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SENTRA CUP MAGAZINE

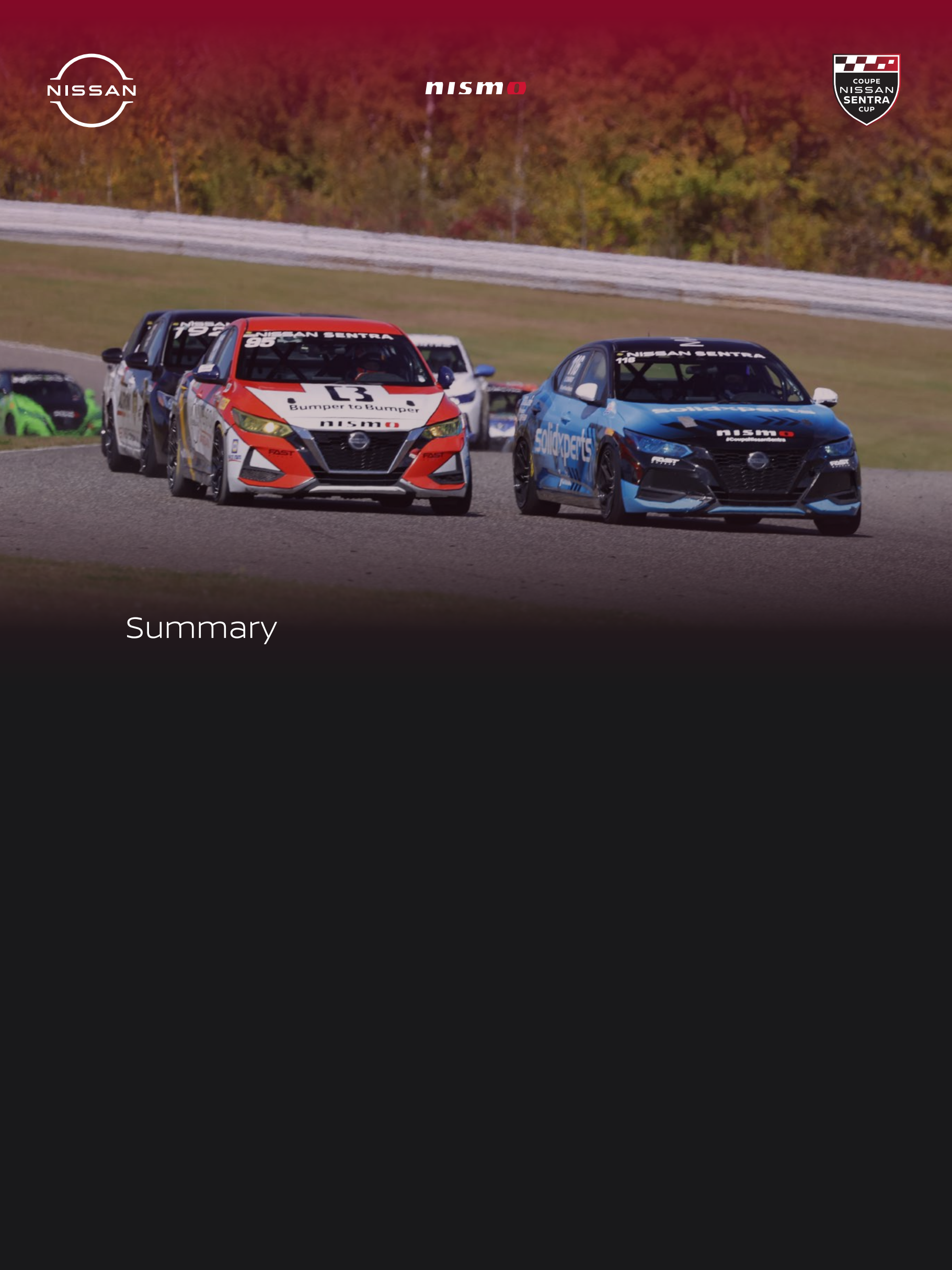


Calabogie Motorsports Park
SEPTEMBER 28 AND 29, 2024

EVENT 6



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Summary


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Valérie Limoges is the 2024 Nissan Sentra Cup Champion; Alexandre Fortin and Frédéric Chaput Win the Final Races of the season

The Grand Finale Was Presented at Calabogie Motorsports Park; Valérie Limoges Champion for a Second Time in Three Seasons

The Nissan Sentra Cup concluded its 2024 season this past weekend at Calabogie Motorsports Park, located southwest of Ottawa. Alexandre Fortin won Saturday's race, and Frédéric Chaput claimed victory on Sunday, while Valérie Limoges was crowned the 2024 champion.

