



# Driving ambition pays off

## Zsa-Zsa Bowie Wilson

Automotive apprentice Matt Hibble represented Australia last month at Britain's famous Grand Prix circuit of Brands Hatch after winning a place to work as a member of the pit crew of the Australian A1GP car racing team.

"My boss suggested I enter the (SkillsOne Ultimate Apprenticeship) competition - I never thought I'd win it, but I gave it a shot," Hibble said.

"That was February this year and about four weeks later I got a call telling me I'd won the chance to go to England and get involved in A1GP World Cup of

Motorsport. "I thought it was someone from work playing a joke."

Two days later, the 20-year-old from Biloela in Queensland, whose passion is go-kart racing, found himself on a plane to Sydney to meet the team, including A1 driver John Martin.

"I met them at Eastern Creek and we did a bit of work on the car," Hibble said.

"A1 cars are based on the Formula One car. The 'GP' stands for Grand Prix."

While F1 teams represent their constructors/car makers or drivers, the A1GP teams represent their nation at the A1GP World Cup of Motorsport,

so last month Hibble accompanied the A1 Team Australia to the UK for the English section of the competition.

Hibble described his week in England as "incredible".

"We stayed at the London Hilton and each morning we'd drive to Brands Hatch," he said.

"During the setting up, we worked from about 8am to 3.30pm. But as the racing approached, the days got longer and we were doing 12 to 13 hours, running on adrenalin."

He also got the chance to bond with Martin.

"When I met John in Sydney I discovered he lives about an hour-and-a-half away from me

and started his car racing career at the same go-karting club. So, when we were in the UK we really hit it off and he gave me loads of driving tips."

Although a racing incident with Team Pakistan ended the Aussie dream of winning gold, nothing could put a dampener on Hibble's experience.

"I've always wanted to get into motorsport and it has given me the drive to do it," he said.

"There's just nothing better than driving really, really fast."

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Matt Hibble, left, had an "incredible" time on his SkillsOne Ultimate Apprenticeship trip to England as an A1GP pit crew member