

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Book Review: Mark Donohue - His Life in Photographs](#)



When we reviewed [Michael Argetsinger's previous Donohue book](#), we commented on the decision to include very few photographs. This new edition from David Bull Publishing redresses the omission, and is very much 'Volume II' of a definitive biography of the great American racing driver.

Donohue was well known for his skills as both a racing driver and an engineer, forming a partnership with **Roger Penske** which saw him develop competition cars as varied as the **Trans Am Camaros** and **Javelins**, the 917-beating **Ferrari 512M** and what was, at the time, the world's most powerful racing car: the **Can Am Porsche 917/30**. Single-seater racing featured too, with a win at the **Indianapolis 500** in 1972 (the **Penske** team's first), and a stop-start **Formula 1** career.

Sadly, it was behind the wheel of a **Penske-run March 751**, in pre-race, Sunday morning warm-up for the **Austrian GP** in 1975, that **Donohue** lost his life.

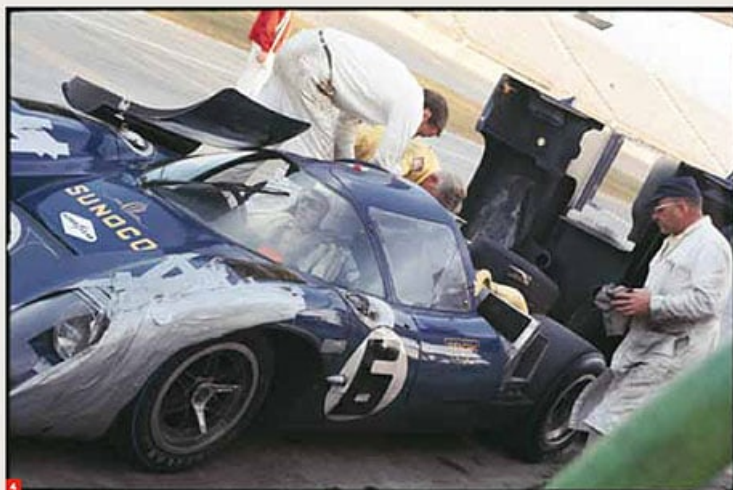
The book's photographs are well-chosen and chart **Donohue's** career from hillclimbing a **Corvette** in 1958 to the glory years of **Trans Am** and **Can Am** domination.

The narrative of the previous, exhaustively researched book is carried over, so casual enthusiasts of 60s/70s motor racing will still learn a great deal about the man and his cars.



4 • The battle on the high banks of Daytona International Speedway between Mark in the Porsche facing Ferrari 512 M and Pedro Rodriguez in the John Weyer-Gulf Porsche 917 was a foretaste of the fierce competition between the two men that would continue a month later at Sebring. (Pete Lyons)

The early part of the race turned into an absolute dogfight between Rodriguez and Donohue—neither liked the other, never had, never would—and after about an hour I walked down to the pit and asked Roger what was going on. He said, “Well, if I can’t get them to quit this, it ain’t going to go on much longer—we’ll be going for an early dinner at the hotel!” Fortunately we had a quick pit stop for a fuel-pump problem that separated the cars.—KIRK WHITE



4 • Co-driver Chuck Parsons (in the cockpit) proved a steady and reliable partner to Mark in nursing the Lola home. At one point the car was 40 laps down to the leading Porsche, but Mark and Chuck persevered, and gradually gained ground as the Porsches and Ford GT40s began to falter. When the last car ahead of them failed early in the morning, it took the pair more than two hours circulating the track to equal the distance the failed cars had run. It was a classic victory and one that required the greatest possible commitment from every member of the crew. (Harry Hurst)



I particularly liked the photo of the **Sunoco Trans Am Camaro** in preparation, the drips from the acid-dipping clearly visible on the unpainted bodywork.

Penske and **Donohue** were a formidable combination, and this reasonably priced book is an important work on the history of both.

*The book (Hardcover, 9" x 11", 160 pages, 126 black & white and 118 colour photographs. ISBN-13: 978-1-935007-09-8) is published by **David Bull Publishing** and priced at US\$39.95 plus postage.*

For further information, see www.bullpublishing.com.

Text Steve Wakefield

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