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**BATTLE FOR THE TOP 10: NATIONAL TECHNICAL SKILLS COMP A WRAP F0R 2021**

Isuzu's National Technical Skills Competition (NTSC) has successfully wrapped up for 2021, with some of Australia’s finest automotive technicians battling it out for a spot in the event’s Top 10—and the chance to represent their Isuzu dealership and indeed their country on the world stage of Isuzu Motor's I-1 Grand Prix.

Although a friendly event by nature, the NTSC sparked fierce competition as a field of 47 talented technicians entered from Isuzu dealerships and Authorised Parts and Service Outlets across Australia.

**For the glory… and prizes**

In a new online format due to COVID-19, the competition challenged technicians with a series of Interactive Virtual Online Diagnostic (IVOD) tests.

The IVOD tests required technicians to diagnose and treat a number of issues by navigating through a truck (virtually) within a 10-minute timeframe. Drawing on their own knowledge to follow the logical diagnostics path—otherwise known as strategy-based diagnostics—the technicians closest to the correct path were awarded the highest number of points.

Results from the IVOD were then tallied up against a 60-minute written exam and each technician’s personal scores from their Isuzu Technicians Guild Questionnaires held earlier in 2021.

With a golden ticket to Japan’s I-1 GP the main incentive, technicians also had their chance at two generous prizes...

For the Top 10 highest scoring technicians, up for grabs was a Milwaukee 18v Fuel 1/2" High Torque Impact Wrench Kit or Milwaukee 18v Fuel™ One-Key™ 3/4" High Torque Impact Wrench Kit.

For the Top 2 technicians: a Snap-On Roller Tool Kit (40” Roll Cab 318 Piece Kit) and the opportunity to represent Australia on the world stage.

Isuzu Australia Limited (IAL) National Service Technical Manager, Brenton Cook, noted the new-look virtual NTSC was a hit with technicians, allowing them to compete across borders without the stress of navigating physical COVID-19 restrictions.

“I’m very pleased to report our 2021 National Technical Skills Competition went off without a hitch thanks to its new virtual format, meaning technicians from all states and territories across Australia could take part,” commented Mr Cook.

“As always, it’s fantastic to see the level of talent that comes out of events like this and the broader I-1 GP event program… we couldn’t be prouder of the results achieved this year and the technician’s commitment to being the best they can be.

“A hearty congratulations to all participating technicians, but to our Top 10 and Top 2 technicians, well done!

**Top of the pack**

They come from a diverse range of backgrounds and experience, but all with the goal of doing dealership and country proud.

This year’s NTSC Top 10 were separated by the smallest of margins—only a seven per cent difference between first and tenth place—and proving that skills are sharper than ever in the Isuzu ranks.

1. **NTSC winner: Harrison Minnis (**[**Brisbane Isuzu Eagle Farm**](https://www.brisbaneisuzu.com.au/)**, QLD)**

Commonly known around the workshop as Harry, this year’s NTSC winner started his employment and apprenticeship with Brisbane Isuzu Eagle Farm in 2016, fresh from high school. His determination to see a job from start to finish and to rectify difficult repairs are his key strengths.

What’s next for Harry? The I-1 GP finals in Japan, his ambition for a dual trade qualification in auto-electrics and a desire to become a leader on the floor at Brisbane Isuzu Eagle Farm.

1. **Jason Peterkin (**[**Tony Ireland Isuzu**](https://www.isuzutruckstownsville.com.au/)**, QLD)**

Jason began his apprenticeship in 1995, working for his father in Darwin. He joined Tony Ireland Isuzu in 2012, completing a dual trade qualification specialising in diagnostics for both electrical and mechanical faults. A combination of smarts and on-the-job experience means Jason is recognised as one of Australia’s best technicians when it comes to Isuzu’s famous 4JJ1 engine series.

1. **Stuart Bell (**[**Suttons Isuzu Arncliffe**](https://www.suttonsisuzu.com.au/)**, NSW)**

Stuart began his craft as an auto-electrician at Suttons Arncliffe 10 years ago. Two years in, he decided to go back and study to become a Heavy Automotive Technician, which he says has allowed him to become a better technician for his clients. With modern truck technology advancing quickly, Stuart’s experience in electrical diagnostics and complex systems is proving its worth.

1. **Boyd Mole (**[**Brisbane Isuzu Archerfield**](https://www.brisbaneisuzu.com.au/)**, QLD)**

Nine-years qualified and a mentor for his fellow Isuzu technicians and apprentices, Boyd is currently a Foreman and a key part of the Brisbane Isuzu Archerfield team. His passion for working on the mechanical componentry of trucks earned him one of the top scores during the engine diagnosis test in this year’s NTSC.

1. **Stephen Leach ([Blacklocks Isuzu](https://www.blacklocksisuzutrucks.com.au/), VIC)**

Stephen’s career as a technician started 13 years ago and has brought him into a key leadership position at Blacklocks Isuzu in Albury/Wodonga. Apprentices and technicians continue to learn valuable lessons under Stephen’s steady guidance. After working his way up the ranks at Blacklocks, Stephen’s next goal is to progress into an Isuzu Technical Support Role.

1. **Brad Hickey (**[**Peel Valley Isuzu**](https://www.peelvalleyisuzu.com.au/)**, NSW)**

Brad has been a truck technician at Peel Valley Isuzu for 14 years. Already an accomplished technician when he started with the company, Brad quickly developed a great passion for all things Isuzu. With a keen interest in training and development, Brad has continuously improved his skills to become an outstanding diagnostic technician.

1. **Kaylem Brown (**[**Canberra Isuzu**](https://www.canberraisuzu.com.au/)**, NSW)**

One of the youngest to earn a place in the NTSC Top 10 hall of fame, Kaylem has been a technician for five years and has spent his career dedicated to the Isuzu product. His can-do attitude and strong focus on procedures gives him an excellent aptitude for trouble shooting and diagnostics.

1. **Jacob Newbury (**[**North East Isuzu**](https://www.neisuzu.com.au/)**, SA)**

Representing South Australia, Jacob’s mechanical smarts have landed him a job at North East Isuzu and his spot in the NTSC Top 10. Seeing a large, complex job completed and handed back to the customer is where Jacob gets his satisfaction, and moving forward, he plans to complete a dual trade in heavy vehicle and auto electrical——and become a Master Technician for Isuzu.

1. **Luke Kneebone (**[**Webster Trucks**](https://www.webstertrucksisuzu.com.au/)**, TAS)**

The youngest of the finalists, Luke is currently completing the fourth year of his apprenticeship with Webster Trucks. Earlier this year, Luke took out the trophy for the [HVIA National Apprentice Challenge](https://content.isuzu.com.au/news-media/isuzu-techs-top-industry-apprentice-challenge/), placing him amongst the best truck apprentices in the country. Luke decided to dive head first into the next level of skills and career development with the NTSC, and he did not disappoint the Webster Trucks team or Isuzu!

1. **Christian Wyatt (**[**Brisbane Isuzu Eagle Farm**](https://www.brisbaneisuzu.com.au/)**, QLD)**

Christian has earned his stripes at the Brisbane Isuzu workshop and is now recognised as an organised leader and educator for the team. In Christians view, a career as a technician keeps him on his toes with new challenges to enjoy every day. His career goals are to give back to the industry and provide as many technicians as possible with the same opportunities to excel that he’s received.

**ends**

**For further information, please contact:**     **For Isuzu Truck releases and photos:**

Sam Gangemi                                                         Arkajon Communications
Isuzu Australia Limited                                        Phone: 03 9867 5611
Phone: 03 9644 6666                                            Email: isuzu@arkajon.com.au