

# So you are thinking of joining- PIRELLI FERRARI *formula classic*



**So you are thinking of joining the Pirelli Ferrari *formula classic* series.**  
**Here is Nicky Paul-Barron's guide to the classes and cars eligible for the series**



**So you are thinking of joining the Pirelli Ferrari *formula classic* series. A wise choice no doubt, but you may be unsure about the classes, and which models are most suitable for the task at hand.**

There is a very simple four class or group structure, which is determined by engine size and degree of modification allowed.

**Group 1** is for unmodified cars not exceeding 3 litres in capacity. **Group 2** has the same capacity limit, but allows a degree of modification. **Group 3** allows for cars over 3 litres in unmodified form, and lastly **Group 4** allows these cars to have some modifications.

The full regulations are kept fairly short and are available to view on the web site. All cars must be production models built prior to 1990 (i.e. before the 348). Turbo-charged cars are not allowed presently.

All cars race on Pirelli road tyres. Weight limits are set based on the model's original weight.

**So what model to choose?** Firstly it should be stated that all Ferraris, of any age, like racing – it's in the blood. Also that as much fun can be had towards the rear of the grid as at the front.

**Let's deal with the earlier pre-308 cars first.** 246 Dino, various 250s, Daytona, GTC, GTC4, 400, 365 Boxer and many

other models have all raced with the club over the years. Some have been virtually standard, others modified, but all have had a good time. In fact as Tim Summers and others have proved, a Grp4 Daytona is a pretty useful bit of kit, as would be a well prepared Boxer etc. However as lovely as it is to see these cars racing we appreciate that they are the exception rather than the rule.



## So what are the more obvious choices?

Well I suppose that top of the tree must be a 328 in GTB or GTS form, pre or post ABS. These cars are basically on the pace in Group 3 out of the box. In fact so good are they that a standard car will on occasion show up on the overall podium. Preparation is basically limited to MSA safety requirements, plus brake cooling and pad material. When it comes to winning overall and Group 4 then again a 328 is the most obvious choice. Costs here are of course higher, but the regulations do prevent the cars becoming too extreme. There is no aero allowed for example, and the weight limits, and tyres are the same in the un-modified and modified classes.





**308 GTB & GTS models also make excellent race cars.** The carburettor cars are more commonly seen, but there is no reason to think that a GTB/S QV wouldn't be a good bet, or in fact a winner in Group 1. For Group 1 preparation would be similar to a 328, but if your car has wet sump lubrication then it may be advisable to take some advice from an experienced preparer. Getting a 308 to win overall and group 2 gets a little more expensive compared to a 328. This is simply due to the fact that even our fastest 328's race with basically standard engines. The original injection system fitted to a 328 does not lend itself to a full house engine build. On carburettor 308's though there is no such limitation, and they need the extra power afforded by a race engine to compete with a 328. A glass fibre 308 GTB is possibly the ultimate in terms of outright pace overall and in Group 4, due to their slightly lower weight limit. However if this takes your fancy don't under estimate the costs involved.



**With a tighter purchasing budget in mind you should consider the various Mondial models, plus of course the 308 GT4.** Mondials came in 3 litre, 3.2 and 3.4 variants so can be suitable for all classes. Their disadvantage is weight. The 3 Litre and 3.2 models race some

105 Kgm heavier than a steel bodied 308 GTB for example. The 3.4 is even heavier. That weight has to be accelerated, braked and turned, but having said that the members that do race them just love them.



The 308 GT4 has been racing with the club for many years. With the slight caution as previously stated regarding wet sump lubrication they make super race cars. They are not that much heavier than a GTB/GTS and some say that the slightly longer wheelbase, as with a Mondial, makes them an easier car on the limit. They may be a better bet for the standard Group 1 though as a full house Group 2 car would cost a similar amount to build as a GTB without the potential residual value.

I just mentioned the V word "value" so let's go there briefly. All Ferraris have risen in price in recent years. I have no crystal ball so make no promises. However it is a fact that if you had been fortunate enough to race your Ferrari in the last twenty years or so, then your racing costs will have been largely offset by increases in your car's value. Does that mean that we've been racing for free all these years? Maybe not, but it certainly beats throwing money down a big hole as with most other club racing.

**Are there any "sleepers"?** Well possibly not quite sleepers, but I would tip a 308 GTB QV as a winner in Group 1 and I can't remember that we have ever seen one racing. Boxers and a Testarossa would be great fun to try and are not often seen, although this is hardly a budget proposition.

**Whatever your choice** you will be joining a very friendly bunch who I'm sure will offer you every assistance and advice, at least until you start beating them!

**We asked Nicky to write this piece as he is an experienced Ferrari club racer in many different models. He is available to give advice on any matters relating to formula classic and with his extensive contacts he could also help you find a suitable car.**

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Thanks to Simonpics for the photos