

SYNOPSIS

FORD GT40 by Trevor Legate

- 208 pages
- 260 x 270mm (landscape)
- 100 black and white photographs (approx) many only recently printed from period negatives
- 100 colour photographs (approx) including many produced over the past few years specifically for this book

CHAPTER 1

THE EMERGENCE OF SPORTS RACING PROTOTYPES

The background story covering the rise in popularity of sports racing prototypes, led by the European factories (Ferrari, Alfa, Porsche etc) and why Ford decided to become involved in a form of motor sport it knew nothing about; how Ford tried to buy Ferrari in March 1963 without realising that Ferrari had already approached Ford with his own very similar offer.

CHAPTER 2

FROM DRAWING BOARD TO REALITY

The emergence of the first prototype in April 1964 at Heathrow airport before it was flown to New York for its American launch; use of the Lola GT as a 'test mule' to develop the design and engineering; the early use of Fords new computer system to aid design; the involvement of Eric Broadley and John Wyer.

CHAPTER 3

LEARNING ON THE JOB

Early races and setbacks as the car proves fast but fragile; the 1963 season and a look at the politics of running an Anglo-American race programme; a detailed review of the 1963 Le Mans effort.

CHAPTER 4

ENTER SHELBY AMERICAN

Why Ford 'awarded' the new Shelby American team the GT race programme and its impact on the previously successful Cobra challenge; a look at how and why the Shelby approach paid dividends; the roles played by people such as Ken Miles and Phil Remington and the new approach offered by the UK-based Alan Mann team during 1964; the advent of private owner/drivers; the attempt to sell the GT40 as a viable road car.

CHAPTER 5

SOLUTION – MORE POWER

The arrival of the 427 cubic inch 'big block' engine and a review of the background development work that gave rise to the MkII and the J-car programme; a review of the 1965 season; why the 'win at all cost' 1965 Le Mans attempt ended in disaster caused by Fords engine division ignoring the advice of Shelby American.

CHAPTER 6

PROMISES MADE GOOD

How victory at Le Mans 1966 came just in time to avoid the racing programme from being closed down; how Ford managed to turn success into a PR disaster; a review of the 1966 season including both factory and private team cars; reappraisal of the challenge offered by Ferrari, Chaparral and Lola.

CHAPTER 7

THE MK-IV CHALLENGE

The evolution of the J-car to the MkIV; the loss of Ken Miles while testing the prototypes, review of the 1967 season and how victory at Le Mans led to Ford cancelling the GT programme.

CHAPTER 8

THE GT40 COMES GOOD – THE GULF YEARS

How the 5-litre GT40 found success in private ownership as John Wyer took over the cars once again and went on to record the models greatest victories during 1968 and 1969, sponsored by Gulf Oil; how double victories at Le Mans were achieved with the same uncompetitive car including the closest ever Le Mans finish.

CHAPTER 9

GT40 ON THE ROAD

A review of the cars sold for road use; owners recollections; the cars that were sold for the road and later converted for the track; the evolution of the unsuccessful MkIII model designed to comply with production cars regulations from 1967.

CHAPTER 10

THE RETURN OF THE GT40

A review of the replica GT40 industry; the authorised run of MkV cars from Safir Engineering; the kit car approach from GTD, CAV and others; the GT40 for the 21st century built by Superformance in South Africa, endorsed by Carroll Shelby and allowed to use the 'GT40' title which Ford omitted to copyright.

CHAPTER 11

THE CHASSIS RECORD & PARTS MANUAL

A list of every chassis built accompanied by the known history of every car from chassis GT40 P/ 101 to GT40 P/ 1114, including the J-cars and specials (133 chassis fully built between 1964 and 1972); a reproduction of the GT40 parts manual illustrating all major components including every part number.

End