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MICRA CUP MAGAZINE



ROUND 1



**CIRCUIT MONT-TREMBLANT
MAY 22, 23, 24**

FIRST TIME OUT!



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TWO EXCEPTIONAL RACES KICK OFF THE NISSAN MICRA CUP!

- The Nissan Micra held true to its promises on the track, fun to drive and fun to race -

The Nissan Micra Cup officially got under way this past weekend with two spectacular races on the Circuit Mont-Tremblant. Both rounds were claimed by the young driver from Thailand, Thanaroj Thanasitnitike, after two fierce battles that brought trackside spectators to their feet.

Qualifying in pole position for Saturday's race, the young Quebecer Olivier Bédard initially led for the first few turns before getting passed by the two Nissan GT Academy Team drivers. Thanaroj Thanasitnitike, of Thailand, followed by his teammate from India, Abhinay Bikkani, took over the front, later to be joined by Marc-André Bergeron. For Bikkhani and Bergeron, any hope of becoming the very first Nissan Micra Cup winner was dashed mid-way through the race when they both crashed off course. Their Nissan Micras were not damaged and both quickly returned to racing, but by then Thanasitnitike, followed closely by Jean-Michel Isabelle and Friday's practice session lap record holder Stefan Rzdzinski, became the new drivers battling it out for victory.

By the end of an exciting 30 minutes of racing, during which positions frequently changed, Thanasitnitike won by one second over Isabelle, with Rzdzinski only another three-tenths of a second behind. Olivier Bédard was successful in defending this fourth place spot, ahead of Valérie Chiasson. The Top 10 was rounded out by Abhinay Bikkani, Carl Nadeau, Valérie Limoges, top novice driver Metod Topolnik and Marc-Antoine Demers. All drivers that took to the start crossed the finish line with only a ten-second gap covering the first nine drivers; great signs of an exceptional course on all accounts.

Sunday, Thanasitnitike quickly claimed the lead with Olivier Bédard hot on his tail, both drivers exchanging the top-ranked spot multiple times. With only just enough fuel to finish the race, Bédard had to ease up during the last lap but managed to conserve a second place finish ahead of Albertan Stefan Rzdzinski, who once again completed the podium.

Carl Nadeau and novice Metod Topolnik had an intense battle for fourth place, with only six-tenths of a second separating them as they crossed the finish line. Olivier Pelletier, Gabriel Gélinas, Valérie Chiasson (who

executed a spectacular comeback after having to drive onto the grass during the first lap to avoid hitting a spun car), Valérie Limoges and Paul Dargis completed the top 10.

Thanasitnitike leads the drivers' championship with 80 points, ahead of Bédard (68), Rzdzinski (64), Jean-Michel Isabelle, and Pierre Clavet and Carl Nadeau (46). Metod Topolnik leads the novice championship.

This first weekend of the Nissan Micra Cup held up to all of its promises. There was never a lack of action, a good omen for the next outing in two weeks during the Grand Prix du Canada, on the Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve in Montréal.

For more information on the Nissan Micra Cup, please go to the website www.nissan.ca/micracup.



IN THE MICRA CUP WORLD



A BIG FAMILY...

A touching moment of solidarity crowned the inaugural series event. During the second race's podium, the winner and Nissan GT Academy driver decided to offer his two Nissan Canada cheques of \$1,500 worth of parts to new driver Mario Berthiaume, who was unable to start the race after seriously damaging his car in a practice session accident. Series organizer Jacques Deshaies, along with Didier Marsaud of Nissan Canada and Frank Bagouet of Total Canada each presented \$1,500, bringing the total to \$7,500. This thoughtful gesture exemplifies the spirit of family that is omnipresent in the Nissan Micra Cup, which will hopefully allow Mario Berthiaume to soon rejoin the pack.



FRONT AND REAR STABILIZER BAR

Sold in more than 160 countries all over the world, the Canadian Nissan Micra has been specifically tailored for Canada and its roads. This is the only Micra in the world to be equipped with both front and rear stabilizer bars. These front and rear sway bars were specially tuned and added to tighten handling, and the rack and pinion steering was further adjusted to improve the turning radius. As a result, Micra could very well be Canada's most agile urban vehicle, something that Canadians will appreciate during their daily commute in traffic, or when trying to find a parking spot. The front and rear stabilizer bars on Micra, paired with the NISMO Suspension kit, are also beneficial for the Nissan Micra Cup drivers as they work through the numerous turns they will face in the 2015 season, including more than 20 hours on some of the finest circuits in the province of Quebec.

