

Alex's A1GP Media Experiences

Since being chosen to be one of the two drivers selected to race for Great Britain in the prestigious A1GP Championship, Alex has learned a great deal more about how to present himself in the best way possible to the media.

So far Alex has attended several press and PR days with Team GBR, many of them just before the Championship's inaugural race at Brands Hatch a month ago, and several more following that weekend, all of which have been valuable experiences, both for now and the future. Some were a little more unusual than he expected.



Alex and John Surtees face the press

For example, he drove sports journalists, media and guests around Brands Hatch circuit in a London black cab, and also had some more 'scenic' pictures done in the heart of the capital, on the deck of an open-top bus.

"The black cabs were certainly different to drive around a circuit! They have a fantastic amount of lock on the steering wheel, that I have never experienced before in any road car, never mind a race car, which has virtually none", said a smiling Alex, shortly after stepping from the cab, tactfully refraining to mention that the cab felt like he was driving a Chesterfield settee.

On the Friday before the Brands Hatch race weekend, Alex was driven into the centre of London to do a couple of live radio interviews. The first was with Simon Mayo on Radio 5 live, on the one-hour lunchtime sports show.



Autograph signing with the other A1GP drivers

"That was a great experience for me" Alex reported, "and I really enjoyed speaking freely on the panel about a number of sporting issues that exist today. It was very professionally done"

Following this was the interview with Radio One Newsbeat. This was completely different to the Radio 5 requirements and listener profile, and Alex ended up racing the presenter on an X-Box racing game, which of course Alex won easily! Tricky to show this on the radio, though!



The latest major PR day for Alex was to be asked to join Sky Sports as a studio expert, to comment on the race that took place in Germany on the 9th of October. Alex was not racing because the Team GBR second car is not yet available, and so his older and more experienced team mate, Robbie Kerr, has been doing all the driving and testing duties so far.

This live, three-and-a-half hour Sky studio performance was another brand new experience for Alex, and was, truth be told, a daunting prospect. Alex, however, took it in his stride and came across extremely well, despite having a touch of nerves the night before.

Speaking afterwards, Alex said "I thoroughly enjoyed the whole day. It was so interesting to see how these things work behind the scenes, and I was pleased to find it quite easy to be on live TV, as it was just like any other interview I have done, but ever so slightly longer! Saying that, I am not so sure I would like to be a presenter full time as I think it would be really tough to have an earpiece in the whole way through, with the TV director giving commands. It's incredibly distracting, I wouldn't have believed it. I have a renewed respect for all these presenters now!"



Alex, John Surtees (MBE) and Robbie Kerr posing with their eye patches for the Jubilee Sailing Trust

Alex has also competed in a few charity events with A1GP. Recently he competed in a 10km cycle race for the benefit of the Luis Figo Charity Trust, and came a creditable 4th alongside an ex-world-championship rider (who won, incidentally), and he also took part in the Jubilee Sailing Trust day, known as the 'eye patch day', in which Ellen McArthur was also participating.

"This has been a really fun and interesting time, especially in terms of the media coverage and exposure that we've been getting, and it's incredibly useful for me for the future, to see the way these things work", Alex said with a wry grin, "but I'd rather be in the car any day!"

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