

# THE TEAM

With over 30,000 flying hours and 3,900 displays between them, The Blades are amongst the most experienced aerobatic pilots in the UK. A team of former RAF fast-jet pilots, all of whom are ex-Red Arrows, The Blades display is renowned worldwide.



**Ben Murphy** – Blade 1

Ben is the Team Leader of The Blades, commanding the team during the displays and managing the itinerary and logistics. He joined in 2015 as Blade 2. In the RAF, Ben flew the Harrier and served on 1(F) Sqn during the Gulf War of 2003 and later on IV(AC) Sqn in Afghanistan as a Qualified Weapons Instructor. In 2006, he was selected to join the Red Arrows and flew as Red 2. For 2007, Ben was chosen to become part of the Synchro Pair, leading the duo in 2009. He became Leader and Commanding Officer of the Red Arrows for the 2010 and 2011 display seasons.



**Andy Evans** – Blade 2

Andy joined The Blades in 2006 as a co-founding team member and splits his flying between the Blade 2 and Blade 4 positions. With over 7,500 flying hours, Andy is a Qualified Flying Instructor and flew with the Red Arrows between 1997 and 2000. He was also the first Red Arrow to be chosen to manage the team as Red 10. A former Jaguar pilot, Andy flew on operations over the Balkans and spent three years as Special Advisor to the Saudi Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Saudi Hawks before leaving the service to join The Blades.



**Chris Carder** – Blade 2

Chris joined The Blades in 2010 having flown alongside many of his Blades colleagues as a Red Arrows pilot. He spent 22 years in the RAF flying Canberras, Hawks and Jaguars and is a Qualified Flying Instructor. He displayed both the Hawk and the Jaguar, flying the Jaguar operationally in northern Iraq and Bosnia, before joining the Red Arrows. Upon leaving the RAF Chris joined Virgin Atlantic as a co-pilot flying the Airbus A340. He divides his time between flying with The Blades and flying for Virgin.



**Kirsty Murphy** – Blade 3

Kirsty joined The Blades in spring 2016 and flies in the Blade 3 position. During her 17 years in the RAF, she flew the Tornado GR4 operationally in Iraq and was also a Qualified Flying Instructor on the Hawk T1. She was the first, and is still the only, female pilot to be selected for the Red Arrows and displayed with them between 2010 and 2012. Kirsty flew a total of 136 public displays and 133 flypasts in 11 countries during her time with the 'Reds'. In her last year, she was selected to be the Executive Officer.



**Mark Cutmore** – Blade 4

Mark joined The Blades in 2008 and has previously flown as Blade 1 (leading the team for five years), Blade 3 and has returned to the Blade 4 position, flying as the team's solo display pilot. Cutty served as an Air Traffic Controller before a branch change to flying duties in 1990. During his time in the RAF, Mark flew the Jaguar and spent three years as a Red Arrows pilot. Mark saw active service over the Balkans and served as Special Advisor to the Royal Saudi Air Force Aerobatic Team before leaving the RAF to join The Blades.



The Blades Aerobatic Display Team is part of 2Excel Aviation Ltd.

2Excel is an aviation based company that today has various primary business streams, one of which is The Blades.

For more information on 2Excel Aviation Ltd, visit: [www.2excelaviation.com](http://www.2excelaviation.com).

2Excel Aviation Limited | Registered in England and Wales | No: 05391365. Registered Office: The Tiger House | Sywell Aerodrome | Sywell | Northampton | NN6 0BN. VAT No. 867 4669 63. | Tel: +44 (0)1604 671309 | [info@2excelaviation.com](mailto:info@2excelaviation.com) | [www.2excelaviation.com](http://www.2excelaviation.com)



# AEROBATIC DISPLAY TEAM







## THE AIRCRAFT

The Blades fly Extra EA-300 aircraft. They are low-wing, high performance aircraft designed for the most advanced aerobatic manoeuvres. The first Extra was designed by Walter Extra, an award-winning German aerobatic pilot, in the 1980's. Walter set out to design and build the ultimate aerobatic aeroplane with optimum structure, weight and performance.

