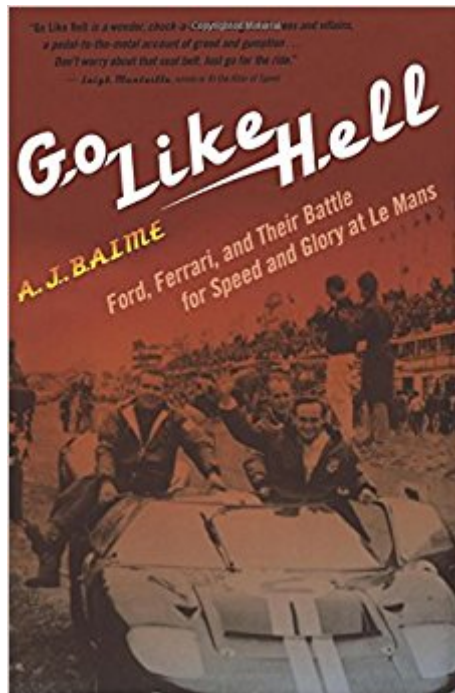


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# Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, And Their Battle For Speed And Glory At Le Mans



## Synopsis

By the early 1960s, the Ford Motor Company, built to bring automobile transportation to the masses, was falling behind. Young Henry Ford II, who had taken the reins of his grandfather's company with little business experience to speak of, knew he had to do something to shake things up. Baby boomers were taking to the road in droves, looking for speed not safety, style not comfort. Meanwhile, Enzo Ferrari, whose cars epitomized style, lorded it over the European racing scene. He crafted beautiful sports cars, "science fiction on wheels," but was also called "the Assassin" because so many drivers perished while racing them. *Go Like Hell* tells the remarkable story of how Henry Ford II, with the help of a young visionary named Lee Iacocca and a former racing champion turned engineer, Carroll Shelby, concocted a scheme to reinvent the Ford company. They would enter the high-stakes world of European car racing, where an adventurous few threw safety and sanity to the wind. They would design, build, and race a car that could beat Ferrari at his own game at the most prestigious and brutal race in the world, something no American car had ever done. *Go Like Hell* transports readers to a risk-filled, glorious time in this brilliant portrait of a rivalry between two industrialists, the cars they built, and the "pilots" who would drive them to victory, or doom.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I found an advanced copy of this at my buddy's place, I don't much like racing, but I forgot my iPod and needed something to look at on the train so I figured, what the Hell. I couldn't put it down when I got off the subway; it's the best book I've read in years. I think it's billed incorrectly as a story about racing. To me it read as a compelling fight between two strong and very different characters (Mr.

Ford and Mr. Ferrari). Ford represents the young gun in big business while Ferrari is the elder artisan. The two men could have been toothpick salesman for all I cared. The magic was how AJ Baime cinematically recreated their war. It was the clash of the titans but instead of being fought on a battlefield it unfolded on a racetrack (though I was surprised by the amount of casualties involved). Anyways whether or not you are a gearhead if you like character driven non-fiction you'll enjoy this. I have never reviewed a book but I figured many non-NASCAR folk might miss out on a good read.

This is the best overall complete story of the Ferrari-Ford battles of the 1960s that I have read. It does not include much detail on the '67 season and the '68-'69 J.W.E efforts, but it covers the origins and years through '66 wonderfully. Especially good are the portraits of Henry Ford II, Enzo Ferrari, Phil Hill, John Surtees, Ken Miles, and Carroll Shelby. Other characters, like John Wyer and Bruce McLaren are well drawn. Baime also describes the industry environment pretty well. When people ask me to list the best books on this era, I name Levine's "Dust and Glory", Wyer's "The Certain Sound", Horseman's "Racing In The Rain", Evan's "Ken Miles", my book, Friedman's "Ford GT-40", Cahier's "Pit Stops" and now Baime's book. Nice job and worth the read for anyone who loves the sport or enjoys exciting (and true) stories.

Here in America, most people think the Daytona 500 and the Indianapolis 500 are the 2 biggest auto races out there. To those people I say, "Not so fast." The Grand Prix d'Endurance les 24 Heures du Mans (24 Hours of Le Mans) is the greatest single race in the world as it pushes a car to the absolute limits. It's also a race that as a child, I had a hard time believing that a single race would go on for 24 hours. I thought it was insane, and even now I still think it is to some degree. This book focuses on probably the most interesting period of Le Mans, and the struggle of Ford in trying to win the race outright. A.J. Baime has written a detailed and engaging history outlining how and why the Ford Motor Company became so driven in trying to ultimately win Le Mans. The need to sell more cars was often achieved through racing victories as seen with the dominance of NASCAR by the Ford Galaxie. Le Mans dominance by Ferrari through the early 1960s also translated into sales of customer cars. There was the belief that if a manufacturer's vehicle won at Le Mans, the company must know how to build cars that can last, as well as having power. The story that unfolds shifts between the Ferrari side and the Ford side. We get to meet the big names of the automotive world like Henry Ford II, Enzo Ferrari, and Carroll Shelby. Then we get the foundation for why Henry Ford II became so obsessed with winning at Le Mans. It would take 3 tries before his goal was fully

realized in 1966. Subsequently the GT40 would dominate Le Mans in 1967, 1968, and 1969 to close out the decade. In between that we are told stories about many of the greatest race drivers that the world has ever seen ranging from men like Bruce McLaren to Phil Hill to Mario Andretti. What makes the story so engaging for the reader is Baime's ability to make the reader truly understand what was going on in the sports car racing world during the 1960s, and it certainly doesn't hurt that we get to know many of the individuals. When reading this book, it becomes clear why auto racing these days will never match the "golden age" of racing during the 1950s and 1960s. Racing was a glorious thing, and the cars were simply machines meant to go fast. While we could debate the obvious stupidity in retrospect of the lack of car safety, it's the very lack of safety that makes this era so appealing. You had to have somewhat of a death wish to get behind the wheel of a Le Mans race car or a Formula One car. The amount of drivers killed during races is astounding, but what might be more astounding is how accepted it was. Safety was viewed as being unmanly so there were no great pushes towards it. Drivers tended to be surrounded by fuel, and things we take for granted now like seatbelts were an after-thought then. But what is just as amazing is how with the technology of those days, they were able to achieve speeds in excess of 200MPH on the famed Mulsanne Straight. Equally amazing, are driver reactions to the race cars reaching these insane speeds. With the end of the 1960s, the golden age started to pass, but it would linger on in the early 1970s with the Porsche 917. For those who love reading about the GT40, the Porsche 917 story is one I suggest checking out. For as fast as the GT40's were, the 917 was even faster hitting 246MPH on the Mulsanne Straight. In fact one driver was reported as saying when he had to start braking for the Mulsanne Corner, the 917 was still accelerating. This book is highly recommended for all racing enthusiasts, and even those with a passing interest in automotive racing or even automotive history, as the story itself is unlike any other out there. The Ford-Ferrari rivalry is one of the greatest stories in automotive history, and this book does that story justice.

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