The weekend featured warm, sunny weather and a clear blue sky. This was the fourth time the Ontarian track hosted a Nissan Cup event, but the first time it served as the season finale with a field of Nissan Sentra racecars (previously, it hosted the Nissan Micra Cup in 2016, 2018 and 2020). The track's abrasive surface presented challenges, forcing drivers to manage tire wear more carefully. Starting from pole position, 2023 champion Alexandre Fortin needed a win to stay in the title race. He led the early laps, closely pursued by Éric Chaput. After 40 minutes of thrilling, incident-free racing, Fortin crossed the finish line first, followed by Chaput.

Nicolas Barrette finished third, ahead of Daniel Fortin and Valérie Limoges. Matthieu Miron, who was excluded from previous races at CTMP, was

no longer in title contention but showcased his skill by battling for a podium spot before dropping two places on the final lap, finishing sixth. He was followed by Frédéric Chaput, Sylvain Ouellet, Nicolas Miron, and Jean Audet.

Despite his victory, Fortin was eliminated from the title race, as was Simon Vincent, who finished fourteenth due to a flat tire. This left only Limoges and Barrette in contention for the title before the grand finale, with Limoges leading by 19 points.

On Sunday, qualifying for the second race brought a pleasant surprise as Frédéric Chaput secured his first career pole position. The young driver achieved this feat with a narrow lead of just nine thousandths of a second over Alexandre Fortin. Joining them on the starting grid for the 120th race





in the series' history were Nicolas Barrette, Simon Vincent, and Valérie Limoges.

During the race, Chaput quickly pulled away from the rest of the pack. He maintained his lead throughout and crossed the finish line as the winner, dominating the race from start to finish.

The battle for second place, however, was intense. Alexandre Fortin managed to hold onto second place for almost the entire race, effectively blocking the rest of the field. A total of 12 drivers were fiercely competing. Unfortunately, a collision three minutes before the end sent Valérie Limoges and Nicolas Barrette off the track. The race was subsequently stopped, and with little time remaining, the final standings were based on the positions from the lap before the incident. Thus, Frédéric Chaput

emerged as the winner, followed by Alexandre Fortin, Nicolas Barrette, Simon Vincent, Valérie Limoges, Daniel Fortin, Nicolas Miron, Matthieu Miron, Éric Chaput, Sylvain Ouellet, Jean Audet, and Raphaël St-Pierre, completing the top 12.

Limoges and Barrette finished the season with a 15-point gap, favouring Valérie Limoges, who claimed the 2024 title, adding to her championship win in 2022. With four victories in 12 races, she achieved her best overall performance in the series, as did Nicolas Barrette. Finishing as the runner-up for the first time in his career after placing third last year, Barrette has consistently shown his worth since his debut in the Micra Cup. He has improved each season in this series, which marked his entry into motorsport, and fought for the title until the very last corner.


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News in brief

TO BE CONTINUED ON RDS AND YOUTUBE THIS FALL...

Although the 2024 Nissan Sentra Cup season has concluded on the tracks, Quebec fans can still catch all 12 races this fall on the RDS network and the series' Facebook page. Some episodes have already aired over the summer on RDS and will soon be available on YouTube. The final six episodes of the season will continue to air on RDS every Saturday in October and until mid-November.



A ZAMBONI IN THE COLOURS OF THE NISSAN SENTRA CUP

The Trois-Rivières Lions, a hockey team in the ECHL (Eastern Canadian Hockey League), will feature an ice resurfacer adorned with the colours of the Nissan Sentra Cup for the 2024-25 season. This unique idea came from the series' promoter, Jacques Deshaies, a passionate hockey fan who decided to sponsor the team in this distinctive way. While no Zamboni races are planned for the coming years, this initiative provides original local and public visibility in Trois-Rivières, a city renowned for its famous Grand Prix. Additionally, the Trois-Rivières Lions are owned by Jeff Dickerson, who also owns the NASCAR Spire Motorsports team in the United States.

