

Media Release

STRONG FINISH FOR A1 TEAM LEBANON AT A1 GRAND PRIX OF NATIONS, AUSTRALIA

6 November 2005.../A1 Team Lebanon led during the Feature race and finished 12th at the end of an incident-packed hour of wheel-to-wheel racing, which followed a 20th place finish in the earlier 20 lap Sprint race. The team competed in front of a supportive crowd with Lebanese flags waving throughout the spectator areas.

In the Sprint race Shaaban made a clean start, moving forward and benefiting from first corner tangles of front runners, to take 17th place at the end of the first lap. Losing a couple of places on the restart, Shaaban ran in 19th spot, dropping to 20th after contact with South Africa as the two nations fought for position. Rear suspension damage sustained in this incident made the car difficult for Shaaban to continue driving, and with a 20th place grid slot guaranteed, the team opted to retire from the race and allow maximum time for repairing the car before the main Feature race.

Shaaban made a flying start from the grid in the Feature race, making up six places to lie 14th at the end of the first lap. With rival teams opting for early pitstops, Lebanon moved up the field over the next few laps until, after all other cars having pitted, A1 Team Lebanon led the race. A safety car period resulted in Shaaban leading the field for three laps behind a pace car, with his tyres cooling quickly.

As the grid returned to green flag racing, Shaaban took the restart well, but his used tyres were no match against his rivals who all had new tyres after their mandatory pit stops. Shaaban pitted after 17 laps, which pushed him back down the field, to lie 19th.

The incident-packed race saw many more experienced drivers tangling, which Shaaban avoided, improving his position as the race reached half distance, lying 14th when the safety car was deployed for the fourth time. As the one hour time limit approached, the pack was released and Shaaban grasped the chance, overtaking rival team India to move into 13th and inheriting 12th place finish when Ireland lost places for a rules infringement.

Shaaban commented, "We made some changes to help on the restarts, which made the car a bit difficult to drive when the pace was on. We tried to stay out of trouble, we were leading for a while which was very exciting and gave me the experience of setting the pace and taking the restart from the front. The crew did a very quick pitstop for me and we were able to rejoin the race at a good pace and at the final restart I passed India to make another place."

"Basil drove well today" said A1 Team Lebanon seat holder, Tameem Auchy, who attends each A1 Grand Prix race weekend. "He kept his head, avoided the many accidents and brought the A1 Team Lebanon car home in a respectable finish position. Basil handled the responsibility of leading the race with maturity and a calm approach, allowing the faster, more experienced drivers to pass, but racing hard with them as well. We're still chasing our first top ten finish, but we hope we're nearing this goal as we gain more experience each weekend. I would also like to thank the Lebanese community in Australia for the support that they gave us during our time in Sydney. We look forward to seeing them again next year! "

The team move on to Malaysia for the 5th round of the A1 Grand Prix of Nations which will be at the Sepang International Circuit, 18-20 November 2005. For further information on A1 Team Lebanon visit www.A1TeamLib.com.

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A1 Team Lebanon photographs are available for download from www.a1gp-photo.com/lib.

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