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For immediate release

**Event: KYALAMI Gauteng District**

### **NEW TRACK MOVING in the RIGHT DIRECTION**

Kyalami 20 February 2009 started a little later than the normal A1GP schedule with the Rookie session starting at 2.30 pm followed by the second session for the lead drivers at 5.10 pm.

A perfect opportunity for twilight A1GPTV!

In the heat of the early afternoon Ash Walsh took his A1 Team Australia car out onto the track for his and the car's very first time to learn as quick as he could, this legendary race track in the Gauteng District. Walsh impressed early into the session taking his car to the limit into some of the fastest corners on the A1GP calendar. After some adjustments to the brakes the session was trouble free with Walsh securing the fastest time in Sector 1 from the entire grid on track in his third Rookie session this season.



After an early opportunity in the Ferrari 599 GTB Safety Car, completing two laps on my own hosted by our own A1GP 'SC' driver James McAlpine; I can understand the stress on the driver at speed over a long period on the Kyalami track.

**Ash Walsh 4<sup>th</sup> Rookies 1 1:34.001:** "It was a great experience. I made a slow start to learn the track but the tyres were going off faster than I had expected so I took more care in the faster corners. The track is very quick and the car was fantastic, I really enjoyed it today setting a fast time plus keeping the car in perfect shape for John who had only 20 minutes to prepare for his first time on track"

**Alan Jones A1 TEAM AUS Seatholder:** "Ash did a good job at the start; he kept the car on the track at all times and did exactly what we had asked of him beforehand. It was good to see him fastest overall in the first sector, that's certainly given him a lot more experience and confidence. A good Rookie session today.

**Kyalami Gauteng District Republic of South Africa** started with a special 25 minute Rookies 2 session with Ash Walsh setting the third fastest time of 1:31.869 to better yesterday's time by 2.131 seconds. His nearest rival Team New Zealand were in fourth just 0.013 of a second behind Walsh with Team Great Britain 0.126 seconds and Team Lebanon who were 1.746 seconds ahead of Walsh.

**Ash Walsh:** "This was a better run and the grip was twice as much as yesterday. I have really learnt a lot since the first time I drove the car at Sepang. One area for improvement will be the new steering wheel, understanding it better and being good at managing it on the track with everything else you need to do in the session. Your hands are working flat out and it is so important to beware of everything you need to be doing to get the best from the car. Thanks to the team who gave me a great weekend of A1GP on this awesome circuit"

Please find a shot taken moments ago with JOHN MARTIN Lead Driver and ASH WALSH Rookie Driver for A1 TEAM AUSTRALIA.

The tribute comes from the hearts of all in A1 TEAM AUSTRALIA and A1GP The World Cup of Motorsport.

**Alan Jones A1 Team Australia Seatholder:** “This week the team discussed the enormity of the Victorian bushfires and their impact on many of our Australians living in Victoria, and those with family, friends and workmates who could not get to help or were away when all of this was happening two weekends ago. You certainly feel the pain when you look at the news each day, and hear the stories that have come back to you in so many ways. This is the least we can do at the moment to let everyone know we are thinking of them at this time, and sincerely hope this never happens to anyone again. The CFA are the best in a crisis of this magnitude and it was obvious to see how the generations of ‘the good Aussie spirit’ came forward when others were at risk losing their own possessions and more important at the time, their own life. Our A1GP Race Car will carry this message on the front of our car all weekend. We would like to thank Michele from Evolution Signs for coming here to fit the artwork onto the car and be with the team at this time. Our team members who share this tribute are: Adam Gotch, Patrick Wedes, Alan Docking, John Martin, Ash Walsh, Rob Arnott, Greg Martin, Ash Edwards, Roy Hingston, Ian Latter, Andrew Byrne, Julain Greenhalgh, Cheyne Bromfield, Andrew Moulden and I as well as our own families, friends and everyone in A1GP from around the globe who had heard of the tragedy and support us all at this time”