

Royal Air Force verses RIO in aid of charity, March 2008

RIO has a long-established, well-respected status for its bespoke investment products. One therefore would expect that any RIO organized charity event would be rare and special, one-off to provide an occasion for genuine “money can’t buy” adventure. This certainly was the case here as RAF fighter jets went head to head on take-off with some of the fastest cars in the world as part of a special charity challenge held at RAF Leuchars airfield in Fife, Scotland, home to pilots of 43(Fighter) Squadron.

The cars were provided by RIO Prestige UK, who have fleet of high performance cars and specializes in ultimate performance motoring events. The purpose of the event was to raise funds and awareness for “Help for Heroes”, a charity for wounded servicemen and women, and the event achieved this by raising over 10,000 pounds for the charity and the spectacle covered by the ITV news team.

The RAF squadrons Tornado jets were challenged from standing start to jet take-off by three legendary iconic vehicles, which were in the hands of specialist drivers.

Of the three vehicles involved two of the hyper cars came second, beaten by the awesome power of the fighter aircraft. These cars were the 800 horse power Koenigsegg CC8, the car that had held the performance car world speed record in 2005, which did well but could not match the acceleration of the Tornado, and the 1000 horse power Gumpert Apollo which also lost out to the fighter on full burn. The hyper cars put in a great effort, both reaching speeds of over 180mph as they hurtled down a track alongside the main runway in their bid to beat the jets to the designated finish line. Only the third and last car, the Pagani Zonda with William Gray at the wheel just managed to reach the finish line ahead of the Tornado piloted by flight lieutenant Simon Grieve.



RAF Leuchars spokesman, Squadron Leader Keith Wardlaw, said RAF Leuchars flying squadrons are always looking for innovative ways to raise money for charity. “The partnership with RIO provides not only participation and an exciting spectacle, but the chance to raise thousands of pounds for a charity with which all service personnel can identify,” he said.

RIO embraced the event, which provided an ideal opportunity for several RIO club members, who had made the effort to travel from Asia to experience the fleet of "hypercars", watch the exciting action and tour the RAF station, which is a fully operational base.

William Gray, Director of RIO, commented that "It was a privilege to be asked to help raise funds for such a worthy cause; this type of publicity simply cannot be bought. The venue was a major event logistically but, as always, the professionalism of both the military personnel and the dedication of the RIO staff involved meant that the event went off without a hitch".

At the event was Kim Wardner, "Help for Heroes" Scottish fund-raising representative, who said the charity had been launched last October to do something practical for men and women wounded while serving. She paid tribute to everyone involved in the Leuchars effort and said that the charity was "absolutely delighted" to have people from the armed services helping in this way.

The event indeed was special, not only attracting several RIO Club members and many locals, but also benefitting from having hundreds of spectators attending, further raising the awareness of the charity supported.

It was a positive day for RIO being in the spotlight, with major features written on the event appeared in both the local and national press. This culminated in national TV coverage, since the charity event was aired on the STV 6 O'clock news throughout Scotland during the week and was viewed by hundreds of thousands of people.