Since it was first produced, the Extra has undergone many modifications and the current design utilises the most advanced materials and construction techniques to provide an extremely light-weight and agile aeroplane.

The Blades operate the Extra 300LP and the latest variant, the Extra 330SC. With a more powerful engine the 330SC gives Blade 4 more performance for his solo routines.

Wing span:	8.0m
Length:	6.96m
Never exceed speed:	220kts
Manoeuvring speed:	158kts
Empty weight:	685kg
Engine type:	300 HP Lycoming AE10-540 / Lycoming AE10-580
Certified to:	+/-10g
Propellor type:	3-bladed MTV-9
Range:	350nm
Seats:	2

## THE BLADES

The Blades, a leading display team of former Red Arrow pilots, are renowned worldwide for flying precision close-formation aerobatics to the highest level during their dynamic and cutting edge display. Amongst the country's most experienced display pilots, The Blades are experts in formation aerobatics.

Since the Team began in 2006, The Blades have flown over 600 displays throughout the UK, Europe and the Middle-East.



## BESPOKE EVENTS

From individual, once-in-a lifetime celebrations, to corporate development days and incredible summer balls, an event managed by The Blades combines precision flying, excitement and exceptional customer care for an unparalleled and truly unique experience.

The team creates a number of unique and highly effective flying events for press launches, rewards/incentives days and team building activities for businesses of all sizes, in locations across the UK, Europe and Middle East. We can assist in reinforcing a company's message, bond teams and achieve specific business objectives.

## UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

The Blades are the only display team that are fully sanctioned by the Civil Aviation Authority to offer 'fare-paying passengers' the thrill of close formation aerobatic flights. Serene, sensational and surreal: The Blades Unique Experience days consist of a range of adrenaline-fuelled activities from hovering a helicopter to taking the driving seat of the F1 simulator. Guests will experience amazing views, 'g-force' and inverted flight. Along with impeccable VIP hospitality, guests will also enjoy their very own private display from the team's private balcony, overlooking a picturesque airfield.

Full T&Cs available on [www.theblades.com](http://www.theblades.com)

## THE DISPLAY

The Blades display is designed to showcase the amazing capabilities of the Extra 300 combined with the skill, experience and heritage of the pilots.

- The Blades perform in front of a live audience of around three million people each year
- The display last for 15 minutes and includes over 30 separate breath-taking manoeuvres
- Each aircraft covers 25 'air' miles during the routine
- There are three routines that The Blades can fly for all weather scenarios
- The Blades are one of the very few display teams permitted to arrive into a show over the heads of the crowd
- During the display the aircraft reach speeds of more than 200 miles per hour and have crossing speeds of around 350 miles per hour



## TEAM PARTNERS

This year, The Blades are working with four partners to deliver a combination of branding and event opportunities.

For a third consecutive year, the 2017 title partner for the team is Aerobytes, a company that specialises in providing world-leading flight safety software to fixed-wing and helicopter rotary operations and is renowned for its expertise within the aviation industry.

The Blades' other partners include Belcom Cables, the UK's foremost stockists, designers and distributors of cutting-edge cables for use in industrial electronic and fieldbus networks, and Leigh Cables, a unique and innovative manufacturer and distributor of industrial high performance cables.

This year, the team is also working in partnership with the RAF Benevolent Fund, and continues to support Aerobility through a number of charitable activities. The RAF Benevolent Fund works to support any member of the RAF family who is need of financial, practical or emotional support. Aerobility offers many terminally ill and disabled people the opportunity to fly an aeroplane.



## PRIVATE DISPLAYS

The Blades are available to provide an event enhancing 'wow-factor' almost anywhere in the world. From weddings and birthday parties to music festivals and sporting events, The Blades add that magical touch that will captivate and enthrall any audience. The Blades can even tailor the display to include the iconic heart manoeuvre.



@thebladesteam



The Blades Aerobatic Team



@TheBladesOfficial



thebladesaerobaticteam

For more information and bookings please call  
**+44 (0) 1604 671309**

web: [www.theblades.com](http://www.theblades.com)  
email: [info@theblades.com](mailto:info@theblades.com)