METOD TOPOLNIK BEST NOVICE!

At the wheel of the #78 Nissan Micra, Metod Topolnik had an excellent start in motorsports. Progressing through each practice session, he completed the two races in 9th and 5th spots respectively. His exciting battle with experienced driver Carl Nadeau during the second round had trackside spectators holding their breath. In the novice drivers' championship, he has 38 points, ahead of Olivier Pelletier (27), Nicolas Touchette (16), Frédéric Bernier (14), Chris Sahakian (10), Yves Aubé (7) and Claude Leclerc (5).



BACK AFTER AN 8 YEAR ABSENCE...

Of the two female drivers contesting the season, Valérie Chiasson and Valérie Limoges, the latter was making her big return to competition at the wheel of the #4 H.Grégore Nissan Micra after 8 years absent from racing. 2001 Quebec Formule 125 Champion (karting), lone female in North American Formula Renault (Fran-Am), she was also a professional driver in the North American Grand-Am Endurance series for the Florida's Blackforest team until 2007. For Valérie Limoges, the Nissan Micra Cup represents a fantastic opportunity because in addition to her return to competition, she also has to learn a front wheel drive car, a vehicle she has little experience with. Methodical in her weekend-long progression, she finished the two races in 8th and 9th positions respectively.

NEXT EVENT: THE GRAND PRIX DU CANADA!

For its second outing, the Nissan Micra Cup will be part of the programme for the Formula 1 Grand Prix du Canada on the Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve in Montréal, this June 5th, 6th, and 7th. Drivers will be on the 4.4km track for two sessions (free practice and qualifying on Friday, one race on Saturday afternoon after F1 qualifying and another race on Sunday morning, before the ceremonial start, in front of packed grandstands for Canada's most important motorsporting event of the year.



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2... 3 QUESTIONS FOR... JACQUES DESHAIES

President of JD Promotion & Compétition, journalist and driver Jacques Deshaies has this year added the role of organizer of the Nissan Micra Cup to his resume. A project that he initiated in the spring of 2014, which came to fruition with Nissan Canada's collaboration, and is now the success that we know today...

The Nissan Micra Cup is proving to be the most affordable series in Canadian motorsport. Was this a critical element when you were creating the series?

It was imperative and one of the criteria that eventually convinced Nissan Canada, given that they offer the most affordable car on the market with the series Micra, at less than \$10,000. The economy changed a few years ago and motorsports needed to provide a more realistic product adapted to entrants' budgets. For our organization, we wanted to answer the following equation: reasonable costs, a

highly pleasurable car for the drivers, and ample restrictions that would provide the public with closely competitive races. We also wanted to offer young talent the opportunity to compete in motorsports in an affordable manner. And what is entertaining now is to see other organizations and manufacturers eyeing the Nissan Micra Cup and regretting not having launched a similar series!

How many people make up the series' sporting organization?

There are a dozen of us working full-time during race weekends. It's a fairly small organization but everyone is very experienced. We have an event steward, a course inspector, and the people in charge of the technical inspection, which, in my opinion is the most important part of a one-make series in order to ensure complete equality between the race cars. Everyone needs to be on point during a race weekend.

Are you pleased to see that more than twenty drivers took part in the series' inaugural event?

Yes, because a brand new series brings with it a little bit of uncertainty at the beginning. Last fall, some people were wondering if this would work. Now, with 25 cars entered to race in two weeks' time in front of tens of thousands of Grand Prix du Canada spectators, I'm very satisfied. The Nissan Micra Cup continues to draw interest from new drivers. Every day we receive requests for information from drivers

and teams that want to join the series. We have an excellent base and it looks very promising for things to come.





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CIRCUIT MONT-TREMBLANT RACE 1 AND 2 RESULTS

FREE PRACTICE 1

1) Stefan Rzdzinski	No.69
2) Pierre Clavet	No.86
3) Marc-André Bergeron	No.88
4) Marc-Antoine Demers	No.422
5) Carl Nadeau	No.220
6) Gabriel Gélinas	No.23
7) Olivier Bédard	No.96
8) Valérie Limoges	No.4
9) Thanaraj Thanasitnitike	No.2
10) Olivier Pelletier	No.5
11) Claude Leclerc	No.572
12) Abhinay Bikkani	No.3
13) Yves Aubé	No.7
14) Brian Makse	No.24
15) Paul Dargis	No.29
16) Frédéric Bernier	No.28
17) Alex Habrich	No.75
18) Valérie Chiasson	No.26
19) Metod Topolnik	No.78
20) Chris Sahakian	No.9
DNS - Nicolas Touchette	No.55
DNS - Mario Berthiaume	No.7

