

A telescope in the back garden that runs rings around the professionals

Saturn in suburbia

By **Ross McGuinness**

DAMIAN PEACH enjoys a stunning view of the solar system's weather patterns – all from his back garden.

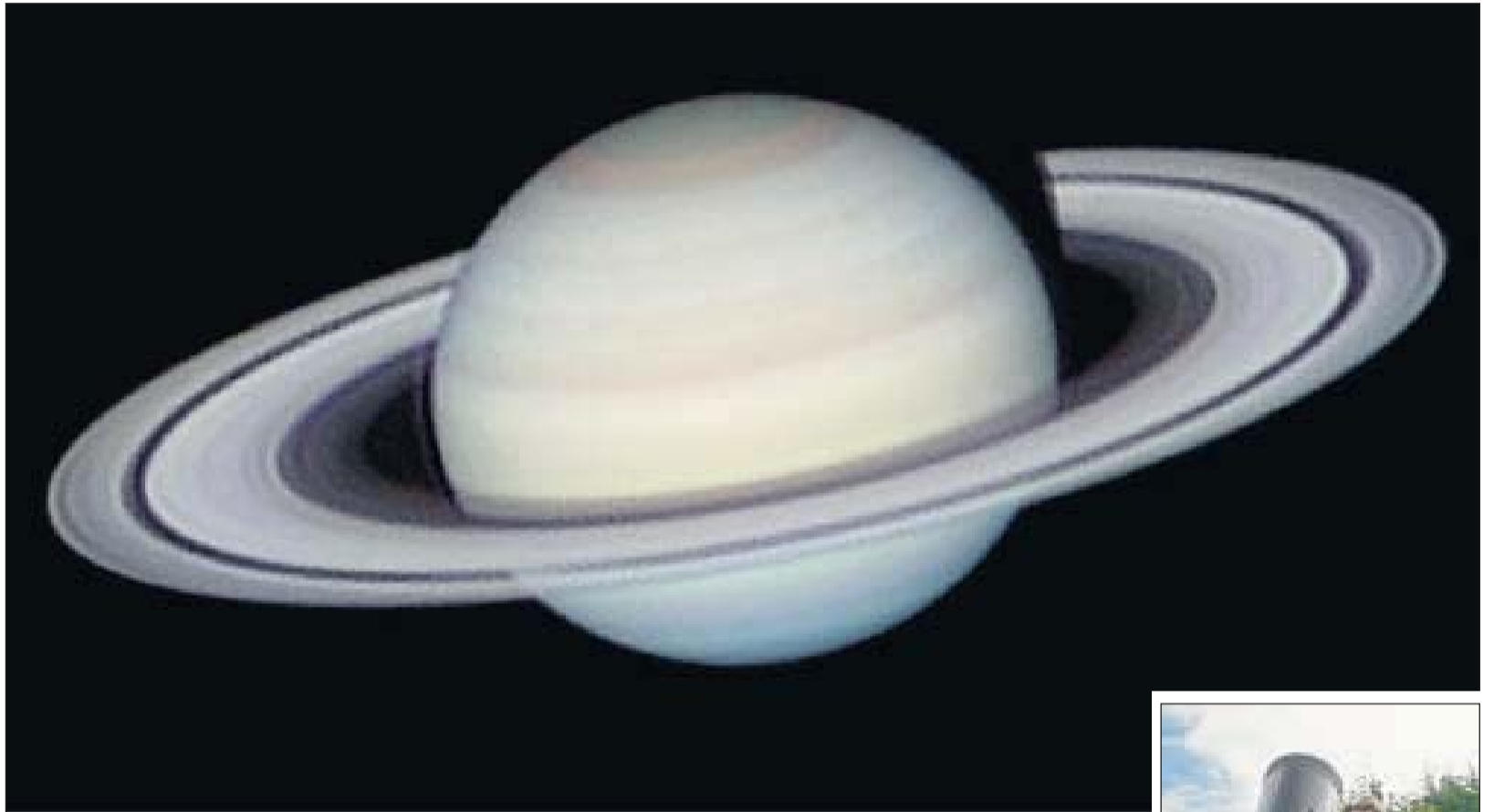
The electronic engineer is able to capture images – from detailed solar flares to Saturn's mesmerising rings – which rival Nasa's, using his relatively modest £10,000 high-speed telescope and cameras.

'It's just fantastic that it's possible to do something like this from your own back garden,' he said.

'This has been made possible by recent leaps in technology.

'These days, surprisingly good results are possible with small telescopes and low-cost webcams. The results possible for home astronomers now were not achievable until the

■ **Damien's £10,000 back garden kit includes a Schmidt-Cassegrain 356mm reflecting telescope, with a Flea3 high-speed video camera. In contrast, on Chile, the Atacama Large Millimetre/submillimetre Array cost £840million and will consist of 66 radio antennae. They will produce images equivalent to a single telescope 10km wide.**



Nice view from the garden: The rings of Saturn, captured from a house in West Sussex Pictures: Damian Peach/Barcroft

1990s by even the largest telescopes on Earth.'

Mr Peach said he was intrigued by the changing weather patterns of the planets, which ebb and flow just as much as our weather on Earth.

'With my favourite planet, Jupiter, you are seeing a world of gas littered with storms of almost every shape and size,' he added. 'The colours you see are real and very close to how the planets would appear could you go there and visit the them.'

Mr Peach, from Selsey in West Sussex, last year became the only Briton to win the Astronomy Photographer of the of Year Award, for his composite photograph of Jupiter's moons Ganymede and Io orbiting the planet.



Garden with a view: A solar prominence on the Sun and craters Atlas and Hercules on the Moon were both captured by Damian Peach



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