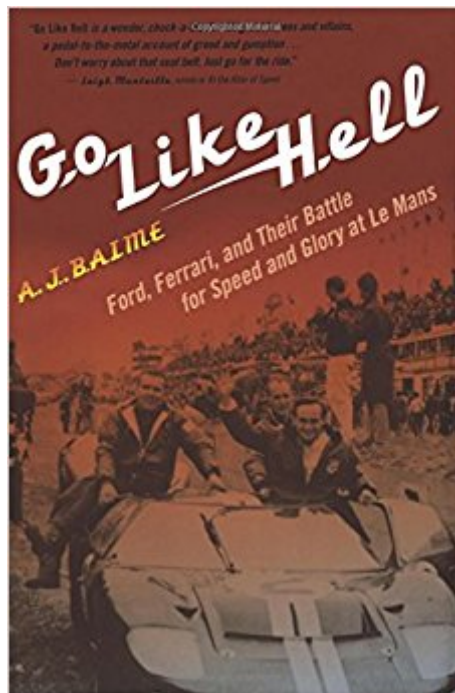




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Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, And Their Battle For Speed And Glory At Le Mans



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.

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Customer Reviews

Product Description 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

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A Q&A with Go Like Hell author A.J. Baime

Question: What are you saying in your book that hasn't been said before? Answer: No one has ever successfully written a book about cars and racing that can be easily enjoyed by someone who doesn't know a thing about cars and racing. My book accomplishes this. At the same time, reviewers who have studied this automotive era for decades have read the book and told me they were shocked to learn many things they didn't know. Specifically, no one has ever written about this story with such a focus on the business side: why it happened in the first place, how Henry Ford II had a vision to create the first pan-European auto company in the 1960s, selling Ford cars from London to the border of Russia. How could he prove that his American cars were the best in the world and that Europeans should buy them? By winning Le Mans. There's a whole foundation to this story that I've never seen fully explored elsewhere.

Q: How did you do your research? A: For starters, I did dozens of interviews: Carroll Shelby, Lee Iacocca, Phil Hill, Mario Andretti, A. J. Foyt, Dan Gurney, John Surtees, Edsel Ford II (son of Henry Ford II), Piero Ferrari (son of Enzo Ferrari), Lloyd Ruby, plus engineers, mechanics, PR men, executives, and on and on. I conducted interviews in Italy, France, England, Los Angeles, and Florida, plus countless others over the phone from my office in New York. On top of the interviews, I read everything ever written on the subject, and I saw every bit of footage, which was a particularly good source for dialogue. In some cases, I took fast cars onto racetracks, such as Daytona and Ford's Romeo test facility north of Detroit, to try to get further into the heads of the drivers during scenes that take place at these locales.

Q: Any highlights during your research? A: My interview with Carroll Shelby. Afterward, he drove me from his office in Gardena, California, to the Long Beach airport. The guy was getting on in years, and his vision was fading. But we were passing car after car on I-405 in a Mustang GT-H, which has ridiculous amounts of horsepower. We're talking about a guy who won the 24 Hours of Le Mans wearing

chicken farmer overalls in 1959. Nearly fifty years later, he can't see much, but he can still drive. Q: Why is this topical now? A: What's happening in the American auto industry today is just stunning. My book is in large part about Detroit at the dawn of globalism. It's kind of like the first chapter in a long narrative that is now reaching its climax. In the 1960s, when the global car sales race began, Detroit was battling against German, British, and Japanese companies for the first time. Ford sold cars by proving on the racetrack they were better than anyone else's. We won in heroic fashion in the 1960s. We're not winning anymore (Photo © Timthy White) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In the 1950s and '60s, the 24 hours of Le Mans in France were not just a race but, according to Playboy editor Baime, "...the most magnificent marketing tool the sports car industry had ever known." It was also incredibly dangerous, the site of the biggest tragedy in racing history—Pierre Levegh's Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR slamming into an embankment and leaving at least 75 dead in 1955. Baime's narrative culminates in the 1966 Le Mans race—where Ford cars placed first, second and third—and the fierce competition between Ford and Ferrari. Ford head Henry Ford II realized that in order to compete in the world market, his cars had to win races—and he could accomplish both by winning at Le Mans. Blocking him was the "...agitator of men," Enzo Ferrari, who devoted his life to building the perfect champion automobile and who prevented Ford from buying Ferrari in 1963. Both men's quest for victory trickles down to their workers. Henry II spent millions on technology and manpower to build the perfect car, the GT40, while displaying limited patience after years of failure. Meanwhile in Italy, Ferrari's world-class drivers faced their own difficulties pleasing their calculating, results-driven boss. Baime's skillful reporting and introspective writing style make for an insightful portrait of two automobile legends, as well as an exciting account of a bygone era in racing and in American culture. 8-page color insert. (June) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Go Like Hell isn't quite what I was expecting, but it is certainly worth owning if you're any kind of gearhead. Pros:-Does a great job telling the overall story surrounding Ford's winning years at LeMans, particularly 1965 and the big win in '66. The writer is advertised on the jacket as being associated with Playboy, and that's the sort of writing you should expect.-Lost of human interest stories. The book focuses mainly on the people involved, and their businesses, rather than getting

