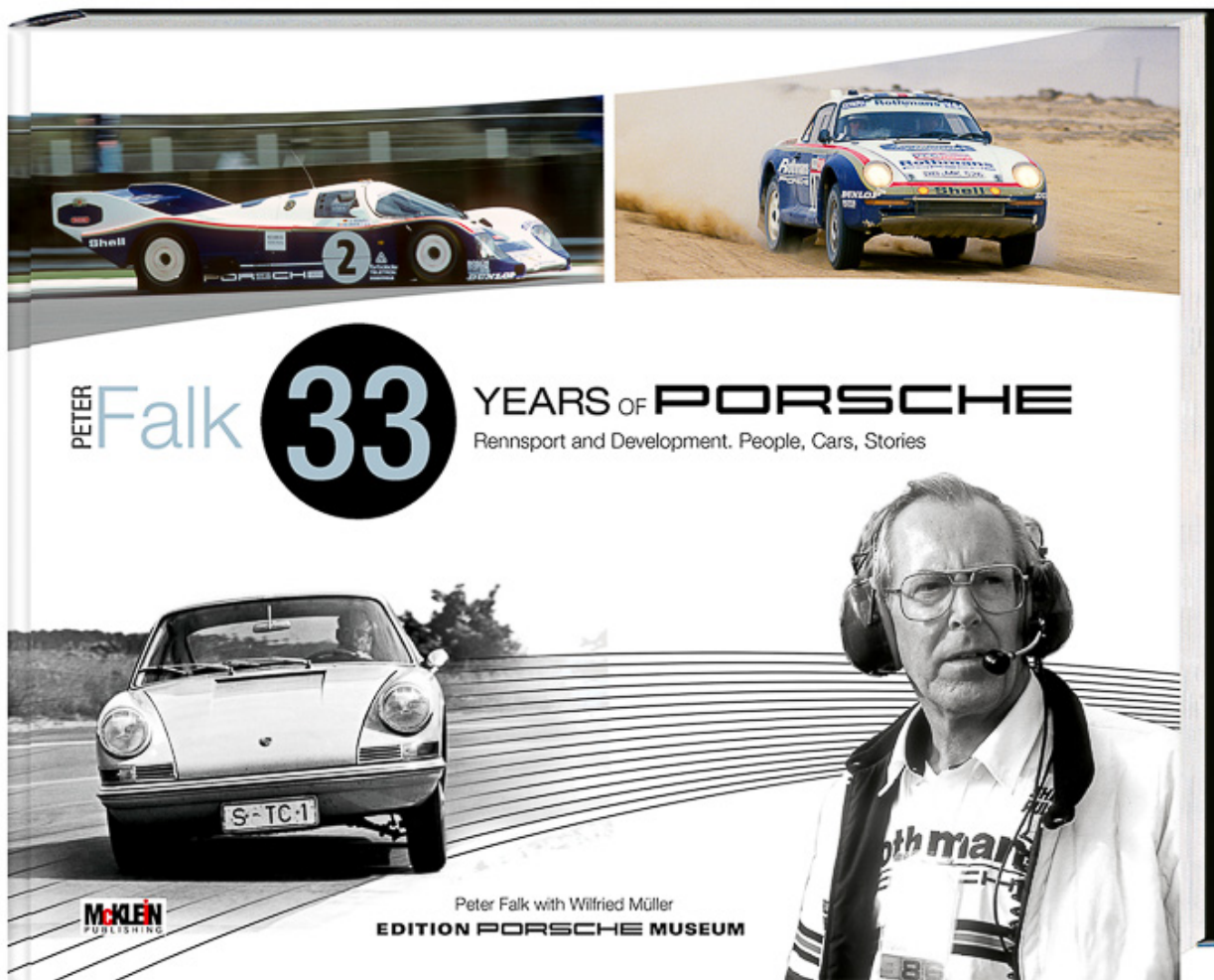


Peter Falk - 33 Years of Porsche

Published: 23rd August 2017 By: Glen Smale

Online version: <https://www.porscheroadandrace.com/peter-falk-33-years-of-porsche/>



As their race director and one of the leading figures in their experimental department, Peter Falk contributed significantly to the character of the sports cars from Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen - both on the race track and on the road.

