

THE FALCONS WERE TIMED AT 0-60MPH IN 6.9 SECONDS AND 0-100MPH IN 16.9 SECONDS, WITH A STANDING QUARTER-MILE TIME OF 14.2 SECONDS.

the '63 campaign plus Henri Greder, Jo Schlesser, Peter Harper and Bjarne Lundberg, with 1962 Formula One World Champion, Graham Hill completing the bill. The team also hedged their bets by starting half the Falcons from Paris and the other half from Oslo. Among the stiff opposition was a pair of Ford Britain works Cortina G.T.s. but they needn't have worried about them, as they both fell by the wayside.

The weather was much kinder and there was less snow and ice on the roads, enabling the Falcons to use their grunt to good advantage. All eight made the finish. Ljungfeldt maintained his status as star of the team and indeed of the rally, by again winning all of the special stages, but after the dreaded adjustments had been applied by the organisers, was pushed back into second place by Paddy Hopkirk's Mini Cooper S. Schlesser was 11th and Greder just made it into the top 20 in 19th place out of the 163 finishers.

Anne Hall was credited with fourth in the Coupe des Dames. Ford America were understandably miffed that they had not won and threw in the towel, again leaving a couple of the cars for Ford France to play with. Greder repeated his Geneva Rally victory and also achieved a fourth place in the Tulip Rally. The other cars found their way back to Alan Mann in England where they languished for a while. In Europe, the Cortinas were coming on strong and over the following years would prove to do exceptionally well in both racing and rallying.

The big 427cu.in. Galaxies were still doing the business on racetracks on both sides of the Atlantic and 1964 saw the introduction of the all-new Mustang, of which Ford had high hopes both for the road and in competition. A Mustang driven by Peter Proctor won the Touring Class in that year's Tour de France. The poor old Falcon was yesterday's news. Back in the States, a few were chopped down in length and fitted with fibreglass panels and 427cu.in. High Riser engines by Dearborn Steel and Tubing to take on the MoPars on the drag strips. Phil Bonner was probably the most successful Falcon pilot, beating Gene Snow's Plymouth Hemi in the final of the AHRA World Championship at Green Valley Raceway, Fort Worth, Texas, in September 1964.

Even Ford themselves shied away from the performance aspect of the Falcon by lowering the specification of the Futura Sprint for '65 and pushing buyers towards the Mustang, which included the high performance Shelby GT-350 in its range. The Falcon was basically a good car, but was already getting long in the tooth and close to its 'sell by' date by the time that Ford decided to return to big time racing and was quickly usurped by the new kids on the block.

It looked all over for the Falcon, but the dying embers flared up again when it was realised that the ex-Monte Carlo lightweight Falcons would be eligible for the Group 5 British Saloon Car Championships and would have a weight advantage over the much fancied Mustangs, in which Roy Pierpoint had clinched the '65 title.

Alan Mann Racing set to work converting and race prepping six Falcons for the track and his hunch paid off. They proved to be both fast and agile. One of the Falcons went to reigning champion, Pierpoint. Another was driven by John Whitmore at the BRDC Daily Express Meeting at Silverstone in May 1966, where he broke



TOP TO BOTTOM: THE FALCONS DID FORD PROUD IN THE ALPS; FALCONS WENT ON TO BECOME BEST-SELLERS AND WERE PART OF FORD'S TOTAL PERFORMANCE LINE-UP; WINNING RACES TRANSLATED INTO REAL SHOWROOM TRAFFIC AND SALES FOR FORD. THE MONTE CARLO RALLY OZZED EUROPEAN SOPHISTICATION AND GLAMOUR IN AMERICAN CONSUMERS' MINDS; GRAHAM HILL CHECKS THE MAPS ON A 1964 MONTE CARLO.



ABOVE: FRANK GARDNER AT SPEED IN HIS ALAN MANN FALCON, BRANDS HATCH, 1967.

the lap record by topping 100mph, and won the race at over 97mph average, with second place going to Sir Gawaine Baillie, an experienced Galaxie regular. Pierpoint won at the Brands Hatch Grand Prix meeting in July, with Baillie third, the pair sandwiching Jackie Oliver's Mustang. Baillie finished second to Jim Clark's Lotus Cortina at the Oulton Park Gold Cup meeting.

In 1967, Australian hard man Frank Gardner joined the Alan Mann Falcon fold. Aged 37, he was 1956/7 New South Wales Sports Car Champion and had raced in the Formula One World Championships in 1965 for John Willment's fledgling, but rather out of its depth team. He took to the Falcon like a duck to water and won the 1967 Championship in dominant style, in spite of being tee-boned and taken out by Graham Hill's Lotus Cortina at Brands Hatch at the end of the season. This was the Falcon's swansong, but she went out in a blaze of glory. ★