

Dick Johnson

Everybody loves Dick Johnson, even his competitors. During his long and distinguished career, Dick was admired for his sportsmanship, enthusiasm and sense of humour, as well as his ability to drive very, very fast. His steely determination to succeed saw him a three-time winner of Bathurst and five-time Australian Touring Car Champion.

While Dick is synonymous with Ford (and the famous number 17), the colourful Queenslander actually started his long and successful career in the rival camp, racing an FJ Holden in 1964, and won his first race in only his second outing. In 1977, he jumped into a blue Falcon V8 for the first time and began his attack on all the major events on the racing calendar.

Dick had the odd crash in his time – it is a bit hard to avoid them when you're battling rivals up Mountain Straight at 255 km/h. In 1980, Dick was leading Bathurst when his car was destroyed after hitting a football sized rock that had 'fallen' onto the track (that's drunks for you.) Shocked at Dick's misfortune, the public then jammed the Channel 7 switchboard with calls, pledging money to help him rebuild his Tru Blu Ford Falcon XD. With the telecast now a telethon, Head of Ford Australia, Edsel Ford called through with a promise to match dollar-for-dollar every public donation received. Dick never looked back.

Dick has always been a favourite of the media because when he speaks he says something significant or witty and usually both. His racecam commentary from behind the wheel at 300km/h was legendary - "Winton? It's like running a marathon around your clothesline!" – and he's much sought after as an occasional speaker. It's because Dick is an all-round good guy – and everyone loves him!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDfKXVNSvsc>



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