Contents

Forward Peter Falk: Logistics, their canine mascot ... 006
 Forward Wilfried Müller: Falk takes ... at last 008

33 years, three months, three weeks and three days 010

Early days: Lubin and more wheel travel for a model car 010
 Early racing: Bringing home the bacon, Type debuffed 012
 A decision for the Porsche 014
 A small company, at the cusp of what communication lines 016
 Henry Porsche: A quiet pathfind 018
 Ernst Fuhrmann: What's new? 020
 Hermann: Born, basic and mental 022
 Ferdinand Pich: The Supercharger 024
 Road tests: Nothing beats kilometers 026
 Wolfsburg weekends: Structure, spirit, spring, spirit 028
 Testing desks and everywhere: The Ligne trial 030
 Mountain adventures: Turkish and West Maritima 032
 Journey back in time 034

Everything revolves around Le Mans 100

Unveiling: Puch clock, cycling and mental gymnastics 100
 The 122 miles of Le Mans and other tributes 106
 Based on: The passion of small town living 124
 1977: Deciding time and victory with the 917/100 134
 Diplomacy at Zuffenhausen and Le Mans 137
 Extraordinary situations call for extraordinary measures 138
 Group C: Triumph times 139

World Champions from the workshop corner 152

Promotion by the top: early race outings 154
 Early personalities: Wilfried Hiller, Herbert Lange, Hans Kemmerlin 156
 Ernst Ferdinand Pich: 160
 The racing drivers: All round entrance at the start 164
 Hill climbs: Test to cover the alps 170
 The road to the first world championship 176
 90A to 917: David replaced by beauty 188
 The road to the first world championship 190
 90A to 917: David replaced by beauty 192
 90C Carrera R, Falk trial 194
 917: heading for overall victory 196

03 196

907: Triple victory at Daytona, big water in the pool 196
 Four days full-time: World records with the 917A at Monza 202
 908: With a partner in the 917 206
 1980 world champions: From failure to triumph 210
 Winning streak with early moments 214
 Spider adventure: Targa Florio 218
 917: Murder in eight 222
 Annual closing: Falk's brush with death 226
 A new car for the 917: Testing the monster 228



04

The severies: 917, interpreting, and Safari 234

917 and 908/10: The elephant and the gable 234
 1975 and 1971: Two world titles with John Woolf 240
 Working with Singer: A partnership of convenience 244
 Ferdinand Pich: "Peter Falk is and will remain a part of Porsche!" 248
 A 1,100 hp trip to the USA and "little Mac" in Italy 250
 The 917: Ignoring the opposition 254
 911 "Interpreting" and a whisky glass for the big boss 256
 Rallying: East Africa drama and industrial espionage in a ship's hold 262



05



The eighties: Porsche's greatest motorsport era 270

New dimensions: Falk builds up the racing department 270
 Why racing and what sort? 280
 A masterpiece: The dawn of the 955 286
 The 955 learns to fly 290
 Driver choice: Closer long-distance sprinters preferred 296
 The untapped 955: and the "Morris hammerhead" 298
 World championship domination and second on the wet road 302
 Stuck in the mud, the huts back, the 917 in rockbottom 316
 The 955C grows old 322
 TAG Turbo: Engine development for McLaren 328
 Indy Interests: Lots of public, very little time 334

06

Paris-Dakar Rally: Heartbreaking, heartswarming 338

Into the desert: The first 4800 911 in the Sahara sands 342
 Rough, uncharted territory: Paris-Dakar 1984 346
 Dakar 1985: A new car and a lesson in humility 350
 Dakar 1986: Strident comeback, useful advice 352
 Porsche in-jokes: The feedback era over 374
 A month's farewell 376
 The foundation of it all 378



