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Damn Few Died In Bed: My Life In Auto Racing By Andrew G. Dunlop As Told To Thomas F. Saal

Damn Few Died in Bed

My Life In Auto Racing
by Andrew G. Dunlop
as told to Thomas F. Saal



Synopsis

Damned Few Died In Bed is the late Andy Dunlop's personal account of his life in auto racing which began in 1928 when he moved to Cleveland Ohio from Detroit with his parents and his sisters at age 17 and ended in 1995 when he retired at age 84, still living in Cleveland. Besides running Pete Salemi's Central Excavating Indianapolis 500 racing team that had its share of ups and downs, Andy witnessed most of the triumphs and tragedies that characterized American oval track racing in the rough and tumble days of the fifties and sixties. Here's the list of drivers who raced for Andy and the Central Excavating racing team at one time or another, all of whom are portrayed in the book: Gene Aldridge, George Amick, Tony Bettenhausen, Art Bisch, Tony Bonadies, Frank Burany, Buddy Cagle, Jimmy Canino, Wally Campbell, Duane Carter, Neal Carter, Bill Chittum, Johnny Crone, Allen Crowe, Jimmy Daywalt, Billy DeVore, Shorty Drexler, Ronnie Duman, Len Duncan, Ed Elisian, Larry Evans, Cotton Farmer, Johnny Fedricks, Don Freeland, Cliff Griffith, Bob Harkey, Gene Hartley, Sonny Helms, Red Hodges, Jackie Holmes, Bob Hurt, Jim Hurtubise, Bruce Jacobi, Gordon Johncock, Eddie Johnson, Dee Jones, Al Keller, Arnie Knepper, Jud Larson, Jim McElreath, Bobby Marvin, Earl Motter, Rabbit Musick, Peewee Northern, Wayne Padgett, Tex Peterson, Roy Prosser, Dick Rathmann, Red Riegel, Chuck Rodee, Jack Rounds, Lloyd Ruby, Mickey Rupp, Eddie Russo, Paul Russo, Eddie Sachs, Henry Schlosser, Sam Sessions, Jigger Sirois, Deb Snyder, Bill Spear, Wally Stokes, Len Sutton, Shorty Templeman, Bud Tinglestad, Johnnie Tolan, Bobby Unser, Bill Vukovich, Rodger Ward, Greg Weld, Chuck Weyant, Dempsey Wilson and Eddie Zalucki.

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Customer Reviews

Don't expect flowery descriptions or personality profiles. A lot of simple and brief recitations of race results. But the cumulative picture is quite striking. My has racing changed! And you cannot beat the price!

A good book for anyone interested in the history of American auto racing. You will learn how hard it was to win when qualifying was not a formality and parts had to be made in a small machine shop. Not a book for someone who does not already have an interest and some knowledge of the subject. It lacks a lot of background color. Sad that Dunlap was an also ran given the amount of work he did with the little money available.

Disclaimer: This review is based upon the hardback edition. Thomas Saal's interpretation of some 28 cassette-tape interviews with Central Excavating Racing Team leader Andy Dunlop (d. 2002) is truly a journey back into the time when aluminum race car bodies were hammered out over wooden models in small garages. To an era when self-taught racers and hard knocks engineers like Mr. Dunlop could simply decide to fit some Buick valves into a race car's head to see how they would perform. Race cars were routinely built behind houses and open-trailerred cross country to compete. Thomas Saal's narrative is crafted to give anyone who's ever spun a few wrenches herself or himself a heady dose of what it was like in the '50's and '60's to thrash a race car from the ground up. He does this while inserting enough personal interest about drivers and races, victories (there were just six) and disappointments to beat down any monotony from too much tech. And then there are the photos. Oh my gosh. Gleaned from several sources over several years, Saal and his publisher present scores (both B&W and color) of shots taken during races, during car building, as well as team shots with grinning drivers. Small Ohio tracks to The Brickyard. For reader's who themselves recall the period, as well as those who would like to know what roundy-round racing was like when a local excavating company could actually compete against the nation's best, and for those who just relish stories about men who dream large and love to use both head and hands, this book is for you.

Very interesting to read about all of the drivers and places when automobile racing was getting a foothold on American sports. It was distressing, though, to read about the drivers who died while competing. Today's safety rules have tremendously affected the number of injuries and deaths in a very positive manner.

There is a lot of inside information for the open-wheel auto racing fan. An interesting read, well-written. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in racing history.

If you enjoy auto racing and the Indianapolis 500, it is a must read.

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