

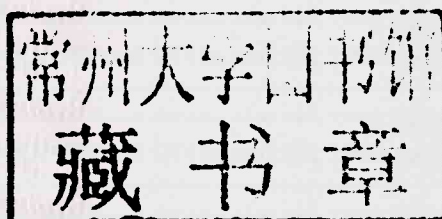
Ford versus Ferrari

THE BATTLE FOR LE MANS AND
SPORTS CAR SUPREMACY

ANTHONY PRITCHARD

Ford versus Ferrari

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SPORTS CAR SUPREMACY



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Haynes Publishing

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Author's note

Motor racing history has been interspersed by great incidents and great eras – incidents such as the Jaguar domination of the Le Mans race in 1953, and eras such as the years of the Silver Arrows between 1934 and 1939. One of the greatest eras in sports car racing was the battle for victory at Le Mans waged between the incumbent, Ferrari – which in post-war days had won the 24 hours' race seven times – and the upstart Ford, dismayed by its failure to buy Ferrari and determined to win the Le Mans

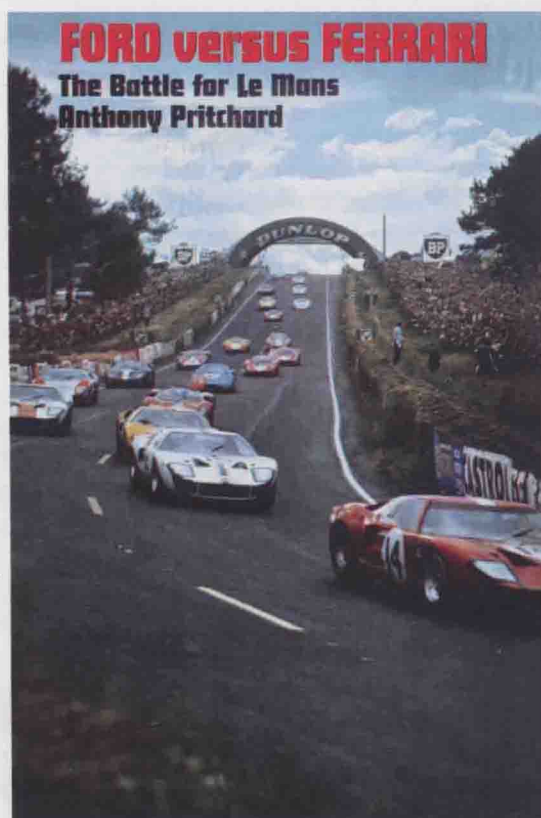
race as part of a sales drive implemented by Henry Ford II. This battle has become almost legendary. Both the Ford GT40s and their 7.0-litre developments, and the flame red V12 cars from Maranello, have become icons of motor racing history.

The two teams were locked in battle for four seasons, 1964 to 1967, and the category of racing was GT Prototype, but the layman would quite rightly interpret this as sports car racing. During the first two of these years the Ferrari team retained its ascendancy, while Ford floundered – mainly because it expected victory too soon, too easily, and also because of its very substantial organisational shortcomings. Then the Ford team won at Le Mans for the next two years in succession, although (as is explained later) Ferrari retained its supremacy in the Prototype Championship.

At the end of 1967 the Ford team withdrew from Prototype racing and so, though for a single year only, did Ferrari. It seemed that for 1968 the mantle of success would be assumed by the German Porsche team, which was deeply committed to sports car racing but had always raced in the smaller-capacity classes. For 1968 there was a 3.0-litre capacity limit for Prototypes, and Porsche introduced a new 3.0-litre model, typed the 908.

There was also provision for the old sports cars to race provided that their engine size did not exceed 5.0-litres. Ford GT40s came into this category, and John Wyer, who had originally been appointed by Ford to head the GT40 programme, was sponsored by Gulf Oil to race a team of these now, apparently, obsolete cars. In 1968 the Gulf-Fords won both the Le Mans 24 Hours race and the Sports Car

RIGHT The cover of the original 1968 edition of *Ford versus Ferrari*.



Championship; they repeated the Le Mans victory in 1969, to give Ford four successive wins in this event. Gulf's win in 1968 in both the Championship and at Le Mans was a success that millions of dollars poured into the works team by the American Ford company had failed to achieve.

Earlier editions of this book were of a somewhat different character. The original edition was published in 1968 by Pelham Books, the Sports and Leisure Publishing Division of Michael Joseph, who issued it as what we call these days 'a reading book', mainly text and very few illustrations. The publisher at Pelham Books was Bill Luscombe, one of the great characters of post-war publishing, who took me for lunch at the famed *The Ivy* restaurant before accepting the book for publication. He astounded me by having gulls' eggs as a starter.

Later, the book was sold as a French language edition published in Belgium and an Italian edition. The contents of the latter were made available in advance to Enzo Ferrari, and before the deal was signed I saw the reading copy supplied to the Italian publishers and made available by them to Ferrari. All paragraphs critical of the Ferrari organisation and Enzo Ferrari were heavily exorcised (it is, I think, the correct choice of word in this context) by pencil slashes (the work of Franco Gozzi?). This first edition covered, of course, only the straight battle between the two works in the years 1964–67. Later, in the 1980s, an illustrated edition was published in the United States and this was expanded to cover the years 1968–69.

