



F1 People – Enzo Ferrari

Welcome to the third episode of F1 People, a short series from Sidepodcast chronicling the lives of important figures in Formula 1. Today, we look at Enzo Ferrari.

Enzo Ferrari was born on February 20th 1898, in Italy. At the age of ten, he attended his first motor race with his father and brother, and after a few more visits to the racetrack, he decided he wanted to be a racing driver as well. His formal education was not particularly strong, and he joined the army. In 1916, his father and brother died, and two years later, Ferrari was struck down with a flu bad enough to cause his discharge from the army. Returning home, he found the family business – a metal fabrication firm – in ruins, and started applying for jobs at car companies. After being turned down by Fiat, he found work at a small firm turning used trucks into cars. He joined the company's racing team CMN in 1919 but was not very successful.

He moved on to work and race at Alfa Romeo, having slightly more success, and at one race in 1923, he picked up the Prancing Horse badge. The badge came from the wreckage of the fuselage of Francesco Barracca's plane, being a primary figure in Italy during World War 1. Ferrari was presented the badge by the pilot's family, in recognition of his courage and audacity. After several more wins and successes, Alfa Romeo offered Ferrari a chance to enter higher competitions, but he refused, racing only a couple of times more before giving up the wheel.

He continued to work for the company and in 1929, he founded the Scuderia Ferrari as the racing team for Alfa Romeo. He managed the development of the cars and built up a team of over 50 drivers, but although they had some success, other racing manufacturers dominated the period. Alfa Romeo were forced to withdraw their financial support. When they decided to return, they wanted to reduce Ferrari's role, so he left, but was under contract not to race or design anything for four years. To pass the time, he built up a company to supply parts to other racing teams. During World War II, the company was involved in war production and relocated to Maranello. After that, Ferrari decided the time had come to race cars bearing his name.

Ferrari have participated in the Formula 1 World Championship since its very beginning in the 1950s, winning their first race in 1951, and the championship for the next two years. To finance the racing side of things, Ferrari sold sports cars, and made enough to participate in the endurance events such as Le Mans, as well. Many of the cars sold were previous years cars, and if he couldn't sell them on the market, Ferrari would recycle or sell them as scrap.

In the late 1960s, Ferrari suffered financial difficulties, and Fiat invested – a small share to start with and then 50% in 1969.

Enzo Ferrari continued to manage the firm until 1971, and even when he stepped out of the managing director role, he still had a place within the team. The Fiat run company had success in 1975 with Niki Lauda winning the championship, but then struggled through some difficult years, culminating with Gilles Villeneuve's death, and Didier Pironi's accident in 1982.

Enzo Ferrari died in 1988 at the age of 90. The Ferrari team won only one race that year, and it was a fitting tribute to finish 1-2 at the Italian Grand Prix.

In 1993, Jean Todt was drafted in to turn the team's fortunes around and 1996 saw the beginning of the Michael Schumacher dominance, with 97 seeing Ross Brawn join. As we all know, major success for the Prancing Horse has followed.



Enzo Ferrari did marry and have a son, Alfredo Ferrari, known as Dino, but the boy died at a young age, and as a tribute, Ferrari apparently wore sunglasses every single day.

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