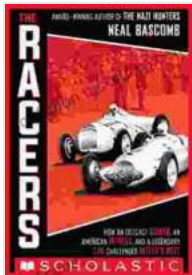


# How an Outcast Driver, an American Heiress, and a Legendary Car Challenged Hitler



## The Racers: How an Outcast Driver, an American Heiress, and a Legendary Car Challenged Hitler's Best (Scholastic Focus) by Frederick Courteney Selous

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
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Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 336 pages
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Screen Reader	: Supported



In the annals of automotive history, the Mille Miglia stands as one of the most grueling and prestigious races ever conceived.

Held on public roads in Italy, the race stretched over 1,000 miles and was a true test of man and machine. In 1938, the Mille Miglia took on an added significance as it became a battleground for political ideologies.

### The Outcast Driver

Rudolf Caracciola was a German racing driver who had been ostracized by the Nazi regime. Caracciola was a devout Catholic and refused to join the Nazi party. As a result, he was banned from competing in German races.

Despite his outcast status, Caracciola remained one of the best drivers in the world. He had won the Mille Miglia twice before, in 1930 and 1931. In 1938, he was determined to win the race again, not only for himself but also to show the Nazis that they could not break his spirit.

## **The American Heiress**

Barbara Hutton was an American heiress who was married to Prince Alexis Mdivani. Hutton was a passionate racing fan and had competed in several races herself.

In 1938, Hutton decided to enter the Mille Miglia with Caracciola as her co-driver. Hutton was not only a wealthy heiress but also a skilled driver. She had won several races in her own right.

Hutton's decision to race with Caracciola was a bold one. She knew that the Nazis would not be happy about it. But she was determined to show them that women could compete with men on equal terms.

## **The Legendary Car**

The car that Caracciola and Hutton would drive in the Mille Miglia was a Mercedes-Benz 540K. The 540K was one of the most powerful and technologically advanced cars of its time.

The 540K was capable of reaching speeds of over 100 miles per hour. It was also equipped with a number of innovative features, such as independent suspension and a supercharger.

## **The Race**

The 1938 Mille Miglia was one of the most closely contested races in history. Caracciola and Hutton led the race for much of the way. But they were constantly hounded by a team of Italian drivers who were determined to win the race for Mussolini.

In the end, Caracciola and Hutton finished second, just behind the Italian team. But their performance was still a remarkable achievement. They had shown the world that an outcast driver, an American heiress, and a legendary car could challenge the Nazis and their ideology.

## **The Aftermath**

The 1938 Mille Miglia was a turning point in Caracciola's career. After the race, he was allowed to compete in German races again.

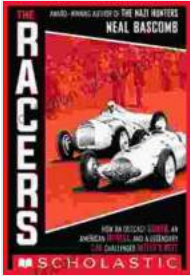
Hutton continued to race for several years after the war. She retired from racing in 1951 and died in 1979.

The Mercedes-Benz 540K is now on display at the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, Germany.

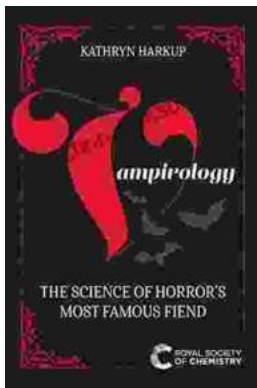
The story of Rudolf Caracciola, Barbara Hutton, and the Mercedes-Benz 540K is a reminder that even in the darkest of times, the human spirit can prevail. Caracciola, Hutton, and the 540K challenged the Nazis and their ideology, and they showed the world that anything is possible if you have the courage to dream.

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