



HIT entertainment



**For Immediate Release**

## ***ROARY THE RACING CAR™ IS ON THE FAST TRACK TO THE US, LAUNCHING EXCLUSIVELY ON SPROUT® IN FALL 2008***

**Champion Racecar Driver Sam Hornish Jr. Makes His Preschool TV Debut  
as the Narrator in the New Series**

**New York, NY and Philadelphia, PA – September 16, 2008** – HIT Entertainment, a leading provider of quality preschool entertainment, is moving full speed ahead with PBS KIDS Sprout, the first 24-hour preschool destination available on TV, on demand and online for kids ages 2-5 and their parents and caregivers, to bring the latest sensation from Chapman Entertainment, *Roary the Racing Car*, to the US.

Originated by David Jenkins and produced by Chapman Entertainment, *Roary the Racing Car* will premiere on Sprout on Monday, October 13, 2008. *Roary™* will air daily during Sprout's live morning show block, *The Sunny Side Up Show* (between 9am and 12pm EST), and on weekend mornings during the *Let's Go Show*. *Roary™*-themed clips, games, printouts and crafts will be available at [SproutOnline.com](http://SproutOnline.com) starting in mid-September. *Roary the Racing Car* will also be part of Sprout's VOD offerings in a dedicated *Roary* folder, starting October 10.

Sam Hornish Jr., one of the most successful drivers in the recent history of open-wheel racing, makes his animation and preschool television debut as the voice of the narrator in the series.

"As a brand-new dad and a career race car driver, I was really excited when I was approached by Chapman Entertainment to be a part of this production," said Sam Hornish Jr. "Not only is *Roary the Racing Car* a top-quality show that I am proud to be a part of, but it perfectly marries my personal and professional life, and I can't wait to share it with my daughter when she gets a bit older!"

"Sprout is the perfect television home for *Roary the Racing Car*, and we are thrilled that Sam Hornish Jr. was able to lend his voice talent to this production," said Claudia Scott-Hansen, Vice President, US Content Distribution, HIT Entertainment. "This series is fun, energetic and filled with positive messaging. Through the characters and their adventures it encourages teamwork, confidence and follow-through. We are sure that *Roary* will be just as loved in the US as he is overseas."

"*Fifi* is entertaining millions of children and their parents everyday on Sprout, and it's very exciting to be exclusively launching *Roary* there, too. I wanted to involve Sam as the narrator of the show, as he is one of the brightest young talents in American car racing and it's a neat twist to be able to add an authentic element to a preschool show in this manner," said Greg Lynn, Managing Director and Executive Producer, Chapman Entertainment.

"With the tremendous success of *Bob the Builder™* and *Fifi and the Flowertots™* on Sprout, we are confident that our viewers will embrace this new series from Chapman Entertainment, and are thrilled to be the exclusive US broadcast home for *Roary the Racing Car*," said Andrew Beecham, Senior Vice President of Programming for Sprout. "We look forward to adding *Roary* to our line-up of innovative Sprout originals and trusted preschool favorites."

*Roary the Racing Car* is a turbo-charged preschool series that follows the adventures of Roary™, a bright, loveable and energetic single-seater, and his amazing and diverse group of race car friends at the Silver Hatch race track. Roary's™ enthusiasm and curiosity often leads him into trouble, but he's a novice with a heart of chrome under his hood, always willing to make amends.

Children join Roary™ on his journey through life, learning lessons as they go: how to do the right thing, how to be positive and helpful to others, road safety, the environment, ways to share and communicate ideas, problem-solving, creativity, the importance of exercise and healthy living.

The series uses a cutting edge combination of CGI, stop frame animation and colorful sets to convey a real sense of speed with all the thrills and spills of the race track.

#### **About HIT Entertainment**

HIT Entertainment, owned by private equity investment group Apax Partners, is one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights-owners. HIT's portfolio includes properties, such as *Barney™*, *Bob the Builder™*, *Thomas & Friends™*, *Pingu™*, *Fireman Sam™*, *Angelina Ballerina™* and *Rainbow Magic™*. HIT represents Chapman Entertainment's *Fifi and the Flowertots™* and *Roary the Racing Car™* in North America and Japan, as well as *Wallace & Gromit™*, *Shaun the Sheep™*, *Timmy Time™* and Aardman Classics from Aardman Animations. HIT also acts as a worldwide representative for The Jim Henson Company's library of classic family brands and as representative for *The Wiggles®* in the UK. Launched in 1989, HIT's lines of business span television and video production, content distribution, publishing, consumer products licensing and live events and has operations in the UK, US, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. HIT is a part-owner of US-based preschool channel, PBS KIDS Sprout®, and international preschool channel JimJam, (outside of the US, UK and China). For more information, visit [www.hitentertainment.com](http://www.hitentertainment.com).

#### **About Chapman Entertainment**

Chapman Entertainment, founded by Greg Lynn, Keith Chapman and Andrew Haydon, is an independent company specializing in the creation, development, production, and IP management of children's and family properties. Keith Chapman is the originator of *Bob the Builder* and creator of *Fifi and the Flowertots* and is the first person to have achieved global success with three pre-school TV properties at the same time.

*Fifi and the Flowertots* has now been sold to over 162 countries worldwide and is currently a leading pre-school license for girls in the UK (Source NPD Pre-School Plush and Puzzles).

*Roary the Racing Car* is Chapman Entertainment's second property. It launched in May 2007 and is already racing ahead to become a winning license reaching the UK NPD top 10 pre-school licenses after only a couple of months of toy sales. The TV series has been sold to over 110 countries worldwide.

#### **About Sprout®**

PBS KIDS Sprout, the first 24-hour preschool destination available on TV, on demand and online for kids ages 2-5 and their parents and caregivers, was created as a partnership among Comcast Corporation, HIT Entertainment, PBS and Sesame Workshop. Since debuting its video on demand (VOD) service in April 2005, Sprout has become the #1 On Demand service for younger children, generating over 450 million orders. The 24-hour digital channel, which launched in September 2005 along with the website ([SproutOnline.com](http://SproutOnline.com)), is the only channel that follows the day of child from breakfast to bedtime with its distinctive programming. Currently, Sprout is available in 42 million unique households.

The network's program lineup of gold-standard, curriculum-based children's shows includes: *Sesame Street®*, *Bob the Builder™*, *Barney & Friends™*, *Thomas & Friends™*, *Angelina Ballerina™*, *Caillou®*, *The Berenstain Bears™*, *Jay Jay the Jet Plane®*, *Teletubbies™*, *Dragon Tales™*, *Pingu™*, *Make Way For Noddy™*, *The Hoobs™*, *Fifi and the Flowertots™* and more.

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