FREE PRACTICE 2

1) Stefan Rzdzinski	No.69
2) Marc-André Bergeron	No.88
3) Jean-Michel Isabelle	No.86
4) Carl Nadeau	No.220
5) Valérie Chiasson	No.26
6) Valérie Limoges	No.4
7) Olivier Bédard	No.96
8) Metod Topolnik	No.78
9) Marc-Antoine Demers	No.422
10) Gabriel Gélinas	No.23
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18) Yves Aubé	No.7
19) Chris Sahakian	No.9
20) Alex Habrich	No.75
DNS - Nicolas Touchette	No.55
DNS - Mario Berthiaume	No.7

QUALIFYING SESSION

1) Olivier Bédard	No.96
2) J.M.Isabelle / P.Clavet	No.86
3) Thanaraj Thanasitnitike	No.2
4) Stefan Rzdzinski	No.69
5) Carl Nadeau	No.220
6) Marc-André Bergeron	No.88
7) Valérie Chiasson	No.26
8) Abhinay Bikkani	No.3
9) Valérie Limoges	No.4
10) Gabriel Gélinas	No.23
11) Metod Topolnik	No.78
12) Marc-Antoine Demers	No.422
13) Olivier Pelletier	No.5
14) Nicolas Touchette	No.55
15) Brian Makse	No.24
16) P.Dargis / J.Bélanger	No.29
17) Claude Leclerc	No.572
18) Chris Sahakian	No.9
19) Frédéric Bernier	No.28
20) Yves Aubé	No.17
21) Alex Habrich	No.75
DNS - Mario Berthiaume	No.7

RACE 1

1) Thanaraj Thanasitnitike	15 laps
2) Jean-Michel Isabelle	-1.054
3) Stefan Rzdzinski	-1.415
4) Olivier Bédard	-3.420
5) Valérie Chiasson	-4.367
6) Abhinay Bikkani	-4.644
7) Carl Nadeau	-6.200
8) Valérie Limoges	-7.199
9) Metod Topolnik	-7.891
10) Marc-Antoine Demers	-11.929
11) Jacques Bélanger	-11.943
12) Gabriel Gélinas	-12.233
13) Nicolas Touchette	-13.097
14) Olivier Pelletier	-27.025
15) Brian Makse	-27.436
16) Frédéric Bernier	-28.900
17) Chris Sahakian	-35.652
18) Yves Aubé	-50.388
19) Marc-André Bergeron	-1 lap
20) Alex Habrich	-4 laps
21) Claude Leclerc	-9 laps
DNS) Mario Berthiaume	-----

RACE 2

1) Thanaraj Thanasitnitike	15 laps
2) Olivier Bédard	-2.602
3) Stefan Rzdzinski	-2.910
4) Carl Nadeau	-23.688
5) Metod Topolnik	-24.207
6) Olivier Pelletier	-24.646
7) Gabriel Gélinas	-25.407
8) Valérie Chiasson	-27.863
9) Valérie Limoges	-44.830
10) Paul Dargis	-45.407
11) Pierre Clavet	-45.631
12) Frédéric Bernier	-49.064
13) Nicolas Touchette	-53.136
14) Brian Makse	-1:09.000
15) Chris Sahakian	-1:11.700
16) Claude Leclerc	-1:28:100
17) Yves Aubé	-1:28.800
18) Marc-André Bergeron	-1 lap
19) Marc-Antoine Demers	-12 laps
20) Abhinay Bikkani	-14 laps
DNS) Alex Habrich	-----
DNS) Mario Berthiaume	-----

DRIVER'S STANDINGS

1) Thanaraj Thanasitnitike	80 points	11) J.Bélanger / P.Dargis	22 points
2) Olivier Bédard	68 points	13) Nicolas Touchette	16 points
3) Stefan Rzdzinski	64 points	14) Frédéric Bernier	14 points
4) P.Clavet / J.M.Isabelle	46 points	15) Brian Makse	13 points
5) Carl Nadeau	46 points	16) Marc-Antoine Demers	12 points
6) Valérie Chiasson	40 points	17) Chris Sahakian	10 points
7) Metod Topolnik	38 points	18) Yves Aubé	7 points
8) Valérie Limoges	30 points	19) Marc-André Bergeron	6 points
9) Gabriel Gélinas	27 points	20) Claude Leclerc	5 points
9) Olivier Pelletier	27 points	21) Alex Habrich	3 points
11) Abhinay Bikkani	22 points	DNS) Mario Berthiaume	-----