The title of the book was an inevitable choice for a lawyer. When the book was published only a year after Ford's second victory, it was a work primarily of reportage with an element of interpretation. The second edition was much more extensively illustrated. When the original book was published, much less was known about the internal workings of Ford or the Shelby organisation, and these can now be discussed in far greater detail. The emphasis of this book is very much on the illustrations, but with a nostalgic account of the races and statistical data about the cars and the competitions.

I was at the 24 Hours race on every occasion from the time when Fords first ran in the event in 1964 until the fourth Ford win, achieved by the Gulf team, in 1969. I also attended most

other championship endurance races during this period. In addition I was fortunate enough to be present at Le Mans to watch the Porsche victories in 1969–70. Although I was only a spectator at Le Mans during the Ford years, spectators then had access to the paddock; they could visit the teams' garages and, if they were sensible, talk to drivers and others. I have first-hand recollections of the atmosphere, the tension, the disappointments and the tragedies.

In writing this book, I have relied to a considerable extent on what those actively involved have told me over the years. Those who have so kindly helped with information include Chris Amon, Richard Attwood, Roberto Bussinello, the late Carlo Chiti, Ermanno Cuoghi, Gérard Ducarouge, Mauro Forghieri, the late Ignazio Giunti, the late Mike Hailwood, the late Paul Hawkins, the late Walter Hayes, Hans Herrmann, the late Colonel Ronnie Hoare, Jacky Ickx, the late Dan Margulies, David Piper, Brian Redman, Michael Salmon, Roy Salvadori, Jack Sears, Peter Sutcliffe, John Surtees, the late John Wyer and the late David Yorke.

As always, Dave Hill of the Ford Motor Company has been immensely helpful in making available photograph research facilities and supplying many pictures from the immense Ford photographic library. A particularly pleasurable aspect of writing this book has been the access I was given to the Ford library, which contains so much non-Ford material. Another stalwart helper has been Kathy Ager of LAT Photographic, who has always strived hard to find the particular photographs that I was seeking. Additionally, many photographs have come from the Tom March Collection, owned by Steve Edwards and myself.

I need to make a small point about Ferrari designations. In Ferrari terminology there is some inconsistency regarding how the company's designations are written; the correct way, from the factory's point of view, is, for example, 250 P, 250 LM or sometimes 250/P, 250/LM. However, the first of these creates ugly line breaks and the second looks wrong. Accordingly, I have throughout this book written 250P, 250LM and so on.

Anthony Pritchard
Wooburn Green
Buckinghamshire
May 2011

A C C O R D O FE/FO

Allegato N° 17

Punto 1)

Il presente accordo avrà inizio a decorrere dal 15 luglio 1963 e termina il 31 dicembre 2000.

Punto 2)

Le parti riconoscono che per la adeguata realizzazione degli scopi sociali si renderà necessario disporre di mezzi maggiori degli attuali, che hanno comportato un impegno di spese di circa 450.000.000 lire annue. FE sottometterà a FO il programma di massima con le previsioni di spese relative per ottenere tempestivo benessere quando l'impegno di spesa superi la cifra di lire 450.000.000.

*cco, non
ci siamo
o*

(A)

8° Cap'tolo

*interire fondino
molto leggero che si legge*

B = 11,5
elt. 12,6

1:062

Glossary of abbreviations

The abbreviations used for certain organisations and events need explaining:

AMR Alan Mann Racing, which represented Ford in the European Touring Championship, entered Cobras for Shelby in European events and developed special versions of the Ford GT40, in addition to building the Ford P68 and P69 Prototypes.

CSI *Commission Sportive Internationale*, the division of the FIA (see below) that dealt with the technical aspects of the governing body's work, including the rules of – and all other matters relating to – homologation.

FAV Ford Advanced Vehicles, the company set up to develop and build the Ford GT40 on the Slough Trading Estate; it was wholly owned by Ford, but was headed by John Wyer.

FIA *Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile*, the governing body of motor sport and based in Paris.

HM Holman Moody, who represented Ford in stock car events in the United States, but also fielded 7.0-litre Prototypes in 1966–67.

NART North American Racing Team, the team dedicated to racing Ferraris in the United States and Europe, set up by Chinetti Motors, the company controlled by East Coast Ferrari distributor Luigi Chinetti.

WSCC World Sports Car Championship, introduced by the FIA in 1953 and based on a series of races as listed below, with points awarded on the basis of 8-6-4-3-2-1 to the finishing cars of each marque, with total points awarded for the best performances in a limited number of races as indicated in the results below. The series was abandoned at the end of 1961. Races in the WSCC series in 1953–61 were: Belgian 24 Hours Touring Car GP (1953).

