

by Larry Webster

JUSTICE FOR ALL

NEARLY FIVE DECADES AGO, 32 DRAG- racing Funny Cars lined the strip at Orange County International Raceway like gladiators. To anyone in those long-gone grandstands in Irvine, California, the tension of the upcoming nitro-fueled melee must have been palpable. If I had a time machine, I'd skip back to that moment just so I could hear the crackling engines.

You can view the scene for yourself on page 42, where we debut a department called "Back in the Day." Our goal is to publish vintage photography that highlights a moment in automotive history. These photos can be of anything, from that race at Orange County to a cruise night in Tulsa, to workers toiling on an assembly line. We're intentionally keeping things loose to take advantage of the material we come across as we produce this magazine.

Your ideas are certainly welcome. We need high-quality images that tell a story, and we're hoping to uncover old photos that have been squirreled away in attics and basements. If you have any, or know someone who does, please drop us a line at tips@hagerty.com.

For this inaugural dispatch of Back in the Day, we relied on photos taken by Ed Justice, Jr., who recently published *Legacy of Justice: An American Family Story*, a coffee-table tome of nearly 500 pages that catalogs his family's longtime involvement in the post-WWII racing scene. But the book is far more than its title suggests.

Ed is the son of Ed Justice, Sr., who with his brothers Zeke and Gus left Depression-era Kansas and bootstrapped an oil-additives-and-lubricants empire while indulging their automotive passion. They started as self-taught mechanics drawn to the warmth and industry of midcentury Los Angeles. They eventually moved to Florida and established a Wynn's-additive sales territory, pioneering the use of motorsports to promote their products. They were regulars at the local circle track, on the ground floor as Bill France built NASCAR, and devoted to the Indy 500.

By the late Sixties, the brothers were back in California and building the Justice Brothers Company, relying heavily on the motorsports promotion techniques that had

served them well. The trio sponsored nearly everything with an engine—Indy cars, offshore racing boats, dragsters, motorcycles, Baja racers.

The story of their entrepreneurial success is an instructive tale on its own, but the book is filled with sidebars that document the relationships formed along the way. The Justice brothers were made men in the racing community with front-row seats during the golden age. They knew everyone from Frank Kurtis to Dan Gurney (who wrote a foreword to the book, as did Parnelli Jones), and it seemed like every winning car wore a Justice Brothers sticker. The Justice brothers were, collectively, like the Forrest Gump of motorsports.

This material from decades on the front lines of racing is wonderfully enhanced with hundreds of vintage photos, many shot by Ed Justice, Jr., who was the company photographer before becoming president in 1988. The book is as much a history of the Justice brothers as it is a history of racing and is well worth the ninety bucks. // lwebster@hagerty.com



Don "the Snake" Prudhomme's Plymouth Barracuda Funny Car. Hundreds of such photos by Ed Justice, Jr., illustrate his new book about the Justice family's longtime involvement in racing.