



Mark Donohue: Technical Excellence at Speed

Michael Argetsinger

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To a generation of fans in the 1960s and 1970s, Mark Donohue embodied a new, uniquely American spirit in motor racing. Donohue was not only blindingly fast he was also smart, with a background in engineering and a unique talent for studying and setting up a race car. Together with his like-minded team owner, Roger Penske, he brought a new level of technical sophistication and preparation to nearly every type of American racing, from sports cars to the Indianapolis 500.

After years of success in amateur sports-car racing, Donohue s professional career took off in 1966 when he drove a factory Ford GT40 at Le Mans and a Lola T70 for Penske in the Can-Am Challenge. He arrived on the public stage at a time when American racing was attracting a wider audience through exciting new series such as the Can-Am and the Trans-Am Sedan Championship, which he would soon dominate, driving Chevrolet Camaros and AMC Javelins. Donohue s greatest triumphs would come in the early 1970s: In 1972 he won the Indy 500, and a year later he captured the Can-Am title in the overpowering Porsche 917-30. After a brief retirement he returned to racing in Formula One, only to die following an accident during practice for the Austrian Grand Prix in 1975.

In the first full biography of Mark Donohue, author Michael Argetsinger tells the story of racing s ultimate driver-engineer, one who set the standard for generations to come. He also explains how Donohue s life and career were shaped by his friends, family, and fellow drivers, as well as by the rapid changes in technology and competition that swept through racing during his time.

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