

**A1 TEAM LEBANON RACES HARD IN FIRST MAJOR MOTOR RACING EVENT IN BEIJING,
CHINA
12/11/2006**

A1 Team Lebanon lined up alongside 21 other nations for the first major international motor racing event to take place in the capital city of China today. Teething problems with the newly-built temporary circuit had resulted in limited track time for the A1GP teams, and the racing was eagerly awaited by the Chinese crowds. With Basil Shaaban driving this weekend, the team had two tough races.



The Sprint race grid line-up was taken from yesterday's limited practice session. With installation laps required for a new engine, A1 Team Lebanon were only able to complete 14 laps of running, to start 20th on the grid for the first of the two races. A rolling start behind the safety car sent the field off around the Beijing streets. The combination of a short race and narrow track offered minimal opportunity for passing rival nations, but on lap four the South African car spun and the Irish entry slid into it, promoting the Lebanese team to 18th place by the end of the 15 lap race.

The Feature race also started with the safety car, with the cars up to full speed after the first lap. In a race littered with safety car periods, Shaaban kept on pace and on pace with the field, improving to 12th place before the mandatory pitstop. The A1 Team Lebanon crew made quick work of changing the tyres and he was soon back into the thick of the action. Lying 15th the team progressed, making two places as Shaaban drove consistently. A push into the wall from a rival nation in the final stages of the race resulted in wheel damage to the Lebanese car, so the team gave him a quick pitstop to change it and he was able to rejoin the race, maintaining his 13th place to the chequered flag.

Basil Shaaban reflected on the day saying, "For the Sprint race we were fairly cautious, particularly as we had so little practice time at this track before the races today and, like much of the field were unable to make any real improvement on our starting place. In the Feature race, it took a while to settle down with a spate of early safety car period disrupting us. We were behind India for a while but got past them with an awesome pitstop from the ace A1 Team Lebanon crew. Unfortunately we were punted by another car in the closing stages, putting me into the wall. We had to pit with wheel damage and a puncture, but were able to get back out and finish the race. It was one of the most challenging street tracks I've driven on, but I really enjoyed it."

Tony Snook, Team Principal, added, "In a day when over a third of the grid were victims of this gruelling circuit, Basil drove well to survive and finish the race. It was probably one of the most difficult tracks we've raced on so far in this Series, so we can take many positives from this experience and continue to fight hard in this highly competitive A1GP environment."

The A1GP World Cup of Motorsport moves on to its second of three Asian stops in two weeks time, with the teams on track at the Sepang circuit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 24 – 26 November.