



Merchants of Speed: The Men Who Built America's Performance Industry

Paul D. Smith

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Hot rodding has always been about taking something that Detroit built and making it leaner and faster. At the epicenter of the movement was a cast of driven men who designed and manufactured the parts that made it all possible. This book takes an appreciative look back at the early hot rodders who worked out of their garages, basements, and backyards, and the “speed equipment” they developed.

In this mammoth volume, Paul Smith examines the stories behind two dozen speed equipment manufacturers and the go-fast goodies they designed, developed, and sold. Drawing upon hundreds of hours of interviews conducted with these founding fathers of hot rodding, Smith details the work of industry icons such as Iskenderian, Edelbrock, Evans, Hilborn, Navarro, Offenhauser, Sharp, Weiand, Ansen, and Kong. Illustrated with more than 200 period photos and filled with firsthand accounts of the birth of hot rodding—and the automotive aftermarket industry—this book is a truly fitting celebration of the names that became synonymous with speed.

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