For Your Bookshelf – quattro – The Race and Rally Story 1980 – 2004

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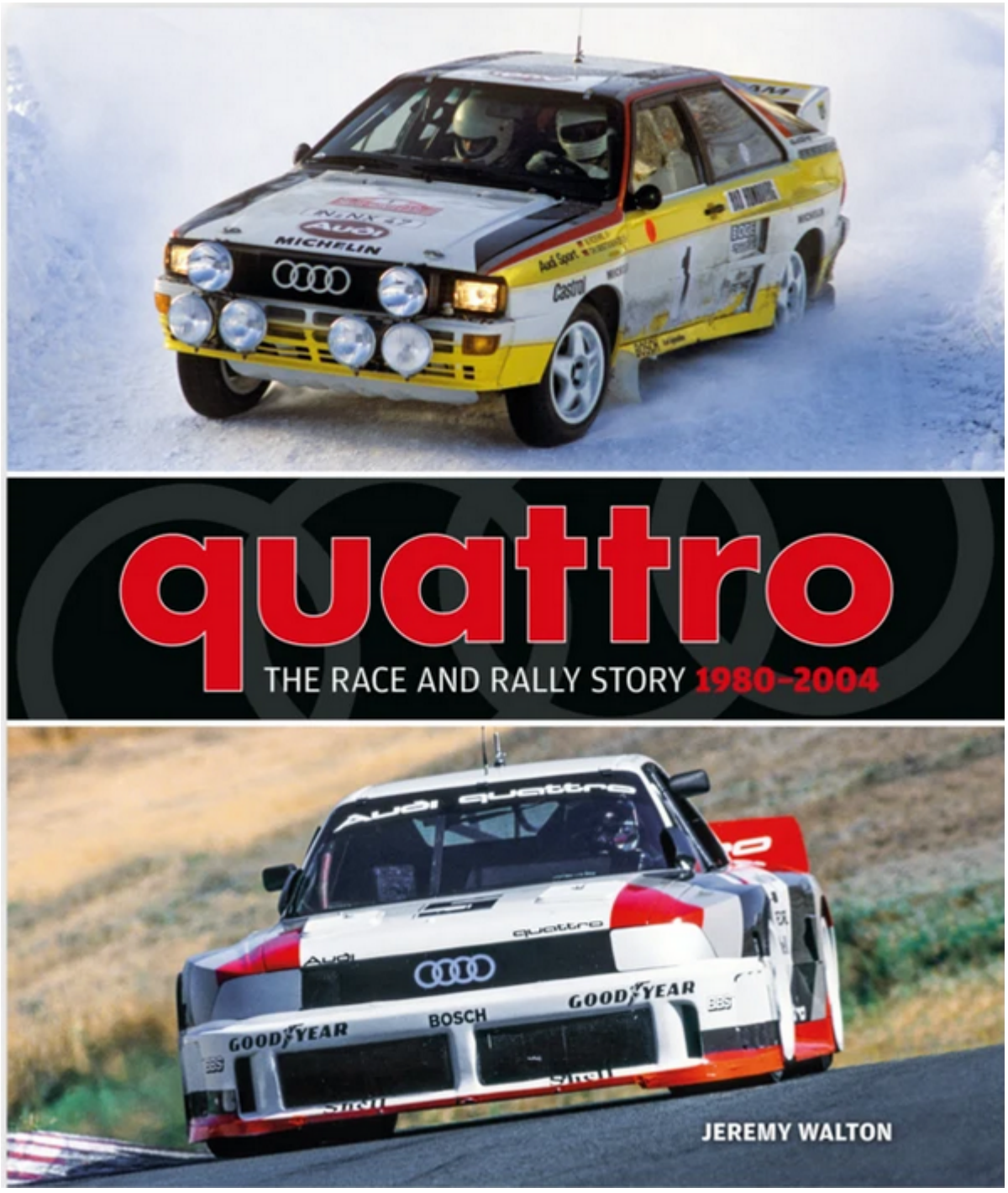
MICHELIN
Audi Sport
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quattro
THE RACE AND RALLY STORY 1980–2004
Audi quattro
quattro
BOSCH
GOODYEAR
GOODYEAR
JEREMY WALTON

Reviewed by Kim Henson.

Title: quattro – The Race and Rally Story 1980 – 2004

Author: Jeremy Walton (Note: Former *Autocar* editor and eminent international authority Ray Hutton edited the title).

Published by: Evro Publishing; https://www.evropublishing.com

304 pages, including more than 334 photos, mostly colour; hardback

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What a wonderful success story 'quattro' has been for Audi, in terms of road and competition cars, and it started more than 40 years ago. The four wheel drive high performance models given the quattro name are much revered by motoring enthusiasts around the globe, and rightly so. I have driven several examples over the years on work-related missions, and can confirm at first hand how competent and how much fun they are to drive.

The history, design, development and testing aspects, as well as the multiple sporting achievements of the Audis bearing the quattro name are covered comprehensively in the latest book from hugely experienced and well-respected motoring writer Jeremy Walton.

While its title suggests motor sport coverage – and it certainly examines that in fascinating detail, this book also tells the story of the 'bigger picture' of Audi's arrival, in fact dating back to 1873. I enjoyed reading the author's entertaining and fully descriptive account of how, via a circuitous historical route, Audi became a mainstream name, and how the quattro models arose during the late 1970s and beyond.

For this review I shall first look at the motor sport elements, and say that as Jeremy Walton's chapters enthusiastically unfold, he brings to life how the quattro clocked up an amazing number of successes, including racing and rallying in all conditions, and all around the world. Just as examples I should mention the four World Rally Championships, five times beating all comers in American driver/manufacturer contest series and, in a single year, seven international touring car titles.

Throughout, Jeremy accurately and informatively describes the technical aspects of the cars, talks about the drivers who put the vehicles through their paces in the toughest imaginable conditions, covers the ecstasies of winning and the agonies of setbacks along the road, and writes about the contemporary challenger cars from rival manufacturers.

Every picture tells a story, and this book is beautifully illustrated with a multitude of excellent photographs (almost all in colour) plus informative diagrams/cut-away views, all complementing the text and adding interest.

To me, a crucially important aspect of this book that shines through, is the fact that Jeremy Walton has followed quattro history from the earliest days. He really does know what he is talking about, not least because he has made it his business to find out, in addition to which he was 'there' during those exciting early years at the start of the quattro story.

In his capacity as a motor sport writer he has driven, and been driven in, a variety of quattros including early 'ur' ('original') examples. He has also interviewed – formally and informally – those within Audi involved with the design and development of the quattro concept, and those who made it a production reality rather than just a motor sport homologation special vehicle. Similarly he has talked in depth to, and driven with, many of the seriously skillful race and rally drivers who helped the vehicles make history.

The historical and technical appraisals of the quattros, put into his own words by Jeremy, are especially compelling and relevant as he has driven, raced and rallied a wide variety of high performance cars over the years, giving a unique perspective of the quattros and their

place in the motoring world.

VERDICT

First class; buy it!

It is true that personally I enjoy reading most motoring books, but to me this volume is a ‘must-have’ title for any motoring enthusiast. You don’t have to be a quattro or Audi devotee (although this may help further!) to savour and enjoy the contents of this well-written first class book, covering a very special series of cars that provides a vital chapter in the story of motoring history.