



Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and Their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans

By A. J. Baime



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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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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Product Description

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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 © Timphy White)

From Publishers Weekly

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)

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Review

"All I can say is: Wow! *Go Like Hell* drops you right smack in the middle an intense and ferocious battle

between Ford and Ferrari in the 1960s. Baime's exceptional voice puts the reader into minds of the drivers, designers, and executives who formed the Golden Age of racing; his fantastic descriptions allow the reader to feel the pounding of the cylinders. If you like cars—nay, if you have ever seen a car—you must read this book!"

—**Garth Stein**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Art of Racing in the Rain*

"Light up a Lucky Strike. Pour yourself a good stiff drink. *Go Like Hell* is a wonder, chock-a-block with great heroes and villains, a pedal-to-the metal account of greed and gumption, a chronicle of obsession and vain glory. Don't worry about that seat belt. Just go for the ride."

—**Leigh Montville**, author of *The Big Bam*, *Ted Williams* and *At the Altar of Speed*

"Go Like Hell is an epic. Ambitions, lives, fortunes, friendships, and a place in history--all are on the line here. A.J. Baime marvelously reveals the people behind the machines."

—**Neal Bascomb**, author of *The Perfect Mile* and *Hunting Eichmann*

"Mix sport, death and big business, the biggest. Throw in vivid portraits of Enzo Ferrari and Henry Ford II, and the drivers, men obsessed with speed and fast cars while trying not to get killed. *Go Like Hell* is a very hard book to put down. Sharp and suspenseful from beginning to end."

—**Robert Daley**, author of *The Cruel Sport* and *Year of the Dragon*

"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."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"Turbo-charged look at the heated race-car rivalry between Ferrari and Ford... Baime's rich descriptions of the card lift them to near-human proportions. The ultimate speed-read."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"A remarkably intimate look into the famous 1960s Ford-versus-Ferrari battles at Le Mans."

—*Automobile*

"Like the cars it describes, *Go Like Hell* is a streamlined marvel built for speed, fueled by testosterone and likely to elicit happy grins from anyone who has ever heard music in the squeal of a tire or the roar of an engine . . . [Baime] hits the gas, pops the clutch and takes readers on a red-blooded ride to glory that will have them smiling all the way to the checkered flag." —*Dallas Morning News*

"A pleasure to read . . . chronicles a time when an unfettered Detroit, led by 'car guys,' could achieve great things." -- *Wall Street Journal*

"Henry Ford II's monumental effort to topple Enzo Ferrari from the summit of sports-car racing at Le Mans is vibrantly told in this fast-paced account of the clash between the two fearsome, hyper-competitive automotive titans." – Bloomberg

"Insightful, well written accounts of the events and people involved along with inspired detail regarding the

vehicles makes for a page turner. This is an ideal book for gear-heads, automotive enthusiasts, historians and people who might find amazing symmetry in what happened over 40 years ago verses what is happening today." -- *Denver Examiner*

"Engaging... Grips you from the early pages to the conclusion." -- *Autoweek*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Nancy Nault:

The actual book *Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and Their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans* will bring that you the new experience of reading any book. The author style to explain the idea is very unique. If you try to find new book you just read, this book very suited to you. The book *Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and Their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans* is much recommended to you to read. You can also get the e-book in the official web site, so you can easier to read the book.

Sylvia Medina:

Often the book *Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and Their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans* has a lot associated with on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was compiled by the very famous author. McDougal makes some research previous to write this book. This specific book very easy to read you can get the point easily after reading this book.

Donna Wright:

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the water world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, in that case why you don't try point that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not feeling tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition details. Even you love *Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and Their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans*, you could enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still want to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't understand it, oh come on its identified as reading friends.

Elizabeth Nicholson:

Your reading 6th sense will not betray a person, why because this *Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and Their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans* e-book written by well-known writer who knows well how to make book which can be understand by anyone who else read the book. Written within good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and composing skill only for eliminate your hunger then you still uncertainty *Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and Their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans* as good book not merely by the cover but also through the content. This is one guide that can break don't determine book by its cover, so do you still needing another sixth sense to pick this specific!? Oh come on your studying sixth sense already

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