

Driving With the Devil



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著者:Thompson, Neal

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From Publishers Weekly Thompson's raucous account of NASCAR's early decades raises from obscurity the "motherless, dirt-poor southern teens... in jacked-up Fords full of corn whiskey" who originated the sport that's now the second most popular in America. Stock car racing grew up in the 1930s South, when moonshine runners, having perfected the art of daredevil driving while escaping "revenuers" hunting for untaxed whiskey, transferred their skills to the event booming in Atlanta and Daytona Beach. Loosely defined as races where the cars were totally unmodified— even though they were actually supercharged beyond recognition— stock car racing was a rawer, more redneck endeavor than AAA-sanctioned events like the Indy 500, which were the realm of rich enthusiasts driving specially built vehicles. Thompson (Light This Candle: The Life and Times of Alan Shepard) celebrates entrepreneurial ex-con Raymond Parks, wizardish mechanic Red Vogt and driver Red Byron instead of the better-known promoter Bill France, "the P.T. Barnum of stock car racing," whom Thompson blames for moving NASCAR from its whiskey-soaked past to mainstream, logo-strewn present. The author is clearly in love with his subject, and the enthusiasm of this breathless, nostalgic account will be contagious to Southern history buffs and historically minded NASCAR fans. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From

Booklist This is a colorful, multifaceted history of the hell-raising origins of stock-car racing in the 1930s and 1940s. Thompson fastens onto what might be considered the original stock-car racing team, an Atlanta-based trio--Raymond Parks, Red Vogt, and Lloyd Seay--who worked in the moonshine business, which depended on fast cars for escapes from lawmen. Recounting their biographies, and those of a host of bootlegging competitors, Thompson instills the outlaw milieu--Seay, the 1941 stock-car champ, was murdered in a bootlegging dispute--of the early days. Ad-hoc races, such as one held on a beach in Daytona, Florida, developed into regular events; its impresario, Bill France, disdained the bootleggers from Georgia and eventually outmaneuvered Parks and Vogt to control NASCAR when it was organized in 1947. Thompson believes that the modern NASCAR organization downplays its beginnings in white lightning. His fascinating corrective should inveigle the fans of one of the most popular sports in America today. Gilbert TaylorCopyright #169; American Library Association. All rights reserved See all Editorial Reviews

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