



Franco and Formula Fun™ children's range brings F1 off the track and into the playroom

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UK (PRWebUK) March 27, 2009 -- "Can I play with your Ferrari please Daddy?" It was this request, and subsequent denial, that set the wheels in motion for Franco and Formula Fun; a range of toys, books and interactive games that bring the thrill of F1 off the track and into the playroom for 3 to 6 year olds.

The question was asked by Bruno Nicholas to his F1 fanatic father, Simon, and referred to his somewhat valuable die-cast car collection. Bruno was taking a healthy interest in the sport that so consumed his father, and Marina Nicholas helped her son to understand the teams, their characters and used the natural travelling element of the sport to educate her son on the geography and culture of the F1 destinations.

What started as a boy's enthusiasm in his father's passion is now being launched as an entire children's educational and play range inspired by the F1 phenomenon.

The Franco and Formula Fun experience encompasses ten racing car characters. Franco, the lead character, is a red Italian car who travels to seventeen racetracks around the world with his friends. Each character is the hero of a book and will soon be available in toy form so that die cast cars remain on the shelf and children can re-enact the crashes and bashes of a race with their own Formula Fun cars. To bring the re-enactment to life, each of track is emulated in a cartoon style play-mat. The Franco and Formula Fun website is an additional learning resource with games and crucially it brings to life the countries the cars travel to for racing.

This educational element is very important to the Formula Fun creators. Marina tested the characters and stories with school children across her native Cheshire. "The young children are my best critics. I love the fact that their feedback is so honest. At that age they say exactly what they see!" The teachers too picked up on the strength of the idea and welcomed the use of a global racing concept to teach children about the world, languages and cultures.

With Marina creating the Formula Fun characters in text, renowned F1 illustrator Jim Bamber brought them to life. Jim says of his involvement, "Some years ago I was at a motorsport show in Birmingham. I had been away from home for five days and I wanted something to give to my two young daughters when I got back. I was surprised that there was virtually nothing for children on sale. In fact the only thing available at that time was a small Teddy Bear dressed in a Michael Schumacher t-shirt. I bought two. So when this opportunity came up to get involved with Franco and Formula Fun I remembered that sad dad looking for a present and just had to do it."

Jim Bamber is not the only F1 personality to take to the Formula Fun concept; Murray Walker, the iconic voice of F1 has given his full approval to the Muddy Talker character in the books and Murray is the narrator of the first e-book, Hero and Formula Fun.

www.francoandformulafun.com launches to coincide with the Melbourne Grand Prix on 28th March. At launch the site will be fully operational in English, with sites in Spain, Italy, France and Germany launching before the



end of the year and Japan, Hungary and China in 2010. The toy range will be available from each of the global sites and Franco and Formula Fun will be trackside at the British Grand Prix at Silverstone this June.

Marina Nicholas, CEO of Formula Fun Entertainment Ltd, comments, "From baking together to kicking a ball in the garden, it's instinctive for parents to share and enjoy their passions with their children. With F1, a sport enjoyed by 600 million people worldwide, there are few opportunities to engage in the excitement as a family unless you visit an actual Grand Prix race. Franco and Formula Fun provides parents with the tools to make F1 a family experience in the comfort of their own home."

Never before has the thrill and excitement of F1 been so coherently delivered to a young audience.

Visit the site at - www.FrancoandFormulaFun.com

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Franco and Formula Fun™

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