



## For Your Bookshelf – Allard – The Complete Story

Published: April 15, 2021

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Online version: <https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/for-your-bookshelf-allard-the-complete-story/>



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Title: Allard – The Complete Story

Author: Allan Allard and Lance Cole

Published by: Crowood Press

240 pages; paperback

Price: £40/\$60 BUT current price on Crowood's website (at 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021) £32 (and e-book version also £32, including vAT). <https://www.crowood.com>



ISBN: 978-1-7850-0559-6

Most enthusiasts will have at least a vague knowledge of Sydney Allard and his eponymous V8-engined sports cars of the immediate post war years. Irredeemable racer, Allard first entered competition in 1929, funding his passion from his Ford dealership, confusingly called Adlards. By the late 1930s his specials were using the flathead Ford Pilot V8 engine; contracts for the war ministry kept his enterprise busy during the war and by 1950, now one of the country's best known racing drivers, he had won the British Hillclimb championship using a war surplus air-cooled Steyr V8 engine which he chanced upon and from which, running on methanol he coaxed an astounding 150 horsepower. Encouraged by this he went to Le Mans and using the same Chrysler engines as the Cunninghams, Allards were amongst the fastest cars and their third place in 1950 was a remarkable achievement for an impoverished non-works team.

Allard was nothing if not eclectic: he built and sold cars until it was obvious that his powerful if artisan creations had become too expensive to compete with mass produced Austin Healeys and Jaguar XK140s. Reluctantly abandoning his own production in 1959, he turned to supercharging, becoming a distributor for Shorrock and competed successfully in his 'Allardettes,' supercharged Anglias and Cortinas.

A regular competitor at the Brighton speed trials, his eternal fascination with big horsepower led him to build a dragster and it was effectively Sydney Allard who introduced drag racing to Britain.

Keen on rallying too, he won the Monte in 1952, the only man ever to do so in a car bearing his own name.

Inveterate competitor, he persevered well into the 1960s, driving Fords in Montes, the RAC and even the gruelling Sofia-Liège-Sofia. Only the cancer which was to kill him shortly afterwards stopped him at 56 entering the 1966 Monte.

It is an involved yet fascinating story, well served by this new book, whose authors, Sydney's



younger son Alan and motoring journalist Lance Cole have produced an encyclopaedic work encompassing the life and exploits of an ambitious, talented, innovative yet also modest individual. At least 500 Allards of the 1900 originally made are known to exist many remain in active road or racing service, especially in the US where most were sold.

## VERDICT

A fine, especially well-written work, an absolute must for Allards fans and one which deserves prominence in any motoring enthusiast's library.