

**FRANKIE'S
MAGIC
FOOTBALL**

BY FRANK LAMPARD

Frankie vs the Pirate Pillagers

Frankie vs the Rowdy Romans

Frankie vs the Cowboy's Crew

Frankie vs the Mummy's Menace

Frankie vs the Knight's Nasties

Frankie and the World Cup Carnival

Frankie and the Dragon Curse

Frankie Saves Christmas

Frankie's New York Adventure

Frankie's Kangaroo Caper

The Grizzly Games

Meteor Madness

The Great Santa Race

Team T. Rex

Deep Sea Dive

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DEEP SEA DIVE
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LITTLE, BROWN BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS
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*To my mum Pat, who encouraged me
to do my homework in between kicking
a ball all around the house, and is still
with me every step of the way.*



*Welcome to a fantastic
Fantasy League – the greatest
football competition ever held
in this world or any other!*

*You'll need four on a team,
so choose carefully. This is a lot
more serious than a game in the
park. You'll never know who your
next opponents will be, or
where you'll face them.*

*So lace up your boots, players,
and good luck! The whistle's
about to blow!*

The Ref



CHAPTER 1

“Life jackets on, please,” said the steward.

Frankie zipped up his bright yellow jacket and looked out across the water. A light drizzle was falling over the holiday camp, so most people had stayed in their cabins, playing board games or watching TV. But Frankie and his friends weren't going to let a little rain spoil

their holiday. They'd come to the boating lake with Frankie's brother Kevin. Today, for once, there was no queue. About ten small rowing boats were moored up against the jetty.

Charlie was struggling with his zip. He couldn't grip it properly with his goalie gloves. That was the thing about Charlie – he never took his gloves off. Even in the bath!

"Here, let me help," said Louise. She soon had Charlie's jacket fastened.

Max had already hopped into the nearest boat, his paws resting on the edge.

“Can he swim?” asked the steward, frowning.

“Like a fish,” said Frankie.

“All right, then,” said the steward. “A few rules. Jackets stay on at *a//* times. No standing up in the boats. No splashing with the oars. And no going beyond the buoys.” He pointed across the lake to where a line of red inflatables were bobbing in the water.

“Got it,” said Frankie.

The steward nodded at the football in Frankie’s hand. “Want to leave that with me?”

Frankie clutched the ball tighter. It was falling to bits – the stitching

had completely gone down one side.
"I'd better keep it with me, thanks."

"OK, you're good to go," said the steward. He watched Frankie and Kevin climb into the boat with Max. The small craft wobbled under Frankie's feet as he settled on the bench. Louise clambered into a second boat, but Charlie remained on the jetty. He chewed his lip nervously.

"What's the matter?" said Kevin.
"Don't tell me you're scared of water!"

"I'm not a great swimmer," said Charlie.

"Don't worry," said Louise,

holding out a hand to him. "You've got a life vest on – and anyway, we won't be getting wet."

Charlie stepped into the boat and sat down, smiling weakly.

The steward handed each crew a set of oars. "See you in half an hour," he said, then walked back to his little cabin out of the rain.

Frankie tucked the football under his bench, and saw that Kevin was smirking at him. "Keeping it close, I see," he said.

Frankie ignored him. His brother knew very well what the magic football was capable of, and liked to tease Frankie about it. In fact,

Frankie and his friends would have been enjoying another magical adventure right now if Kevin hadn't tagged along. They'd been planning to go straight to the shut-down theme park on the far side of the camp, but when Kevin had caught up, they'd decided the boating lake was a better idea.

So far, the magic football had brought two rides to life, sending them to a dinosaur world, and into space! They were only here for a few more days, and Frankie was eager to see what rides they could go on next.

Frankie slotted the oars into

place while Kevin unlooped the mooring rope. With a few pulls Frankie propelled them away from the jetty. At first it was hard work and the boat started to drift in the wrong direction.

“You’re hopeless!” said Kevin.

“Let me have a go.”

“Wait,” said Frankie. Soon he got the hang of it, and the oars were gliding through the water.

Kevin glanced back towards the steward’s cabin, then pulled his life jacket off. “Silly thing,” he muttered.

“You shouldn’t,” said Frankie.

“What if you fall in?”

Kevin rolled his eyes. "Don't be such a chicken."

Frankie looked over the side of the boat. The water was too murky to see how deep it was. *Probably not very deep*, he told himself.

Louise pulled up alongside their boat, churning the water. Charlie was gripping the sides, his face a little pale.

"This is fun!" she said. "Harder than it looks, though."

Kevin suddenly reached across and grabbed the oars from Frankie.

"Hey!" said Frankie.

Before he could take them back, Kevin began to slap the paddles



in the water, throwing waves at Louise's boat. One splashed Charlie, soaking him.

"That's not funny!" he said.

Frankie sighed. He wished they'd never brought Kevin with them.

His brother was laughing as he continued to splash the others, but Louise just sank the oars again, and rowed away.

“Great! Let’s race!” said Kevin.

With a lot of rocking, he managed to turn the boat around.

“Maybe we should just go back to shore,” said Frankie.

Kevin began to thrash the oars as he tried to row. He wasn’t very good, but soon they were veering in an uneven course after Louise. Max whined between Frankie’s feet.

Kevin looked back over his shoulder, keeping on track. Frankie