07

From Peter Falk's private archive 382

From the first 901 right through to the very last air-cooled Type 993, every Porsche 911 bears the signature of Peter Falk. He joined the company in 1959 and quickly rose through the ranks to head various testing departments. In the mid-sixties, Falk also took over the tactical and technical leadership of the factory's Rennsport team. In 1981, he was appointed as race director and led Porsche throughout its most successful era of competition. "His" team won at Le Mans, became World Sports Car Champion, conquered the Paris-Dakar Rally, and was victorious in Formula 1 with the TAG Turbo engine.

Advertisements

**PORSCHE
911
50 YEARS**

**THE BOOK
1974 - 1989**

EDITED BY
PETER FALK
WILFRIED MÜLLER

**BUY
NOW**

**Everybody
wants it!**

**Buy your limited Edition book
directly from Berlin Motor Books**

Falk 33

Testing always and everywhere: The Lapine trial

Away from the testing facilities, every kilometre on the road was regarded as an hour in a test. In 2010 Peter Falk still recalled a discussion with Heinrich Roth during a trip to Le Mans in an NSU T1000. Falk wanted to know about the engine. Roth then had pointed with his finger under the front winged bonnet that had not been secured. Depending on the speed the hood lifted. For this reason he had the opportunity to observe the workings of the front axle damper mounts. The country roads to Le Mans were still in poor condition in the early sixties. For classic shops like us it was a pleasure to drive along these roads.

Peter Falk developed a rather close relationship with some of his company cars, and in this he stood alone. Around 1960 there was no one else back then who had a special relationship to their company vehicles or test cars. Perhaps Hans Roth. He had to hold on to his cars longer and he also loved the particularities, for instance, the orange and paintwork on his 910, or he would stubbornly start his automatic 918 with a gear engaged.

Falk still remembers some of his company cars. My white large, I think a Rotaxcar met him on the Bent Road, which made the car rather conspicuous. On the long business trip to Brno in Czech in England, Sax in Belgium, then France, Switzerland, Munich in Italy and Austria, I never had any trouble getting through the border controls. Several of them were actually checked in the hat on the front. But all the German border in Switzerland an official post check refused to let me through. He claimed that the red illuminated colour would block incoming traffic. He told me to remove the hat and as far as he was concerned, it was banned in Germany. I insisted that I crossed through half of Europe's borders without the slightest problem, but he didn't budge. Finally one of his colleagues came over, observed his book. He thought that the car stood out excessively, and that there was no chance of going. He advised me to drive on. After that, I finished him and finally re-entered Germany with the hat intact.



In this book, Peter Falk tells of his years with Porsche. A highly-respected person in the world of engineering, he relates how it all began at Porsche – when race drivers and engineers huddled together in a shepherd’s hut at Weissach to discuss suspensions, what the Porsche crew experienced during endless testing adventures in both the Arctic Circle and the Sahara, how the race cars at Le Mans roared to the start over country roads, and how a test drive with a Porsche 908 almost cost him his life. He shares his views on every Porsche race car, from the 904 Carrera GTS to the 962C, and describes the race drivers who competed during his reign: Herrmann, Ickx, Elford, Bell, Stuck and Mass to name just a few. Thumbing through the pages, one is left in no doubt about the commitment that Peter Falk and his fellow engineers and colleagues endured personally, in carrying out their responsibilities. In this way, he provides a good, long look into the inner workings of Porsche.



02-04 - Peter Falk with a Porsche 911. Not only the prototype of the Porsche 911, a prototype by means of the 1000 cc engine used in the production. Stuttgart: Dieter Knechtel (left), right: Peter Falk (left) took the photos of this car when it was in 1966. The white car (below right): Porsche 911, first and last driving Peter Falk on West Coast.



