

Pre-season Formula 1™ 2016

By *lluigib*

Images by *lluigib*

Theme: Speed Champions

Set numbers: 75879, 75882, 75883

The 2016 Formula 1 pre-season has started and the teams are working at full throttle to get their cars ready. The tests to fine tune the cars will start in the following weeks at the Circuit de Catalunya. After contacting several teams, Scuderia Ferrari Formula 1 and Mercedes AMG Petronas Formula One Team have opened their doors to show us how their designs are evolving.

Scuderia Ferrari Formula 1

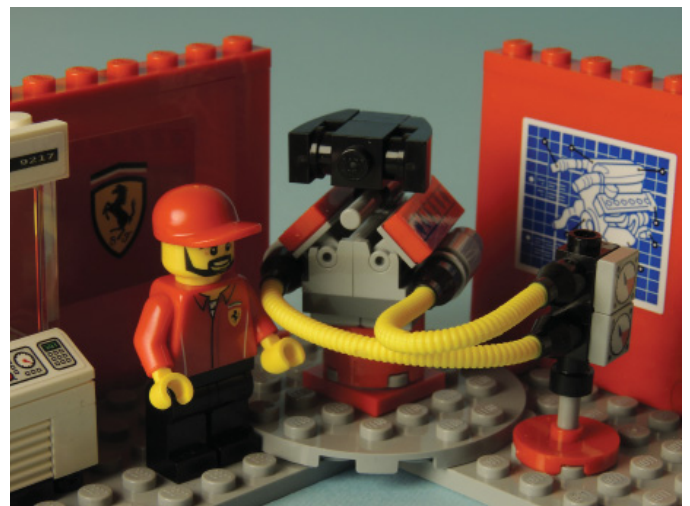
Let's go back to the Bologna airport and rent a car. We will take a trip to Maranello to visit the design department of Ferrari. Upon arrival, the Ferrari FXX K is in the wind tunnel. This car has a very limited edition (only 40 units) based on the LaFerrari platform by Ferrari. You can see the angular shape and the different spoilers that give the car stability at high speed.



The engineer in charge of the wind tunnel allows us to take a look at the computer screens displaying the acquired data. Since this is not Formula 1 there are no restrictions against showing this information.



After seeing this test we go to the adjacent box. Here they are testing an old 12 cylinder Formula 1 engine. There is a test bench and an exhaust collector so nobody is asphyxiated by the exhaust fumes. The engine sounds glorious compared to modern F1 engines. It has a very high pitched sound and you can hear its tremendous power.



Meanwhile, right next to it there is a 3D printer finishing the last piece to complete the front spoiler of the Formula 1 car. The machine is controlled by the main engineer who oversees the whole process.



After finishing the piece, it is added to the front spoiler.



Now the Formula 1 car is ready to go into the wind tunnel. But first the machine needs to be adjusted to adapt to the wheelbase of a Formula 1 car.



We attend the last trials before the test rounds at the Circuit de Catalunya, and see a very stylised Formula 1 car. The last parts of the nose have just been printed and the assembly has a double curve that gives it a very elegant appearance. Another thing that stands out are the long side pods surrounding the cockpit. The livery is slightly different from previous years.



For example, the top of the engine cover is white and the Italian flag runs over the whole nose. It's obviously an Italian design. We appreciate the opportunity Ferrari has given us to visit its installations, and it has been very interesting to see part of the development of a Formula 1 racing car.

Mercedes AMG Petronas™ Formula 1

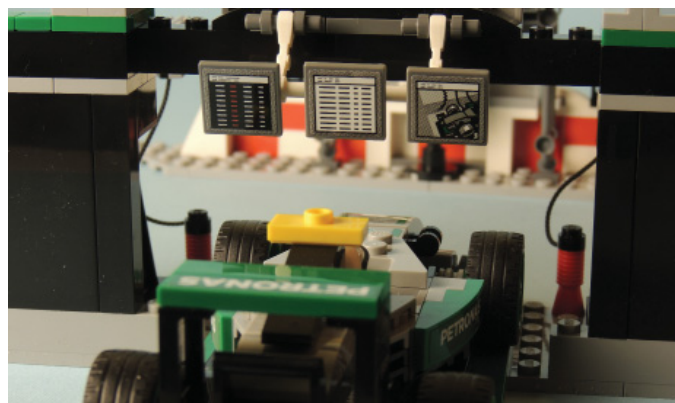
Next we travel to the United Kingdom for the Filming Day of the Mercedes team on its test circuit. After landing in London we go to Brackley, where Mercedes has its headquarters, near a small airstrip they use for promotional purposes. We arrive during the official presentation of the new cars and their drivers.



The cars have a two-level nose and a rear spoiler that includes an additional spoiler underneath to add more aerodynamic power. These are small changes to a car that won the Driver and Constructor Championship titles last year. Lewis Hamilton starts driving while Nico Rosberg's car stays in the Box for some fine tuning.



Aside from the machine for refueling the cars, there is a second rear spoiler with less aerodynamic power for circuits like Monza or Montreal that require higher top speeds. Going into the garage we see Nico who is already in his car, observing everything that is happening on the screens he has at his disposal.



Toto Wolff doesn't take his eye off the track. He is sitting on the pit wall and gives instructions to the whole team regarding how to get the best images (and to collect data, as teams use these Filming Days to do covert testing).



There is a spectacular display of equipment to take images from all angles. There is even a camera with telescopic arm to take close-up images. Lewis takes the bend several times at low speed. This way the camera can record the perfect angle.



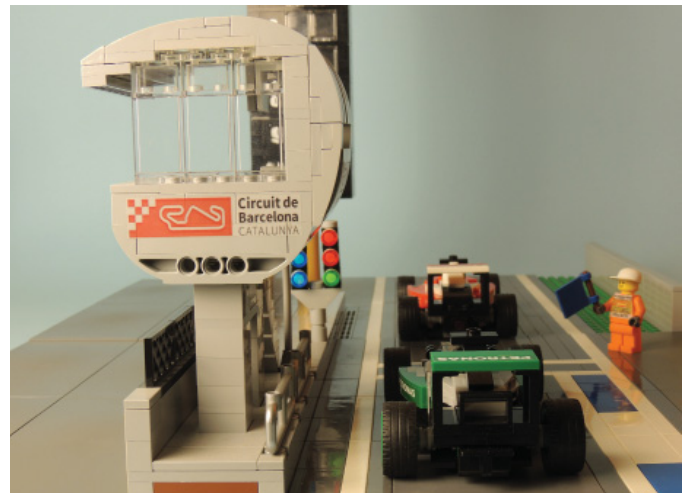
Mercedes have also prepared a set to interview the drivers. There are giant screens on where you can see what happens on the track as well as the interviews that are held.



To finish off, Lewis Hamilton is brought onto a podium to present the World Championship trophy he won last year to the assembled press. Of course you can see everything on the giant screen behind the podium.



The day is over and we go back to Barcelona where one week later we will be able to see the result of all the hard work the teams have done during winter. It is 9 a.m. at the Barcelona Catalunya Circuit and the lights have turned green. The cars are ready for the installation lap. There's a long championship ahead!



I would like to thank the LEGO AFOL Relations & Programs Team for providing the set for review. However, LEGO® does not approve nor endorse the opinions we publish about their sets.

#

