

'HOW I BUILD MY BODY'



RACING CAR DRIVER

Jess Hawkins

MEET THE ELITE

Jess Hawkins is one of 18 drivers from 12 different countries taking part in the W Series, a groundbreaking new motor racing championship for female drivers. Since being crowned British Karting Champion at just 12 years old, Jess has continued to push the boundaries of driving, appearing in the *Fast and Furious Live* franchise as a stunt driver and the new James Bond film, *No Time To Die*.

CARDIO

'It's really underestimated how physical driving is. People think all you need to do is turn a wheel, but you're fighting against some incredibly high, constant G-forces, which are very hard on your body. Endurance and good cardiovascular health are essential – studies have shown that your heart rate is surprisingly high throughout the duration of a race. I'm not a big fan of [steady state] cardio, so I push myself to do it. I'd rather play a game of football every day than go for a run (I used to play for Reading WFC), but I do it because I have to. I don't get to spend much time in my racing car because it's a very expensive sport, so I need to stay consistently fit. I work out

pretty much every day, and I'll see my personal trainer five days a week if I can for 60- to 90-minute sessions. He keeps my cardio training varied with cycling, sessions on a SkiErg machine, and lots of boxing. I love the endorphin rush I get after a workout – exercise really helps me keep a clear head.'

STRENGTH

'I love heavy lifting, and I really like knowing I can lift over double my bodyweight, but my trainer prefers me to lift lower weights at higher reps. For racing, you need strong shoulders, arms and forearms; a strong core to support you against the high G-forces; and strong legs, as putting your foot on the brake is

the equivalent of pressing up to 100kg with one leg! We often take a whole-body approach by doing moves like deadlifts and overhead squats.'

NUTRITION

'Being a W Series driver, I'm at the forefront of elite sport, so I take my hydration and nutrition really seriously, although I do have a sweet tooth. I eat a lot of protein throughout the day. For dinner, I'll eat salmon or chicken with rice and broccoli. It can be hard when I'm on trackside, as I can't prepare meals in advance, but I generally try to eat everything in moderation.'

RECOVERY

'I'm absolutely mad keen on a sports massage. If I have one before training, I can lift so much more – it's crazy! Flexibility doesn't come naturally to me, so I do lots of stretching with my trainer. If I don't do enough stretching, I can tighten up all over again in a couple of days, so I do something almost every day.'

VITAL KIT

'When I'm going away for a week or so, I always pack long resistance bands. They fit easily into my suitcase and provide a convenient way to get a great strength workout in, wherever I am. I often tie them to a door handle or stand on them when I'm working my upper body.'

Words: Joanna Ebsworth



WHY TRY RACING?

'Race car driving is typically viewed as a man's sport, but I can assure you that is absolutely not the case! I'm 100 per cent positive that there isn't a person alive who can drive a race car and not enjoy it, male or female. The speed and adrenaline rush can be breathtaking.'

'There are lots of restrictions when driving on the road, as the main objective is getting yourself from A to B safely, but in racing, you're competing directly against others to be first – and it's extremely competitive. You get a real sense of freedom that's seriously exhilarating.'

'There are so many types of driving experiences you can try, from going to kart tracks offering relatively cheap "arrive and drive" sessions, to doing courses and experience days with companies such as Trackdays (trackdays.co.uk). You can even drive your dream Supercar at Silverstone (Silverstone.co.uk). The possibilities are endless.'

FOR THE FIRST TIME, ALL W SERIES RACES THIS YEAR WILL TAKE PLACE ON THE SAME WEEKENDS AND AT THE SAME LOCATIONS AS F1 RACES, AS PART OF FORMULA 1'S COMMITMENT TO GROWING DIVERSITY AND GETTING MORE WOMEN INVOLVED IN MOTORSPORT. FIND OUT MORE AT WSERIES.COM