Peter Falk shared his personal Porsche stories and fascinating insights with the author Wilfried Müller. On the photographic side, the images in this book come from Peter Falk's private collection, the Porsche Historical Archive in Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen, and from the vast collection in the publisher's possession. Along with the contributions from former colleagues and race drivers, these images and stories give an in-depth portrayal of Peter Falk's 33 years with Porsche. Scanning through the images selected for the book, the reader can quickly ascertain that the author has gone to impressive lengths to source images seldom seen in other publications. In this area, both Falk and the author have excelled, as the book benefits from many previously unseen photos, and careful selection in other areas have revealed images that skilfully support the text.

Advertisements

PORSCHE ROAD&RACE

www.porscheroadandrace.com

Falk 33

910: Heading for overall victory

As the successor to the 906, the 910 first appeared in MI during 1966 and won its first overall race on February 6th, 1967. At the 2,000m class at Daytona where it was also fourth overall, with third place in the overall classification at both LeMans and Monza and second at Spa, the fate of the 910 looked good. The story of Falk's close to calamitous, but the really desperate cock-up was reported after Joe Sauer and Iain Sturges won the 1,000 kilometre race on the Nürburgring for Porsche for the first time. It was on May 25, 1967, and their 910S led home another three 910s. Falk's small production run had to work most hard because, at the request of PDK, for safety reasons, only two cars could be fielded at races.

And the weight loss regime continued unrelentingly. The steel tubular space frame of the 910, for instance, had new members compared to that of the 906. At the same time, two of its pipes served as oil lines between the engine and cockpit. Porsche specified the lighting weight of the car to be 1,175 kilos, with the eight cylinder version 21 kg heavier. At the Spa race, the 910S featured various big brakes at the front for the first time. In time for track trials, Falk's people had quickly compared a "brake release cable" which enabled services to change the jack of lighting speed instead of the 906's 11 inch wheels, the 910 ended up only light 13 each wheel with carbon springs.



MI 17: The new 910S from Porsche for the overall victory

- MI 17: The car was driven by Falk, Sauer and Iain Sturges in the 1967
- MI 18: Mission accomplished: Porsche's overall victory of the new Porsche 910S in 1967
- MI 19: May 25, 1967: Porsche wins its first 1,000 kilometre race on the Nürburgring with the 910S



This was my favourite car. I helped design the 910 right from the start. A beautiful and light race car. It's the most stunning racing car I've ever driven and also handled beautifully. The 910 proved much easier to set up compared to the 906 and was - thanks in part to the 13-inch Porsche wheels - straightforward to handle. The body was so well designed and aerodynamically great that we didn't need those ugly front splitters from the 906. Testing at Hockenheim we quickly discovered that we had very little spin. If I remember correctly, we photographed the car at high speed from the side. You could see whether it rolled or dipped at the front. For the body design we had our specialists near Schöcher and Hans Kuhl who also maintained contact with Porsche. The car came to the assembly and kept their eyes on us in case we wanted to tweak the body. They gave us their blessing - or not - and they shaped us from convincing timber and, and these two weren't only officials, they were also very pleasant and people.



It is a measure of an engineer's skill, creativeness and commitment to the task, when he has excelled in a number of different areas of work. Not only did Peter Falk successfully achieve this, but he did so while giving others the opportunity to grow along with him. The author, Wilfried Müller, has done an excellent job of painting Peter Falk in both his serious work environment, while also showing the light-hearted side of his work.

Advertisements

Porsche - The Carrera Dynasty
- tracing the origins of the famous Carrera name -

BUY NOW

Signed copies only available directly from author

>> The seventies: 917, Interpretreering, and Safari

1970 brought a shift in work priorities for Peter Falk. When I was promoted to the head of the experimental and test driving department, I initially had to leave my racing people to work on their own. My focus at that time shifted to production cars. Things changed the day that throughout the summer and even extended when I was made head of the department in 1970 for the areas of daily suspension, gearbox, tires, special projects, driving tests and endurance runs. I still attended a great many races, but I wasn't quite as involved in the development and testing of the racing cars. However, I had super people for the racing activities, Manfred Bartle and Heinrich Fagl, to name only two of many - who pushed things ahead - with a little guidance from me.

