

Oasis

Props to the sky

The skies above Al Ain will be alive with the hum of engines today, as the Al Ain Aerobatic Show kicks off its four-day flying extravaganza. Among the spectacles will be Swedish wing-walkers, an Italian formation display team and the Saudi Hawks Aerobatic Team.

Smokey Young, an aerobatic flying instructor who will compete in the Aero GP, talks us through some of the death-defying moves he will be executing in his Extra 300L.

Move 1 - Loop

"Of the four basic manoeuvres, the loop is probably the most familiar. I normally start at about 165 knots and a good 4G pull into the vertical. As the nose goes up, I lose sight of the horizon and will generally glance out quickly at the wing tips to make sure I'm going straight. Then I'll tilt my head back and start looking for the horizon to come back behind me."

Move 2 - The Hammerhead

"From the ground, good vertical lines are thrilling to watch. I start at about 165 knots with a good solid pull into the vertical. As the nose goes up my view needs to rapidly shift to the wing tips. As you head uphill, you have to keep nudging the stick forward so that you don't tilt over on your back."

Move 3 - Aileron Roll

"For an Aileron roll, you point the nose towards where you want to go and then push the stick all the way towards your knee. The aeroplane rolls in that direction. Snap rolls are a little more aggressive: the aeroplane rolls very quickly when it's snapped. When I take someone up on a flight, they generally only handle one or two."

Move 4 - Stall

"When we stall an aeroplane, it is not the engine that ceases to operate, it is the wing. The wing of the aeroplane meets the air at an angle. This is called 'the angle of attack'. To generate more lift from the wing, we increase the angle of attack. If we increase the angle of attack too much, the wing stops creating lift and the aeroplane falls. A spin is probably the most common manoeuvre to enter from a stall."



