart	Ragan	Ku. Busch	Newman	Kahne	Truex, Jr.
4	Mendard	Stremme	McMurray	B. Labonte	Montoya	Vickers
5	Sadler	Logano	Mears	Sorenson	R. Gordon	Kvapil
6	Blaney	Gilliland	Nemechek	Hornish, Jr.	Waltrip	Reutimann

On January 26, 2009, FantasyDrafthelp.com convened their contributors for their fifth annual NASCAR fantasy mock draft. Participants drafted in the following order in a standard serpentine draft:

1. FDH NASCAR contributor Jeff Maslanich
2. FDH Managing Partner Rick Morris
3. FDH Senior Editor Jason Jones
4. FDH Motorsports contributor and chief NHRA correspondent Jeff Weber
5. FDH Entertainment Editor Samantha Jones
6. FDH NASCAR contributor Mike Ptak

Here's how it shook out:

ROUND 1: Jeff Maslanich went for the industry chalk pick at #1 in Johnson, while Rick was very happy to have the #1 pick on the FDH board, Kyle Busch, fall to him. Once Edwards and Biffle predictably went 3-4, then unpredictability ensued. Sann and Mike put their trust in some heralded Hendrick names to end the round.

ROUND 2: Mike took his second Hendrick driver with the grand old veteran making a comeback in Martin. Other than that, there were few surprises in this round.

ROUND 3: Jeff Maslanich proclaimed that he received a great value in Stewart, who will be burdened as a team owner, but is returning to Chevy — where he had a great comfort level. Actually, this round was full of drivers who could have been expected to go higher last year and may therefore be good comeback candidates.

ROUND 4: Sann gambled on the talented Montoya making more of an adjustment to NASCAR this year; meanwhile, hubby Jason received a great value on the FDH board when McMurray dropped to him.

ROUND 5: Does it get more boom-or-bust than Rick's selection of young Logano? Robby Gordon may have been a bit of a surprise here, but she knows she'll get lots of points from the superspeedway and restrictor plate races.

ROUND 6: Jeff Weber raised some eyebrows with the Hornish pick as former open-wheel racers were out of favor this year.

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2009 NASCAR Sleepers

A.J. Allmendinger. His best races as a whole came on intermediate tracks in 2008, and since those account for 2/3 of all NASCAR races, that shows you that his transition from open-wheel is progressing at a pace where he might become a nice late-round value.

Joey Logano. It's hard to get a read on what exactly this super-talented youngster can accomplish right off the bat — but he's likely to be regarded as even more suspect and raw than he really may be. Capitalize if he drops into the late rounds.

Mark Martin. Without full-season stats available as a point of comparison for 2007 and 2008, it's tough to get an exact read on what his capabilities can be for 2009. But don't sleep on this grand veteran with the power of Hendrick behind him.

Brian Vickers. He's arguably the best driver never to qualify for the Chase and his growing consistency across different track types means that he might shed that label this year.

Suggested League Guidelines

The best way to organize a league is by allocating talent through a six-round standard serpentine draft with six owners.

Teams accumulate the sum total of the NASCAR points earned by each driver throughout the course of the season, with no transactions made. Additionally, bonus points are awarded for the top five racers in the final standings: 1. 1000 points 2. 750 points 3. 500 points 4. 250 points 5. 125 points.

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2009 Press Pass racing cards overview

By Valerie Wood/CardCornerClub.net

Press Pass' first offering of 2009 features a 120-card base set, a Tony Stewart subset and a subset for the much-acclaimed young driver signed by Joe Gibbs' Racing, Joey Logano. He has been hailed as the 'greatest thing since sliced bread' (and nicknamed accordingly). While it remains to be seen whether sliced bread will pan out or just be toast after his first full racing season (ahem...), it is interesting that Press Pass has already given him his very own subset. Enough of this loafing, however; let's get on to the cards!

One hobby box yielded 116 of the 120 base cards, 25 doubles and three triples. The base card set includes notable Nationwide Series and Craftsman Truck Series drivers. There is, additionally, a 'Freeze Frame' set-within-a-set, inserts (Unleashed, Tradin' Paint, and Zero cards), and Cup Chase redemption cards to be mailed in for year-end subsets. The Top 12 subset features the drivers who made the final cut for the Chase for the Cup in 2008.

Premiums in this particular Press Pass 2009 set include Burning Rubber memorabilia cards (tire rubber embedded in the card) and autographed Burning Rubber Signature Series cards. As has become standard with Press Pass, there is a year-long memorabilia program kicking off, with autographs (and the Burning Rubber cards) as well as a 'Santa Hat's subset and retail-exclusive cards for Wal-Mart and Target retail boxes. And of course, there are parallel cards (gold and silver) for the base set as well.

The plus, in this offering, is that while the cards are fairly plain (not a lot of embossing and glitz, YET), the quality of the photography and card stock has come a long way since the early days of Press Pass. Those of us who collected the first Press Pass cards of the early 1990's will know exactly what I mean.

It becomes more difficult each year, from an accuracy/production standpoint, for NASCAR card manufacturers to come out of the gate with a set of cards that will be remotely similar to the driver/sponsor/team alignments that will show up at Daytona in February. Press Pass makes a gallant attempt to do this correctly, but it will take another couple of sets or so for the dust to settle and cards to show 'which team' the driver is racing for—particularly those who are not the top 15 or so drivers. So take this set with a grain of salt, as they say; at least one box usually yields a memorabilia card and an autograph!

Overall, rate this one a B+ for quality and effort. A nice little set of cards.

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