917 and 906/03: The elephant and the gazelle

After the Spania experience at the Ostermaching in the autumn of 1969, the 917 - at least the original version - evolved from an unimproved to an almost unbeatable racing car to eventually become Porsche's most famous contender. And in order for the team to be well equipped for sandy tracks, Falk's men built a cross-section of the 906 Bergwagen - the 906/03, which was tested by the factory only four times in 1970 and 1971 at the Targa Florio and the 1,000 kilometers race on the Nürburgring. Falk never in spirit of his motto: "I thought the 917 was an elephant, necessarily strong, big, fast, aggressive. The 906/03 on the other hand was the gazelle, small, slender, nimble, fast, agile."



01 | 0906 & 0303: 1970/71 racing in the British driver Steve Redfern, seen in the before -

02 | 0906 & 0303 for the 24h race with in Berlin. The small Spider was regarded as 7000 Aachen car except above.



This is an excellent account of one of Porsche's great engineers of a by-gone era, and this book comes highly recommended.

The 906 learns to run

Robert Singer was the father of this car. He was the ultimate test man. He never stood at the steering wheel. He was one of the first in our office to get a computer which he used right from the outset. Singer managed the overall project 906 and he designed the aerodynamics. It was a revolution to adapt the ground effect from Formula 1 for a single-seater. It forced out that Formula 1 aerodynamics to generate ground effect could not be used for our 906 with its wide body and covered wheels. To achieve the same effect, Singer and his aerodynamicists had to find a different solution. The turned out to be a massive job.

The body came from Eugen Kubb. Hans Kuffler developed the suspension and our first aluminum monocoque - a completely new task for him. He'd only ever designed cars with tubular frames for us. We had an engine, the 2.0-liter six-cylinder flat boxer with water-cooled four valve cylinder heads from the previous year. Valentin Schaefer modified the engine slightly so that it had decent fuel consumption. Hans Kuffler learned as one of the guys just in case Schaefer needed help with any adjustments.

Robert Singer remembers working with Peter Falk: "He gave me great freedom when I was working on the 906. Important decisions concerning technical questions were made within the team. Still, he would take responsibility for them. Today you'd be hard pressed to find a boss who does it like that."

Apart from the engine, everything else on the 906 was new: the aerodynamics, the aluminum monocoque. The first speed gearbox, the suspension and brakes. Jürgen 21 1969, missed the rollout of the car with Jürgen Barth at the wheel just nine months after the board had given the green light. Peter Falk remembers that afternoon: "It was the first time for the 906 on the track. The experienced many robots. But I've never experienced such a trouble-free first hour like with the job of Ralf Singer that too."



01 | And it goes like the 906/03: Jürgen Barth drove the 906/03 at its debut on March 27, 1969.

02 | The roll-out of the 906 with Steve Redfern from Klaus Barth, Hans Kuffler, Karl-Heinz Schickelmeier, Peter Falk, Jürgen Barth, Ralf Falk and Rolfhard Larkens

03 | A big welcome concert: Jürgen Barth accepts his title for the night for the debut of the 906.



Key Information



Title	Peter Falk - 33 Years of Porsche Rennsport and Development. People, Cars, Stories
Author	Peter Falk with Wilfried Müller
Publisher	McKlein Publishing/Verlag Reinhard Klein GbR
First published	2016
ISBN (Standard Edition)	978-3-927458-87-1
ISBN (Limited Special Edition)	978-3-927458-90-1
Format	408 pages; 30 x 24 cm; hardcover
Pictures	ca. 341 in colour and 174 in black-and-white
Language	English (also available in German)
Price	69.90 Euros
Telephone	+49 (0)2203-9242570
Web	www.racingwebshop.com

Edited by: Glen Smale

Share this: