

Some young patients take heart from Grand Prix visit

By PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

Behind the glitz, glamour and muscle cars of the Detroit Grand Prix beats a heart.

Just ask the 26 youngsters from Detroit Children's Hospital who attended Friday's time trials courtesy of Birmingham doctor William Pinsky and the "Racing for Kids" program the physician helped initiate five years ago.

Among other things, the program frequently features hospital visits from race drivers like Robbie Buhl, national "Racing for Kids" spokesman.

But Friday the youngsters — who suffer from congenital heart disease — got the chance to visit Buhl at his workplace and watch the time trials. They were welcome behind the grandstands where they could see the muscle cars up close, talk race strategy with Buhl, or maybe catch a glimpse of other drivers like Nigel Mansell or Emerson Fittipaldi.

"It's really fun," said Alexandra Herbin, a fifth grader at Stevenson Elementary in Southfield. "I like seeing the cars, it's amazing how fast they go. It's scary."

Daniel Lenart, a student at Churchill High School in Livonia, said he enjoys the outing because of the people. "We meet some really nice people, and some are famous."



PHOTOS BY PAT MURPHY

To James with love: James Loveless, a student at Avondale Middle School in Rochester Hills, watches as driver Robbie Buhl autographs his Grand Prix program.

See PRX, 7A



The extra mile: Physician Bill Pinsky of Birmingham chats with Nicole Gentry, a student at Bishop Borgess High School in Redford.



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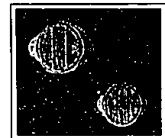
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