

Ward's Dealer Business

June 1999

The Ricart-Galpin rivalry rages on; one tops in trucks, other in used units

The Top 500: 13th Annual

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What counts a lot for Ford dealers these days are trucks and used vehicles.

Explaining why are the top sales performances in these categories for the No. 1 and No. 2 dealers on the Ward's Dealer Business 500.

In used vehicles, No. 1 is Ricart Ford of Columbus, OH. Ricart also tops the overall Ward's 500.

Ricart's total of 10,618 sales of pre-owned units in 1998 fell slightly from its all-time record of 11,039 in 1997.

But it still produced \$108.9 million in revenues and surpassed the 1998 runner-up in the pre-owned segment, Bill Collins Ford, of Louisville, KY, by nearly 4,500 units.

Co-owner Fred Ricart forecasts "nothing but growth" for high-quality cars and light trucks coming off lease and off rental.

He says, "I've outsold my new Ford cars with pre-owneds for two years in a row. That's because often you can find low payments which buyers want on units in good shape and with factory warranty left."

Ricart has a dedicated building and sales staff for used vehicles. He says profits from those are often "a lot better than on new."

The Ricart staff visits Ohio auctions, but most of the inventory is from the dealership's own trade-ins.

In light trucks, however, Ricart takes second place to Herbert F. Boeckmann II's Galpin Ford, North Hills, CA.

Galpin was runner-up to Ricart in the latest Ward's 500 total revenues category, but outsold the Ohio dealer in new pickups, minivans and SUVs by 8,599 to 7,165.

WARD'S DEALER 500

Retail Used Leaders

Top 20 - Retail Used Units

Ricart Ford	10,618
Bill Collins Ford	6,167
Earnhardt Ford Sales Co.	5,076
Landmark Chevrolet	4,679
Roseville Toyota	4,405
Earnhardt's Gilbert Dodge	4,234
C & O Motors	4,143
Van Boxtel Ford	3,984
Norm Reeves Honda Superstore	3,899
Sam Galloway Ford	3,812
Landers Dodge-C-P-Jeep	3,787
Mullinax Ford South	3,742
Marcone Auto Plaza	3,581
Capital Ford	3,551
Leif Johnson Ford	3,425
H.R Smith Ford	3,401
Universal City Nissan	3,400
Bill Heard Chevrolet Co.	3,367
Autoland of NJ	3,339
Phil Long Ford of CoL Springs	3,338

Top 20 - Retail Used %(*)

Brandon Honda	51.5%
Diehl Toyota	46.0%
Suburban Ford	45.5%
Roseville Toyota	42.8%
Ramey Motors	42.8%
Lund Cadillac	42.4%
Van Boxtel Ford	41.8%
Hansel Ford	39.0%
Rizza Chevrolet	38.9%
Reliable Chevrolet & Mercedes	38.7%
Ed Bozarth Chevrolet - KS	38.5%
Massey Cadillac - FL	38.5%
Gary Yeomans Ford	38.0%
H.P. Smith Ford	37.8%
Don Seelye Ford	37.4%
Reliable Chevrolet - OK	37.2%
Rapid Chevrolet Co.	36.8%
Plains Chevrolet	36.7%
Team Chevrolet	36.7%
Renton Honda Automobiles	36.6%

* As a percent of the total revenue

Mr. Boeckmann says, "I just got off the phone with the regional manager, and they're promising me more Explorers and Expeditions for the rest of the year.

"We led the Ford dealers in Explorer sales last year with 3,200 and were also first in Expeditions and Navigators at our Lincoln Mercury store.

"We beat the second Explorer dealer by 1,400, and I'm told our retail Ford, truck sales top those in 11 states combined."

Cramped for space on his spread in the San Fernando Valley, Mr. Boeckmann is expanding.

He has bought nearby land for a new Lincoln Mercury-Jaguar building and will either relocate his Saturn of the Valley dealership to the complex or install a new franchise, possibly Ford's Mazda and Volvo lines.

He opened a second Saturn point in the north Valley area last year, Saturn of Santa Clarita, and is planning a new service facility that will feature an accessories display area and an express service section.

As the first dealer to open a restaurant on site, Mr. Boeckmann since has added a community room with a kitchen that can provide meals to 240 people at a time.

He is unimpressed by the dealer collections started by GM in the San Fernando Valley or in Denver, where AutoNation has 17 stores in a John Elway pilot hookup.

"AutoNation lost its shirt trying to build up their penetration in Denver," says Mr. Boeckmann.

Called the "best dealer in the country" by archrival Fred Ricart, Mr. Boeckmann laughs at that.

He says he isn't yet ready to turn the business over fully to his sons Brad, 39, and Beau, 29, for the "Ricart Challenge."

"They're taking over more of the operations, and have college degrees, so I'm confident that Galpin will stay in good hands."