



Racing Families – The Franchittis

Hello and welcome to Racing Families, a mini series from Sidepodcast that looks at all those drivers who have family members in the same profession. This is the last episode of the series, meaning we've already covered six families that have racing in their blood. This time, our seventh family, it's the Franchittis.

The Franchitti brothers may not be first on the list of a Formula One related racing families list, however they have spread themselves across the motorsport world, trying their hand at plenty of the different disciplines. Dario Franchitti may be the most famous, as a four-time IndyCar champion, and multiple Indy 500 winner.

Dario made his way through the usual junior series, including a stint in the German Touring Car Championship, before getting the chance to test a Jaguar F1 car. There was plenty of speculation at the time about whether he would be joining the sport full time, but he was unable to secure a drive, and looked around for other opportunities. He found one, moving to the Champ Car series, and then IndyCar. He started out with Andretti Green Racing, and they began working towards podiums and then wins. They secured two championships together, before Dario moved on to Chip Ganassi Racing. Another two championships were in his future, and he started looking at other series'.

With the Chip Ganassi team, he also participated in the NASCAR championship. Dario spent a couple of years racing stock cars, and then tried his hand at sports cars, with entries into the 12 Hours of Sebring and Petit Le Mans. He's currently battling in the 2013 IndyCar season, with a couple of disappointing races to start the year off with.

Sports cars are also the domain of Dario's younger brother Marino, who joined the ALMS series with his brother's team Andretti Green. Dario has participated in the 24 Hours of Le Mans four times, with three of those ending in a DNF. In 2012, he drew a lot of attention piloting the unique DeltaWing car, although that too did not see the end of the race. Marino continues his endurance racing career this year, with the Level 5 Motorsports crew.

The Franchitti name has heaps of Italian heritage, but the parents of Dario and Marino were born in Scotland, and the pair are cousins with Scottish Formula One driver Paul di Resta. Paul is the youngest of the three, with Dario aged 40, Marino 35, and Di Resta the tender age of 27.

Having made his way through the traditional formulae towards F1, including karting, Formula Renault and Formula Three, Di Resta made a switch to the DTM series, which is a less traditional method of breaking into F1. He raced in the touring car series for four seasons, finishing fifth in his first season, then 2nd, then 3rd and finally taking the championship in 2010.

At the same time as winning the DTM series, Di Resta was signed to the Force India F1 team, testing the car through the year, and participating in several free practice sessions as the season progressed. For 2011, Di Resta was promoted to the race team, where he picked up a point on his first outing at the Australian Grand Prix. It's been a really consistent performance from Di Resta in his F1 career so far, with just three recorded DNFs, and more than half of the remaining races finished in the points.

He's remained with Force India for all three seasons of his Formula One career to date, with an eye to moving onwards and upwards as soon as he can. As yet, there doesn't seem to be an end in sight for Di Resta in Formula One, but if there was, he'll have the support of his cousins should he choose to move to IndyCar, or NASCAR, or some of those endurance races. Three members of the same family, and what a wealth of motorsport they have managed to cover so far.



That's all for this episode, and this series, of Racing Families. I hope you've enjoyed the series, do send me your feedback by tweeting me at sidepodcast, or visiting the contact form on sidepodcast.com/contact. As ever, thank you for listening.

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