

WATCHES AND JEWELRY

## IWC races to new frontiers with flying car partnership

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*Matthew Pearson, CEO of Airspeeder, discusses what drives progress in a new effort. Image credit: IWC Schaffhausen*

By KATIE TAMOLA

Swiss watchmaker IWC Schaffhausen is touting its partnership with [Airspeeder](#), the first electric flying car racing series, in an exciting new effort.

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The two companies have formed a new engineering and timekeeping partnership, drawing on their shared values of progress and sustainability. The new short film introducing the partnership harnesses excitement and the brands' shared desire to continue towards adaptation and innovation.

"IWC and Airspeeder are trying to get consumers to feel like the future is here as they compare air racing to flying cars," said Donnie Pacheco, founder of [Donnie P. Consulting](#), Seattle. "They are also trying to generate excitement for this new category of racing by comparing it to car racing, which is more understandable and talking about the human need to compete.

"They also use the ad to emphasize their joint expertise in watchmaking and flying while making the stories personal for people at both companies," he said.

### IWC x Airspeeder

The short film begins with Christoph Grainger-Herr, CEO of [IWC Schaffhausen](#), explaining his lifelong interest in flying.

"For me, that dream of flying, that fascination with aviation, started really on when I was just a little boy," he says.

### *Two leaders share a lifetime love of flying*

Mr. Grainger-Herr goes on to reminisce about visiting an airbase with his grandfather when he was a child, forever solidifying his love for the art of aviation.

Matthew Pearson, CEO of Airspeeder, similarly reverberates a childhood love for the idea of flying, talking about how when he was a kid, he assembled a pile of deck chairs as a flying cart prototype.

Mr. Pearson explains that since then, he has been hoping to make his dream a reality. He also touches on what

drives innovation and progress.

"Progress has always been hastened by the very human requirement to compete," he says.

The two leaders then praise each other's organizations, a preview of the work the two organizations will do in pioneering this new form of motorsport to fast-track a new era of clean-air mobility. During competition, the "Speeder" octocopters will race at a top speed 124 mph, while controlled by human pilots.



*IWC has long been associated with the aviation industry. Image credit: IWC Schaffhausen*

"It's fantastic to play a part in bringing Matt's bold vision to life," IWC's Mr. Grainger-Herr said in a statement. "The Airspeeder team are true pioneers of aviation and they are bringing together two things that are really close to IWC's heart.

"From making some of the planet's best pilots' watches for the last 80 years to the cut and thrust of modern automotive design and racing, we have always equipped and inspired those who dare to dream," he said. "We are proud to collaborate on an endeavor that will make such a progressive impact on society."

For the love of flying cars

Racing for flying cars is an innovative concept that continues to be developed, but flying cars are already expected to play a pivotal role in the future of luxury travel.

During the Technology in Luxury Conference in March, panelists discussed how reimagining the future of luxury travel will involve continued dedication to technological innovation and brands continuing to both stay true to their brand ethos and envision the needs of the consumer. The panel discussed the progression of technology within these luxury means of travel, what draws consumers to these products as well as the challenges that await ([see story](#)).

Luxury automakers are going beyond ground transportation to better meet future customer demand for urban air mobility in an elevated fashion. Aston Martin and Porsche have both launched partnerships centered on the creation of consumer-manned or concept aircraft, extending their sports car driving experience to flying ([see story](#)).

The IWC x Airspeeder partnership could be another sign indicating the rising trend of brands getting involved with flying vehicles, particularly those with close ties to aviation.

"Watch brands have a long history of sponsoring racing sailing, Formula 1, etc. and with IWC's expertise in creating aviation watches, this is a natural progression and partnership," Mr. Pacheco said. "It makes sense for a brand with a long history of creating aviation watches be at the forefront of air racing."