

Wacky Races is a 1968 cartoon series by Hanna-Barbera. It's a series of races in which gangsters, aviator planes and other archetypes that were apparently more popular in the 60s drive their trope themed cars with much of the focus being on Dick Dastardly and his various failed attempts at cheating. Which is like watching tennis with the focus being on that guy in the crowd trying to put someone off.

[Miss it! Miss it! - hit in face]

The show was originally conceived as a kind of game show where kids would have to guess the winner of each race to win prizes and such. So you know, gambling. But for kids.

But speaking of winning, just who exactly did win the Wacky Races? There were 34 individual races in the whole show, and I'm sticking to the original series here. No spin-offs, reboots, comic books, video game or car commercials.

Here's a quick recap of the racers:

Now if you're the impatient type who hates fun and just wants the answer right now then looking at just who came first place the most, then it's a four way tie between the Ant-Hill Mob, Penelope Pitstop, Luke & Blubber Bear and Peter Perfect, each getting first 4 times. But that doesn't accurately portray the most consistently best performing drivers. If a driver gets first place 4 times but rolls in last the other 30 times, doesn't mean they're a better driver than someone who, like a considerate lover, always comes second. To measure that lets use the scoring system from Formula One racing, and here to explain it is videographer and Formula 1 enthusiast, Matt Amys.

[Matt Amys VT]

It was at this point, I got bored.

Although we have 11 racers, Dick Dastardly has only ever crossed the finishing line twice. Once on the back of a donkey dead last, and one time he actually won but got disqualified for cheating. Which is bullshit because Peter Perfect did the exact same thing in another race.

Because of this, we will not count the Mean Machine in any race, and just give them nil point. All that make sense? Then away we go!

So one problem I ran into trying to rank every racer 1st to 10th is that many episodes don't actually show every racer cross the finish line. It'll just be the top 3 or top 5, but often not all 10. So I had work off their last sighting in the episode.

Example:

The only time I broke this rule was for [episode title] where the narrator says that the Gruesome Twosome were sent to last place. There are other racers left unseen but as we don't see the Creepy Coupe after this point, I kept them to last place. If you don't like it, blame 1968.

[Calls up stranger to blame them]

And that's it. After 34 races, we have our final results. Drumroll please!

And The Slag Brothers are the winners! With the Ant Hill mob in second and Penelope Pitstop in third. This is quite surprising as the kinda main characters of the show, in terms of screen time and plot points, what there is of them, are Dick Dastardly & Muttley, Penelope Pitstop, The Ant-Hill Mob and Peter Perfect, but poor Peter crawls in at 8th place overall. And the Arkansas Chuggabug, despite get first place 4 times, as previously mentioned, they still come in dead last overall.

So what does this all mean? Well, from what I seen, whatever happens in a race has zero correlation with who actually wins. Like, an episode that prominently features the Ant Hill Mob will still have them unceremoniously roll in, like 7th place. Everything within the race is just visual jokes and puns and none of it actually impacts the ending at all. It just feels random and arbitrary which maybe is the whole point of the show. It wasn't made to make sense so maybe these sort of things don't need to have a satisfying ending.

[Long pause] [End]