



FORD VS FERRARI - MOVIE REVIEW



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By Ken Latka

I had the privilege of attending a special advance screening of the new motion picture “Ford vs Ferrari” at IMAX Headquarters in Playa Vista, California on Thursday November 14th. The event was hosted by Collider and included a Q&A session with the film's director James Mangold afterwards.

For those of you familiar with the battle between Ford and Ferrari at the 24 Hours of LeMans in the 1960's, this film is a well-crafted portrayal of the struggle the American's faced against the domination of Ferrari in that era. Ferrari had won six back to back LeMans endurance races from 1960 through 1965. With that said, no American auto manufacturer had dared challenge Ferrari in this arena, that is until Enzo Ferrari turned down Henry Ford II's offer to purchase the Ferrari company. Ford had spent millions in 1963 in an audit of the Ferrari factory assets and in legal negotiations, and The Deuce (as Henry Ford II was called) was not at all happy when Enzo Ferrari pulled the plug on the deal, not to mention Enzo belittling the Ford Company and The Deuce himself, which is documented in the film.

The battle between Ford and Ferrari is one of the most storied moments in racing history, superbly portrayed by Matt Damon as Carroll Shelby and Christian Bale as racing driver Ken Miles in what seemed like an impossible attempt to take down Ferrari's dominance of endurance racing.

The film also sheds light on the politics at the Ford Motor Company (at the time). Mangold doesn't go too in depth into the development of the car or the failed attempts before their victory at LeMans in June of 1966, although there is a scene where Ken Miles (Christian Bale) is listening to the 1964 race on the radio because a certain Ford Executive named Leo Beebe (played by Josh Lucas) didn't like Miles bluntness, honesty or both, which created a resentment that kept Shelby's top driver (Miles) from driving at their first attempt at LeMans where Ford ultimately failed.

Eventually, due in large part to Carroll Shelby and Ken Miles help in development of the GT40, as well as Ford pumping in an estimated \$100 million dollars into the project, Ford was able to achieve an incredible one-two-three victory at LeMans in 1966. Ford flipped the tables on Ferrari and went on to dominant LeMans by winning the race not only in 1966, but also in 1967, 1968 and 1969 before they pulled the plug on their efforts. After all, their point had been made, their task had been achieved and there was nothing left to prove.

The film is worth the time of anyone who loves cars and racing, not to mention anyone who loves the story of an underdog that is able to achieve victory against all odds.

Is the movie worth seeing? You bet it is!

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