



Racer Bob Bondurant with Arizona Diamondbacks catcher Tuffy Gosewisch at Chase Field. Photos courtesy of L.M. Parr/Arizona Diamondbacks.

## First pitch by first name in auto racing

Bob Bondurant, founder and CEO of the Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving in Chandler—who turned 80 in April—threw out the ceremonial first pitch during Senior Day on September 4, prior to the D-backs vs Blue Jays game, which offered discounted tickets for fans ages 55 and over.

After competing with dirt bikes in Southern California in his teens, Bob raced Corvettes in the mid-'50s, winning the West Coast SCCA B Production National Championship in 1959 with 18 out of 20 wins. He then raced with the Shelby American team and participated in the 1965 World Manufacturers Championship, winning seven of 10 races in Cobras and Daytonas—to this day the only American team to achieve this title.

A half year after surviving a horrendous June 1967 racing accident at Watkins Glen, NY, Bob rebuilt his life by opening the Bondurant School, at Orange County International Raceway in Santa Ana. The school moved to its Arizona location in 1990. The only purpose-built facility of its kind in the world, the Bondurant School has trained nearly 500,000 people—professional racers, executives, law enforcement officers and military specialists, performance enthusiasts and day-to-day drivers—to become safer and more proficient at handling the challenges of track, street and highway driving.

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