MATHIEU LEMIRE, NEWCOMER TO THE SERIES

The series welcomed a new driver at Calabogie, Mathieu Lemire. Behind the wheel of the No.87 Nissan Sentra, the Trois-Rivières driver competed in his very first event in a national motorsport championship, preparing for a full-time run in the 2025 season. Lemire began with a driving school in Calabogie in 2018, before participating in multiple test sessions

(lapping) at Circuit Mont-Tremblant in the following years. “I had been looking for a while to buy a Sentra and race in the Nissan Sentra Cup. I have now started and will be at all the 2025 races,” says Lemire, who also competes in Sno Cross competitions during the winter.



MARIE-SOLEIL LABELLE VICTORIOUS IN ENDURANCE KARTING



Between the early September events at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park and this weekend in Calabogie, two Nissan Sentra Cup drivers took the opportunity to participate in a new Endurance karting race, the 6 Heures Day & Night Pole-Position Magazine, at the SH Karting track in Quebec. Competing in the SWS (Sodi World Series) class for the first time, Jean-François Couture finished 15th. Meanwhile, Marie-Soleil Labelle, who teamed up with snowmobile world champion Sabrina Blanchet, won the Pole-Position category, finishing 16th overall. The victory of the team—Marie-Soleil Labelle, Sabrina Blanchet, Olivier Gagnon, and Anthony Gagnon (Team Hazet, photo here)—was secured with a lead of 114 thousandths of a second after 6 hours of racing!



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INTERVIEW:

Valérie Limoges, 2024 champion!

A loyal participant since the series began, Valérie Limoges secured her second Nissan Sentra Cup championship title in Calabogie, following her 2022 victory. This achievement further cements her place in Canadian motorsport history, as no female driver has accomplished such a feat in a national road racing series in the 21st century.



Valérie, how would you assess your 2024 season?

It wasn't an easy season, but we started strong. At the second event, the Grand Prix Nissan at ICAR, I won two races, which gave me the maximum points I needed to tackle the rest of the season. It was a close competition all season, with several drivers capable of winning each race. However, I consistently maintained a slight lead in the standings, which made the difference. Going into the final race, I knew it would be tough. The competition was fierce, and unfortunately, I had an incident in the last race when Nicolas Barrette hit my car. That's racing. Towards the end of the season, I was a bit conservative because winning the title was more important to me than a single victory at Calabogie.

What was the best moment of the season for you?

Winning the championship was definitely the highlight. But close behind, winning the Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières for the third time was also a great moment.

In 2022, you won the title by 3 points. This time, you won with a 13-point lead. Which title means more to you?

The first title is always special. But it's been two years, and I'm not a fan of statistics, so I don't remember that season as well. This time, it feels like the culmination of a lot of hard work by my entire team. The mechanics ensured nothing was overlooked on our Sentra, and we had plenty of spare parts ready. We worked on tire pressures and wear management throughout the race. The Nissan Sentra Cup cars are almost stock, so these details, not just the driving, make a big difference in winning a title. Plus, in 2022, I didn't win any races, but this time I won four!

You've been in the series for 10 seasons. Do you still enjoy the new additions, like the event in the United States this summer?

Absolutely! Lime Rock is a fantastic track, and I enjoyed its addition to the calendar. I had driven there a long time ago, and it was great to return with the Nissan Sentra Cup. The more competition, the better. It adds pressure, but I handle it well.

Five drivers were still in contention for the title a month before the season ended. You set a lap record and a pole position, both tied to the thousandth of a second. Does this make it one of the most competitive seasons?

It's hard to judge, but it was definitely intense. There were many different winners throughout the season, and several drivers gained enough experience to win. For the fans, it was excellent. I've been in the series for a long time, and seeing drivers who were mid-pack in previous seasons now competing at the front is great. Winning without competition doesn't interest me.



Will you be back in 2025?

I always say it's time to stop driving, but I'm not so sure anymore! I'm in good shape, things are going well, and I really enjoy driving in the Nissan Sentra Cup. So, we'll see about next year!



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10 seasons, 6 different champions!



First champion in 2015, Olivier Bédard remains to this day the record holder for titles (3) in the series.

So far, 120 races have taken place since the Micra Cup began in 2015, including the 2024 season that just ended. That's 10 full seasons that have crowned 6 different drivers: Olivier Bédard (2015-17-18), Xavier Coupal (2016), Marco Signoretti (2019), Kevin King (2020-21), Valérie Limoges (2022-24), and Alexandre Fortin (2023).

