

**A book about the Group's F1 adventure of almost twenty years.  
BENETTON's MAGIC FORMULA**

Ponzano, July 2006. Image -because, as Luciano Benetton says, "only Formula 1 can give such global exposure"- business instinct, innovation. And colour, team spirit, passion, enthusiasm, the contest, the avant garde technology, the heady scent of victory. The ingredients of Benetton's adventure in the motor-racing world emerges from the photographs, reports, technical analyses, interviews and personal comments in the book *Benetton Formula 1, A Story*, edited by Fabrica for the Group's 40th anniversary, published by Skira.



It's the description of the nineteen years, from 1983 to 2001, of a story that was unique because it grew from a unique, remarkable idea that developed and intensified race after race. A story of sport, business flair, innovative communication, technological research and, above all, of the protagonists: Luciano Benetton, Flavio Briatore, John Barnard, Tom Walkinshaw, Alessandro and Rocco Benetton, Davide Paolini. Drivers Michele Alboreto, Riccardo Patrese, Nelson Piquet, Alessandro Nannini, Gerhard Berger, Jean Alesi, Michael Schumacher, Alex Wurz, Giancarlo Fisichella. And all the people -managers, technicians, team members- who gave their individual contribution, through ideas and hard work, to the Benetton Formula success.

When Luciano Benetton first thought about Formula 1 he did so because he considered it the ideal way of boosting the visibility and image of Benetton, a global group present in 120 countries across the world. It began as a traditional sponsorship but the first victory, with Michele Alboreto at Las Vegas, and its immediate attendant media stir in such an important market as the U.S. convinced the Group to take a bold, ground-breaking step. Benetton took over the Toleman team in 1985 and debuted at Monte Carlo with a car that was a veritable "communication vehicle": new, bright green, unexpected and engaging.

Team Benetton's first win, at Mexico City in 1986, aroused a great deal of excitement. Never before had a winning car been so closely identified with a company from outside the automotive business. A company that wasn't just the sponsor or owner but had actually built the car and given it its name. Benetton transferred its corporate vision to Formula 1: a blend of technological innovation, a solid organisation and motivated people, that translated into a strong team spirit which, enabled it immediately to "read" the various conditions that develop during a race.

The arrival of Flavio Briatore, followed by Michael Schumacher (1991) and the opening of the world's biggest, most advanced Formula 1 factory, at Enston, United Kingdom (1993), completed the picture and were the start of a season of victories that led to winning two drivers' world championships (1994 and 1995) and a constructors' title (1995). Overall, Benetton Formula won 27 Grands Prix, 96 podiums and 16 pole positions. The Team's technical excellence had major positive effects on the group, not only in terms of corporate image but also high-tech research such as in textiles and materials for apparel and accessories.

But, as mentioned in the book, the greatest moral satisfaction came from a comment Gianni Agnelli made first to Luciano Benetton, when the two bumped into one another in the Italian Senate, and then in public: "I told the people at Ferrari that Benetton cannot possibly make cars better than ours. It's as if Fiat were to start making jumpers, and made them better than you!".

*Benetton Formula 1, A Story* is edited by Pino Allievi and designed by Massimo Vignelli for Fabrica.

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