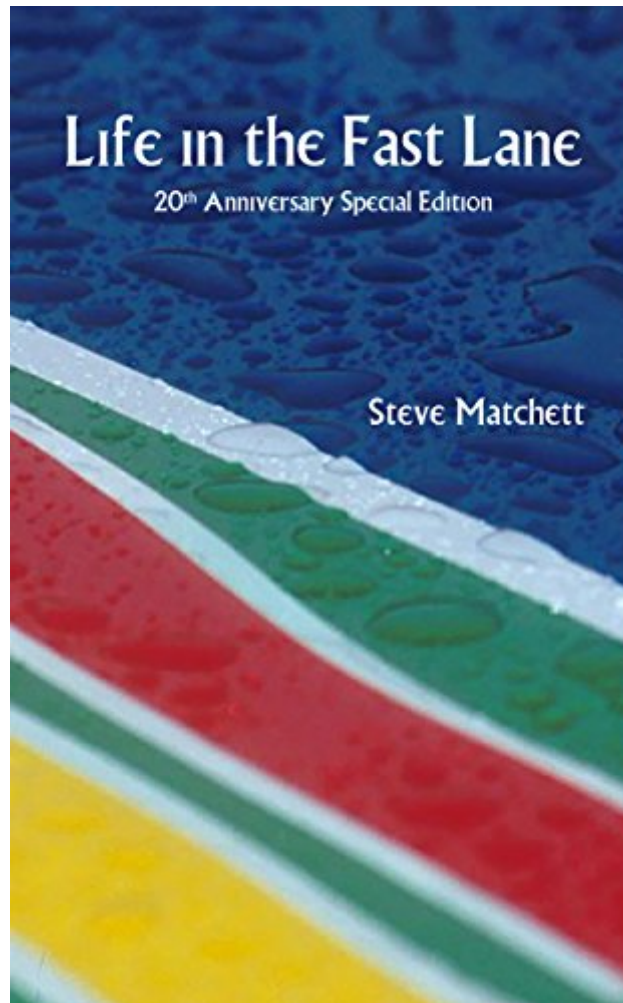




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# Life In The Fast Lane: 20th Anniversary Special Edition



## Synopsis

Over the last twenty years *Life in the Fast Lane* has become a staple of Formula 1 literature. In essence a monthly diary of a Benetton grand prix mechanic, this essential book gives a behind-the-scenes account of daily life in the trenches of F1, each page written throughout the tragic and turbulent 1994 season. The author's unique view alone makes this book indispensable reading for any serious motor racing enthusiast but *Life in the Fast Lane* is much more than an informative diary of this highly exclusive multimillion dollar world: its remarkable insider setting, its exceptional subject matter, its unfolding tension, its ease of narration, all of these thrilling ingredients have been wonderfully blended, mixed to produce a truly captivating page-turner. From January through to December, the enthralled reader is simply compelled to follow the author's stunning racing year from start to finish. Written by popular Formula 1 television personality Steve Matchett, *Life in the Fast Lane* is Matchett's first book – two more soon followed – and its immediate success proved the catalyst to take him from life in the F1 pit lane to life in America, working first with FOX and now with NBC television, a commentary position from where he has called all the live grand prix racing action for the past sixteen years. When Matchett wrote *Life in the Fast Lane*, however, he was unknown outside of his highly technical clandestine industry; a Formula 1 race mechanic, a member of the Benetton grand prix team working alongside celebrities like Flavio Briatore, Michael Schumacher and Ross Brawn. His fast-paced story of the frantic, unending backstage activity to become the fastest and best in the world gives a fascinating, unparalleled insight into Formula 1 during some of its darkest and most difficult days. Matchett was the rear jack man in Benetton's pit crew, and was himself engulfed in the terrible fire in Hockenheim where Jos Verstappen's race car dramatically exploded. In *Life in the Fast Lane* he reveals the full inside story of the momentous 1994 season, including the death of Ayrton Senna, the Hockenheim fuel fire and the numerous fines, penalties and disqualifications that embroiled the sport as the Benetton and Williams teams battled tooth and nail for the drivers' and constructors' world championships. The final showdown came in Adelaide, Australia, the last race of the year, complete with that still controversial title-deciding racing collision between Michael Schumacher and Damon Hill. First edition hardback copies of this classic motor racing title have risen in value to become near unobtainable, expensive collectors items. Fortunately, this Twentieth Anniversary Special Edition e-book version for Kindle readers makes *Life in the Fast Lane* readily available to a whole new audience, and for a reassuringly affordable price.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When one thinks about a tome written by a mechanic, one may easily imagine a lunch truck order scrawled in grease pencil on the back of a parts receipt. That is not the kind of mechanic they grow in Great Britain, or at least not in the person of Mr. Steve Matchett. Keen observation, droll, artful turns of phrase, and knowing references to Baudelaire and the weltanschauung of Christmas turkeys make this memoir of a memorable racing season both warm and riveting. It's like receiving a tour of a great art museum not from a weary docent but a renowned painter who goes on to reveal the secret techniques of brushstroke and color choice over a couple of pints at your favorite local. Those familiar with Mr. Matchett from his subsequent career as a race commentator will find in these pages proof that his television image as a knowledgeable mensch is no affectation. Perhaps the highest praise I can give *Life in the Fast Lane* is that one doesn't need to know anything about motorsport to thoroughly enjoy it (although it certainly magnifies the experience.) There's a pint and far more waiting for Mr. Matchett at any local he chooses should the opportunity arise.

Tremendous insight into one of the most captivating racing seasons in history. I've tried to get my hands on this book for years, having read the other two by Steve. Since it was out of print, I wasn't

successful. I downloaded this version the day it was made available. It's written from an often forgotten perspective of the F1 mechanics, ironic in that they are the ones closest to the action after the driver. Steve is a great author and has a way of making you feel as though you are a part of an F1 team. Written as a diary throughout the season, it's a very captivating look at modern F1. A particularly poignant passage involves the great Michael Schumacher leading the Spanish GP while he is managing the race strategy via radio transmission so that his team, Benetton, can get their second driver in the points, all while fending off a hard charging Williams challenging for second. Simultaneously had me grinning and choked up thinking of Michael's present condition. If you are a fan of racing or even have a passing interest in F1, BUY THIS BOOK!

I've been wanting to read this book for a long time, having been a big fan of Mr. Matchett's work on American F1 broadcasts and having read *The Chariot Makers*. I couldn't put this down. From pre season testing through an intensely personal perspective of the terrible events at Imola on through the end of Michael Schumacher's 1st World Championship, it was riveting. Even a casual fan of F1 should enjoy this. I heard the whole book in his accent.

A great read for racing fans. I also got Steve's second book which I read up to the coverage of 1994 and then switched to read this one, which is all about that year. Then I went back and finished *Mechanics Tale*. That is a good way to do it by the way. Both are excellent.

Having listened and watched Steve for years on US Formula 1 coverage, it's no surprise I enjoyed this book. A record of a specific year window in the ever-changing world of top-level auto racing, there are still many elements of the universal nature of the sport. I look forward to reading the other books very soon.

The author readily admits the writing had some rough edges as his first book. That said if you have any interest in F1 this is a must read. The inner workings of a F1 team supporting Michael Schumacher's first world championship season is fascinating

Well done, Mr Matchett. Wonderfully written. I will enjoy your commentary on NBC Sports even more having read this account of your time in the garage. Thank you for writing it.

A most excellent account of life behind the scenes of a man who lived it, not just writing a story on it.

I watched him for several years as a analyst on the speed channel.

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