overly deep into mechanical aspects. You'll learn a lot about the people involved, from Ford executives, to drivers, to Mr. Ferrari himself.-Lots of very well-sourced quotes and factoids from a massive list of interviews. The book contains a bibliography and index which sum to a larger size than most chapters in the book. The level of research is really quite astonishing, and that's lovely to see for such an important historical work.Cons:-Lack of mechanical detail. Considering the Ford GT40mk.II will be considered by any gearhead to be the "real" hero of this story, you'd expect quite a bit more detail into its interior workings and development. While you do get a good general overview of the parts involved- particularly the massive engine- this isn't near the technical manual I would have liked it to be. A good example is that the book goes into the Ford "J-Car" program, which implemented a variety of experimental mechanical designs- none of which are even mentioned when discussing the car. I'll avoid spoilers, but anyone familiar with the story will know there are critical reasons why the new parts on the J-Car must be mentioned in any discussion of its history.-Feels a bit "broad" for a car book. Related to the point about the mechanical detail, the overall tone of the book seems to focus mostly on the people and the broad forces involved. Again, this is perfectly in line for a writer of Playboy, or perhaps think Salon. There's sufficient detail to get your car passion going, but you're probably going to want to get on Wikipedia for some of the finer details to really quench your thirst.Any true fan is going to wish this book came with a Popular Mechanics style cutaway blueprint of the Mk.II, and the fact that it doesn't have that level of mechanical detail is my only gripe. The human interest stories are top-notch. You'll climb inside the heads of Ferrari, Ford II, Iacocca, Shelby, and a host of drivers- and there's a long list of sources for further reading. Definitely pick this one up.

For people addicted to the car disease this is one super book. I thought I was pretty tuned in back when Hank Deuce decided to go for Ferrari's jugular. But this book revealed all kinds of stuff I missed-- big and little. Big stuff, like the fact that Enzo Ferrari had an illegitimate son. Little stuff like Bruce McClaren having one leg shorter than the other. Also a detailed description of Carroll Shelby's Cobra and Mustang GT350 operation at Los Angeles airport. And a lot of new info on Ken Miles-- one of my heroes because of his MG Specials. And so much more. I worked for an ad agency on Wilshire Blvd. in L.A. in the mid-'60s and would drive my MG TC home to Redondo Beach on Pacific Coast Highway every night for two reasons: 1. To hear the car's neat exhaust sound in the tunnel under LAX's runway. 2. To drive past the parking lot for Shelby's operation to see row after row of finished Cobras and GT350s. And I would covet them! Big time! Please don't tell God. Weekends were spent at Riverside, Goleta, Laguna Seca and other tracks watching

names in this book race. I didn't give Mr. Baime's book "Arsenal of Democracy" a very good review because, unlike this Ford/Ferrari book, I didn't really learn anything new. Maybe that's because I've read a lot about Ford in the last 60 years. But "Go Like Hell" is really one helluva book so go like hell to order it.

First of all, being, or having been, a race car nut is helpful if you wish to enjoy this book. In 1970, after the Ford assault on LeMans I came interested in American Sports Car racing. In '70 - '72 I did some work, nothing to really speak of, with the SCCA out at Bridgehampton through friend at work named Rick Holzer. In that my interests were A through G class sports car racing, FIA Group 5 Sport and Prototype, F-1 Trans Am, Can Am and IROC. NASCAR, INDY and Formula 5000 not so much. I read avidly of the 917, 512 T20 racers but got to the tracks (Watkins Glen, Mosport, Riverside) after they had been outlawed although I did get to personally witness Roger Penske's Sunoco Porsche 917 essentially destroy the Can Am Series in 1973. I had a subscription to Competition Press/Autoweek for 10 years. My interest in this book was piqued by a man named Jim King, who gives daily tours at the Shelby American dealership, factory and museum just south of the Mandalay Bay Casino in Paradise Nevada. This is the history of two men and their cars. Enzo Ferrari and Henry Ford II as well as that amazing racer, car builder and salesman, Carroll Shelby. Reading it is a pleasure and provides a sentimental journey, through what was a very exciting time in international Sportscar and Formula 1 Racing. However, it is just a sampler and points you in various directions at the end of the book. Baime gives you a glimpse into how this period of time and particular circumstance foreshadowed the Global Economy, the Reckoning of Japan's automotive influence, the ascendancy of Ralph Nader and the personality of Carroll Shelby, to name a few. If you want more you'll have to read more. For example, next on my list "Inside Shelby Racing" by John Morton. So, "Go Like Hell" provides a valuable and entertaining jumping off point for a variety of topics that pertain to, or were influenced by, Sports Car racing in the United States as the country went through radical changes in that period of time known as The Sixties.

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