



Hall opens 2010 Red Bull Air Race season with new plane

ABU DHABI – Matt Hall will be eager to see how his new MXS-R airplane handles the heat in Abu Dhabi in the opening race of the 2010 Red Bull Air Race World Championship season on March 26-27.

The Australian ace, who took an amazing third place overall in his rookie season, got a spectacular send-off with a season warm-up over Sydney Harbour last week and is hoping the buzz from that display of flying that was broadcast live in Australia will carry him through some pre-season setbacks in getting his 380-horsepower MXS-R aircraft ready for the high-speed, low-altitude racing.

“The season launch in Sydney was extremely successful,” Hall said after arriving in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday, March 17th. “I fully expect that we have generated a much larger fan base thanks to the event and that’ll drive my motivation to do well.”

Hall, a decorated RAAF fighter pilot before joining the Red Bull Air Race last year, set new standards for rookies with consistently strong performances in the high-speed races through obstacle courses of 20-meter high pylons. He was the first rookie to ever get a podium when he took third place in Porto. There are eight races on five continents this year and the second stop is in Perth on April 17-18.

“Lots of people have great expectations of me and that’s fine,” said Hall, who acknowledges the pressure to improve will be greater this year. “The only one who can put pressure on myself is me. I think it’s great people are expecting a lot of me.”

Hall knows the other 14 pilots have also worked hard in the off-season to improve performance and that especially the 12 who finished behind him all have pilot flying in Australia’s national colours in their targets. Expectations were modest last year and the man from Merewether NSW was able to take advantage of his military training to develop winning strategies. Many others have since started borrowing from his game plan.

“At this stage I just want to be safe and be positioned at least mid-field after the first race,” Hall said. “We had a lot of setbacks during the last few months so we just need to regroup at this race and make sure we don’t surrender any chance for the rest of the year in that process.”

For more information on Matt Hall Racing go to www.matthallracing.com or contact Team Coordinator David Lyall at david@matthallracing.com



Hall, who last year flew in an earlier version of the MXS-R, said he was optimistic the new plane will help him get strong results this year even if it might take a while to get all the modifications right.

“I’d always prefer more time in the plane prior to a season kicking off but I feel I’ve nearly got the new plane feeling like the old one so in that regard I’m comfortable to hit the track here at Abu Dhabi,” he said. “There will still be lots of learning throughout the year for us all with the aircraft. But no amount of flying pre-season would solve that.”

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