

For immediate release

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World's Best Pilots Ready to Fight for the Title of World Aerobatic Champion at Silverstone

- Aerobatic flying is like 'fighting Mike Tyson in a spin dryer'
- Team Mazda UK (British Aerobatic Team) favourites for title
- Championships run from 20 – 29 August at Silverstone circuit in Northamptonshire
- www.mazdaaerobatics.co.uk for more information

The waiting is over; 23 years after the World Aerobatic Championships last came to Britain the World's best pilots are poised to fight for the title of World Aerobatic Champion at Silverstone over the next 10 days.

Sixty pilots from 18 countries will compete for both the individual and the team title in the World Aerobatic Championships 2009 (WAC 2009), with the British entry, Team Mazda UK, being one of the favourites for both individual and team honours.

Headed by current British Champion Tom Cassells, the six members of Team Mazda UK have been training intensively for the last eight weeks guided by team trainer and ex-World Champion Eric Vazeille. Eric will also compete in the four minute freestyle representing Britain despite being a French national.

The sport of aerobatics is both physically and mentally demanding, described by Alan Cassidy, Chairman of the British Aerobatic Association and Chairman of WAC 2009, as "being inside a tumble drier, fighting Mike Tyson and trying to understand which way up you are."

Aerobatics is also one of the most spectacular forms of motorsports; it plays out in three dimensions at over 150mph, one minute diving at the ground, the next climbing to a momentary stop before falling back towards the earth accelerating hard.

Sequences consist of negative flick rolls, fractions of flick rolls on vertical lines, left flicks followed by right flicks, inverted spins, rolling circles, knife edge spins, hesitation loops, inverted recoveries and gyroscopic manoeuvres where the aircraft stops flying in the normal sense and rotates around the engine in a tumbling motion, either vertically up or down.

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The manoeuvres apply forces of up to plus and minus 10G on the pilot's body. To put that into perspective, a pilot weighing 10 stone would weigh 100 stone for the period that he is subjected to the 10G force.

For more information on Team Mazda UK and the World Aerobatic Championships go to www.mazdaaerobatics.co.uk. For tickets to the event visit www.silverstone.co.uk.

Ends..

Notes to Editors:

Team Mazda UK (British Aerobatic Team): The Pilots

Team captain Tom Cassells, 54, from York, MD of a logistics company; Gerald Cooper, 38, from Lincolnshire, Chief Pilot and Engineer for his family-owned aviation business; ex-Royal Navy Officer Nick Onn, 50, from Connecticut, USA; Mark Jefferies, 51, from Bedfordshire, a well-known display pilot and owner of an aircraft sales and brokerage company, based at Little Gransden airfield; Kester Scrope, 39, from Hertfordshire, a COO for a leading head hunting company, and the team's warm-up pilot: Richard Pickin, 55, from Kent, a retired company director.

Mazda's involvement in Aerobatics

Mazda is the official car supplier to the World Aerobatic Championships, Mazda cars are being used to ferry pilots, team personnel and championship officials to and from Silverstone.

Mazda also sponsors the British Aerobatic Association to offer funding for the Mazda Aerobatic Scholarship to train promising pilots between the ages of 16 and 25; the Mazda Bursary to fund the training to move up a level for pilots who have shown promise during the season; funding for the National Championships and training for Team Mazda UK in preparation for European and World Championships.

For all the latest news from Mazda UK please visit www.mazda-press.co.uk

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