



HOT PRODUCT: Michael Sherlock serves it up at the Surfers Paradise Cold Rock ice creamery. **Picture: Mike Batterham**

Alex Tilbury

IT was his children's pester power that pushed Michael Sherlock to buy the Cold Rock ice cream chain and make his return to work.

Mr Sherlock started his new job yesterday as the executive chairman of the newly created Franchised Food Company, which is majority owned by Melbourne businessman Stan Gordon and his business partner Dani Teer.

Two years ago, Mr Sherlock's Brumby's Bakeries chain was absorbed by the Retail Food Group in a hostile takeover and he's been consulting ever since.

The Cold Rock deal was settled last Friday, for an undisclosed sum, with the previous owners Norm Hunt

Sherlock scoops up tasty franchise deal

from the Gold Coast and John Booth of Western Australia. Now all 87 stores fall under the new holding company, which also owns Mr Whippy and Pretzel World, with total store numbers at 115.

Cold Rock's unique point of difference is its "smash ins", where customers can choose the type of confectionery to crush into the ice cream on a cold marble slab.

"I'm thrilled to be involved with this venture and in growing Franchised Food Company into a major franchising group but really, it

was my kids' pester power that got me back in the saddle," said the 57-year-old Mr Sherlock of his two children Estella, 5 and Adam, 8.

"Cold Rock has enormous potential with further growth to come throughout Australia.

"We are really excited to be adding Cold Rock to the fold. It sits well alongside our existing brands, Mr Whippy and Pretzel World, which are both fun, happy places to visit and enjoy a quick treat.

"We are a modest little battler compared to the Retail Food Group with 1000 outlets

but we are definitely on the lookout for more acquisitions."

With a background in marketing and advertising, Mr Gordon, originally from South Africa, is also an experienced franchisor successfully starting up several different franchise operations, most notably the Pies for Africa group.

During this time he was approached by the Mandela family to embark on a venture to help empower Black entrepreneurs and was also voted the Ernst & Young business personality of the year in 1991.

"We are definitely on the lookout for more franchising opportunities into the future, with plans to grow Franchised Food Company into a major player on the fast food scene," Mr Gordon said.