Buenos Aires 1,000km race (1954–58, 1960).
Le Mans 24 Hours race (1953–55, 1957–61).
Mille Miglia (1953–57).
Nürburgring 1,000km race (1953, 1956–61).
Pescara Four Hours race (1961); half-points only.
Sebring 12 Hours race (1953–61).
Swedish Grand Prix (1956–57).
Tourist Trophy (1953–55, 1958–59); half-points in 1958, as the race lasted only four hours.
Venezuelan Grand Prix (1957).

RESULTS

1953 (seven qualifying races, best four results):
1st Ferrari, 27 points; 2nd Jaguar, 24 points; 3rd Aston Martin, 16 points.

1954 (six qualifying races, best four results): 1st Ferrari, 32 points; 2nd Lancia, 20 points; 3rd Jaguar, 10 points.

1955 (six qualifying races, best four results):
1st Mercedes-Benz, 24 points; 2nd Ferrari, 22 points; 3rd Jaguar, 16 points.

1956 (five qualifying races, best three results):
1st Ferrari, 24 points; 2nd Maserati, 18 points; 3rd Jaguar 10 points.

1957 (seven qualifying races, best four results):
1st Ferrari, 30 points; 2nd Maserati, 18 points; 3rd Jaguar, 17 points.

1958 (six qualifying races, best four results): 1st Ferrari, 32 points; 2nd Aston Martin, 18 points; 3rd Porsche, 18 points.

1959 (five qualifying races, best three results):
1st Aston Martin, 24 points; 2nd Ferrari, 18 points; 3rd Porsche, 18 points.

1960 (five qualifying races, best three results):
1st Ferrari, 22 points; 2nd Porsche, 22 points; 3rd Maserati, 11 points.

1961 (five qualifying races, best three results):
1st Ferrari, 24 points; 2nd Maserati, 14 points; 3rd Porsche, 11 points.

OPPOSITE This is an extract from the final-draft contract between Ford and Ferrari. Enzo Ferrari objected to Ford requiring budgetary control over the racing programme. After scrawling his objections on the contract, he withdrew from the negotiations. (Ronald Stern Collection)





CHAPTER

1

Introduction

'Five champion cars': so Ford proudly proclaimed when they released this photograph at the end of 1965, though the reference to champions has to be interpreted liberally. The cars and the categories in which they ran were (back row left to right, front row right to left): Taunus (winner of the German Touring Car Championship); Shelby American Cobra (winner of the Gran Turismo World Championship); Lotus-Cortina (Sir John Whitmore won the European Touring Car Championship with cars entered by Alan Mann Racing); GT40 (not a championship winner, but the model did score a victory at Daytona); and Ford Mustang. (*Ford Motor Company*)

Alan Mann Racing entered the works Cortinas in the European Touring Car Championship, including the Spa 500km in 1964 where the English team entered two Lotus-Cortinas plus a Cortina GT. Here the Cortina GT, driven by Tony Hegbourne/Roy Pierpoint, is trailing one of the very bizarrely-styled Zagato-bodied Lancia Flavias. In this race neither the Alan Mann cars nor the Flavias finished, and Alfa Romeo Giulia TIs took the first three places in the 1,600cc class. (Ford Motor Company)

Ford's decision to participate in GT Prototype racing stemmed from Henry Ford II's conclusion that the company should cultivate a much more sporting image, in the well-founded belief that this would promote sales of Ford cars. This became the 'Total Performance' programme. When it started Ford had the image of being a dull, stodgy company with a reputation – in Europe at least – for poor electrics, poor starting and indifferent roadholding, despite the efforts of the British Ford company in rallying and touring car racing. 'Total Performance' completely changed this attitude and public perception.

After the start of the 'Total Performance' programme Ford attempted to buy Ferrari, but protracted negotiations finally broke down on 20 May 1963. In his *Memoirs of Enzo Ferrari's Lieutenant* (Giorgio Nada Editore, 2002), Franco Gozzi – Enzo Ferrari's personal assistant – recorded the meeting to sign the final documentation, and the collapse of negotiations:

'So, we reached the stage of approval of the attachments [to the final Agreement], which had to be initialled one by one, but at document 17, the one that concerned the expenditure of the racing department, the bomb exploded.

"But here", Ferrari hissed, "It is written that if I want to spend more on racing, I have to request authorisation to do so from America! Is it also written that way in the official English text? Where is the freedom that I demanded right from the start to make programmes, select the men and decide on money?" And when this was confirmed, the explosion gave way to a tirade that I had never seen or heard before in my entire life and have not done so since.'

It was the end of the negotiations.

Although Ford had taken the negotiations very seriously, it does seem that as far as Ferrari was concerned, they were nothing but a sham to encourage Fiat's investment in the company. It must be remembered that when Ford was negotiating to buy Alfa Romeo from the Italian Government, Fiat stepped in to prevent the historically important Milan company from passing out of Italian control. And in fact Fiat bought a 50% share in Ferrari in 1969. Enzo Ferrari achieved what he wanted, in that Fiat supplied the money to support the Ferrari racing programme and became responsible for development, production and sales of Ferrari GT cars, while the 'Old Man' retained control of the racing programme.