On May 23, 2015, when the series' very first race took place at Circuit Mont-Tremblant, it was Thai driver and Nissan GT Academy member Thanaroj Tanasitnitikate who was the first to put his name on the winners' list. But in the 3rd race, held in support of Formula 1 during the Grand Prix du Canada, an 18-year-old Quebec driver, transitioning from karting, made a strong impression with his Micra, sponsored by the Sorel-Tracy Nissan dealer. His name? Olivier Bédard. And the general public would continue to hear about him throughout the season, which he finally won ahead of Tanasitnitikate, Albertan Stefan Rzadzinski, Indian (another member of the Nissan GT Academy) Abhinav Bikkani, Valérie Limoges, and Valérie Chiasson.

The following year, Bédard joined the Albi Nissan team and struggled with a particularly tough competitor, Xavier Coupal. More consistent, Coupal was crowned at the end of a marathon season of 16 races (a record in the series' history), ahead of Bédard, Kevin King, Rzadzinski, Limoges, and the American Nic Hammann. Bédard would have his revenge the following season. In 2017, the duel between the two young drivers was captivating for the fans, and the media were fond of their rivalry. In this battle,

featuring two Formula 1 champions using everything at their disposal to win, Bédard won. He thus clinched his second title in 3 years, ahead of Coupal, Kevin King, Limoges, Jean-Michel Isabelle, and Normand Boyer.

Olivier Bédard would still compete in a final record-breaking season in the series to race towards the title in 2018: 12 races, 7 victories, 9 pole positions. Despite this, the season was anything but boring, highlighted by Valérie Limoges' first victory. She has been a loyal driver since the series' launch in 2015. In the championship standings, Bédard won ahead of King, Jake Exton, Limoges, Boyer, and Fadi Mourad, also the Rookie of the Year.

While Olivier Bédard continued to dominate the early races of 2019, his transition to the Open Wheel Series introduced two new title contenders: Kevin King, who was already well-experienced in the Micra Cup, and Marco Signoretti, a newcomer to the Micra Cup but not to motorsport, as he had a background in karting and car testing. At the wheel of a Micra superbly decorated in PayPal colors, Signoretti snatched



Marco Signoretti, rookie and overall champion in 2019!

the title after winning 3 of the last 4 races. Six different drivers shared the 12 victories in 2019. King finished runner-up, ahead of Limoges, Exton, Taylor Near, and Sylvain Ouellet.

The last season of the Micra was also the first title for Kevin King. After having lost battles against Bédard then Signoretti, he finally got his revenge after a short season



Kevin King has the distinction of having been both the last champion of the Micra era and the first with the new Sentra.

(Covid). The duel between King and Jesse Lazare, the winner of the 24 Hours of Daytona, ended with a narrow gap of 8 points. Limoges, Gavin Sanders (Rookie of the Year), Near, and Justin DiBenedetto completed the Top 6.

The introduction of the powerful all-new Nissan Sentra in 2021 brought many changes, but it didn't alter the fierce competition for the title between King and Lazare. Throughout a standard 12-race season, both drivers,



piloting their respective Sentras, engaged in a thrilling battle. Unfortunately, Lazare's crash in the final event handed the victory to Kevin King. Promising rookie Jesse Webb from British Columbia, along with fellow first-season competitor Alexandre Fortin, Éric Chaput, and Valérie Limoges, followed in the standings. The championship, bolstered by the Sentra, saw a record influx of new competitors.

Valérie Limoges achieved a remarkable feat in 2022, securing the championship without winning a single race all season. Her consistent performance edged out Simon Charbonneau by just 3 points. Fortin, Ouellet, Chaput, and Boyer rounded out the Top 6. The 2022 season saw three drivers vying for the title until the final race, a scenario

Valérie Limoges won her first title in 2022.

that repeated in the 2023 finale. Despite a challenging start to the season, Valérie Limoges secured multiple victories, but it wasn't enough to surpass Alexandre Fortin for the title. Nicolas Barrette, who finished 3rd, remained a strong contender until the end. Simon Vincent, Matthieu Miron, and Daniel Fortin completed the Top 6 standings.



