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**ISUZU AUSTRALIA STANDS PROUD AT I-1 GRAND PRIX IN JAPAN**

The Isuzu World Technical Competition, best known as the I-1 Grand Prix (or I-1 GP), was recently held in Japan with 33 participating countries battling it out for honour and glory.

Isuzu Australia Limited (IAL) were proudly represented by Brad Hickey, senior service technician from [Double R Trucks](https://www.dblrisuzu.com.au/) in Tamworth and Louis Holt, foreman at [Bendigo Isuzu](https://www.bendigoisuzu.com.au/), as the top two scoring contestants from IAL’s qualifying National Technical Skills Competition.

After months of preparation including a three-week intensive training course under coaches Jeff Berry and Dan Gorfine at the IAL Head Office in Truganina (Melbourne), Mr Hickey and Mr Holt took out a well-deserved spot amongst the top five competing teams in Japan.

Narrowly missing out on a podium finish, Isuzu Australia came in fifth, nine points behind Isuzu New Zealand who placed third overall:

* 1st place was awarded to Japan: Kanto Isuzu Motor Co.
* 2nd place was awarded to United States of America: Isuzu Commercial Truck of America
* 3rd place was awarded to New Zealand: Isuzu New Zealand
* 4th place was awarded to Thailand: Tri Petch Isuzu Sales Co.
* 5th place was awarded to Australia: Isuzu Australia Limited

IAL National Training Manager, David Smith, said the two Australian technicians performed admirably under the gruelling conditions of the heats and the final test against stiff competition.

“Brad and Louis did very well on the day of the final competition with a strong connection and great communication with each other.

“They were kept on their toes during the 40-minute practical session, and it was down to the last minute when Brad got the truck engine started, so it was a stressful moment, but they pulled it off.

“As we all know, the I-1 GP is incredibly tough—this year there were four other teams that achieved a higher score than us.”

The I-1 Grand Prix brings the best of the best together each year with the aim of encouraging and elevating the skills of Isuzu’s international pool of highly trained technicians.

It is also an opportunity for the contestants and coaches to network and connect with their overseas counterparts.

“It was an honour to compete and to represent Isuzu Australia alongside Brad in Japan,” said Mr Holt of the event.

“The competition is phenomenal—we walked out onto the stage with AC/DC playing, flashing lights and a smoke machine going, the amount of effort that Isuzu Japan put into it makes you feel like a superstar.”

While both Mr Holt and Mr Hickey had their heads down during the competition, Isuzu Australia made sure time was allocated for visiting the sights of Japan, including the highly anticipated Japan Mobility Show.

Mr Hickey described the experience, noting there was much to take back to his own dealership in New South Wales.

“The mobility show was awesome, there was so much to see, including the new BEV and Hydrogen Fuel Cell trucks from Isuzu Japan and the fantastic Supercars,” he said.

“The extra study and training I've done for the I-1 GP will transfer straight back into the dealership at Double R Tamworth, especially when it comes to training the junior techs and apprentices coming through.

“It's not only technical skills that we’re passing on, but also the attitude for giving things a go and improving yourself.”

IAL’s 2023 National Technical Skills Competition is due to kick off in November and Isuzu Dealerships from around Australia are now readying their technicians for the next round.

“Each year is different when it comes to the National Technical Skills Competition and the I-1 GP, which means that the competitors need to train broadly,” said Mr Smith.

“We could not have asked for a better team this year than Brad and Louis, they worked sensationally together.”

“Both the National Technical Skills Competition and the I-1 GP are great examples of the initiatives available to Isuzu service technicians,” he continued.

“They run alongside training courses such as our Master Service Technician program that foster ambition and career growth within the Dealer Network.

“We want all aspiring and working technicians to see the incredible opportunities on offer at Isuzu, including the making of unforgettable memories like the I-1 GP in Japan.”

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

Sam Gangemi                                                      Arkajon Communications

Isuzu Australia Limited                                       Phone: 03 9867 5611

Phone: 03 9644 6666                                           Email: isuzu@arkajon.com.au