Results and standings

■ Calabogie Motorsports Park - Event 6

QUALIFICATION RACE 1

1) Alexandre Fortin	#1
2) Éric Chaput	#116
3) Nicolas Barrette	#427
4) Matthieu Miron	#191
5) Valérie Limoges	#777
6) Daniel Fortin	#95
7) Nicolas Miron	#192
8) Frédéric Chaput	#63
9) Simon Vincent	#91
10) Jean Audet	#22
11) Mathieu Lemire	#87
12) Raphaël St-Pierre	#419
13) Sylvain Ouellet	#99
14) Steve Poulin	#37
15) Stéphane Pouliot	#210
16) Marie-Soleil Labelle	#27
17) Jean-François Couture	#7

RESULTS RACE 1

1) Alexandre Fortin	21 laps
2) Éric Chaput	-1.898
3) Nicolas Barrette	-5.289
4) Daniel Fortin	-14.459
5) Valérie Limoges	-14.770
6) Matthieu Miron	-15.702
7) Frédéric Chaput	-16.068
8) Sylvain Ouellet	-22.298
9) Nicolas Miron	-29.461
10) Jean Audet	-36.594
11) Steve Poulin	-40.533
12) Jean-François Couture	-46.414
13) Simon Vincent	-55.613
14) Stéphane Pouliot	-1:00.628
15) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-1:12.274
Excluded) Raphaël St-Pierre	-----
Did not start) Mathieu Lemire	-----

QUALIFICATION RACE 2

1) Frédéric Chaput	Groupe Gabriel / Mallette
2) Alexandre Fortin	Ste-Foy Nissan / Fix Auto
3) Nicolas Barrette	Groupe RM
4) Simon Vincent	Vincent2 racing team
5) Valérie Limoges	BetGRW.com
6) Daniel Fortin	Ste-Foy Nissan / Fix Auto
7) Nicolas Miron	191 Motorsport
8) Éric Chaput	Groupe Gabriel / Mallette
9) Matthieu Miron	191 Motorsport
10) Jean-François Couture	Céramique O-Nivo
11) Sylvain Ouellet	Ouellet Motorsport
12) Jean Audet	Grand Times Hôtel
13) Raphaël St-Pierre	Sensei Groupe-Conseil
14) Steve Poulin	Nissan Thetford
15) Mathieu Lemire	Lemire Motorsport
16) Stéphane Pouliot	Équipe Stéphane Pouliot
Did not start) Marie-Soleil Labelle	Musée Gilles-Villeneuve

RESULTS RACE 2

1) Frédéric Chaput	18 laps
2) Alexandre Fortin	-10.401
3) Nicolas Barrette	-10.669
4) Simon Vincent	-10.984
5) Valérie Limoges	-11.423
6) Éric Chaput	-11.820
7) Daniel Fortin	-12.325
8) Nicolas Miron	-12.634
9) Matthieu Miron	-13.241
10) Sylvain Ouellet	-16.884
11) Jean Audet	-17.806
12) Raphaël St-Pierre	-18.187
13) Jean-François Couture	-22.433
14) Steve Poulin	-34.968
15) Mathieu Lemire	-38.464
16) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-50.950
17) Stéphane Pouliot	-59.007


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Results and standings

■ Calabogie Motorsports Park - Event 6

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

Position	#	Driver	Races	Points
1.	777	Valérie Limoges	12	503
2.	427	Nicolas Barrette	12	490
3.	1	Alexandre Fortin	12	441
4.	91	Simon Vincent	12	428
5.	116	Éric Chaput	12	369
6.	191	Matthieu Miron	12	362
7.	95	Daniel Fortin	12	314
8.	50	Nicolas Lévesque	10	264
9.	22	Jean Audet	12	257
10.	7	Jean-François Couture	12	256
10.	63	Frédéric Chaput	9	256
12.	419	Raphaël St-Pierre	12	248
13.	192	Nicolas Miron	10	234
14.	99	Sylvain Ouellet	12	231
15.	210	Stéphane Pouliot	12	209
16.	37	Steve Poulin	12	208
17.	27	Marie-Soleil Labelle	12	200
18.	46	Christian Thibault	10	164
19.	08	Martin Harvey	6	100
20.	69	Luc Beaudoin	4	64
21.	49	David Gosselin	2	37
22.	87	Mathieu Lemire	1	16
23.	63	Mario Charette	1	14





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The 2024 season was exceptional, for competitors and fans. We look forward to seeing you next year for the 2025 season of the Nissan Sentra Cup!



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