



MICRA CUP

MAGAZINE



CALABOGIE MOTORSPORTS PARK

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EVENT

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Mobil 1



Kevin King wins both Nissan Micra Cup races at Calabogie Motorsports Park

- Kevin King is still the points leader while two rookie drivers join in for the title fight this weekend in Ontario -

This weekend, the Nissan Micra Cup held the third and fourth rounds of the 2020 season at Calabogie Motorsports Park in Ontario. The 5.05km long circuit, located southwest of Ottawa, hosted two races in radically different weather conditions, both marked by victories for Kevin King.

Of the six series that competed in the Calabogie Cup Race Weekend 2020, the Nissan Micra Cup had the largest starting grids. Both Micra Cup races were spectacular to watch as Saturday's race continued on in the rain while Sunday's took place in fair weather.

Saturday morning's qualifying session saw Kevin King (LP Apparel / Nissan Gabriel team), point standings leader and winner of the opening two rounds of the year, capture a pole position in both races. Two Ontario racers fresh out of karting and teammates at SPI Racing team, Gavin Sanders and Justin Di Benedetto, lined up second and third on the grid, respectively. For the second race, King took pole position with Jesse Lazare (PayPal / Motorsports In Action) and Sanders just behind him.

Held in the rain and on a slippery tarmac, Saturday's race saw Sanders power into the lead away from King from the start. After two

and a half laps, King managed to overtake Sanders and moved into the lead. With that, Sanders' hope to win a race in his rookie season unfortunately vanished.

Fifth on the grid, Valerie Limoges had a fantastic start, but quickly slipped into third place. The veteran racer challenged Gavin Sanders for second place during the second half of the race, but eventually crossed the line in third place, scoring her third podium finish in the third race of the season.

Meanwhile, an intense battle for fourth place involved Di Benedetto and PayPal / Motorsports In Action teammates Taylor Near and Jesse Lazare, with Near finishing fourth, ahead of Di Benedetto and Lazare. Sylvain Ouellet crossed the finish line seventh and claimed victory in the senior class. Rounding out the top ten were Éric Chaput, Frédéric Bernier and François-Xavier Lassus, who all competed well and made very few mistakes throughout the race despite the difficult conditions.

Sunday's race featured another thrilling battle for victory between King and Lazare. The race turned out to be a carbon copy of the opening round from the event at the Mont-Tremblant circuit where action raged all race long. At the start of the race, King powered into the lead but was quickly

overtaken by Lazare. Lazare was in the lead for most of the race, but was passed by King on the final lap. It all came to an end as King drove away with the win, scoring his fourth consecutive victory this season.

Jesse Lazare finished the race in second place ahead of Benedetto and Limoges as the first four cars crossed the line bumper-to-bumper. For rookie Di Benedetto, this was his first podium finish of the season, while Gavin Sanders finished the race in the top five, finishing in front of Taylor Near, Chaput, the winner in the Senior category, Nicolas Barrette, Bernier and Ouellette.

Although spectators were not admitted at the event this weekend, fans had several ways to follow the action on social media as news and videos were posted on the series' Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages. In addition, for the first time, all eight races of the 2020 Nissan Micra Cup will be broadcasted this fall on Réseau Des Sports (RDS).

With the addition of the new event at Circuit ICAR, the 2020 season will be made of a total of eight races, making the Nissan Micra Cup the motorsport series with the most events of all Canadian championships and all classes combined in 2020.



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IN THE NISSAN MICRA CUP WORLD



André Lapointe's special preparation!

Québec driver André Lapointe is currently competing in his first full season in the Nissan Micra Cup. During the initial outbreak of COVID-19 last spring, Lapointe took advantage of his time quarantining to watch the series on YouTube for at least an hour each day. "To prepare myself, but to also keep my motivation and to learn about the series, I had to watch over 100 hours of videos. I think they helped me a lot, especially to help me get to know tracks like Calabogie better, where I am driving for the first time," explains Lapointe. This weekend, he shared an Airbnb accommodation near the racetrack with three other drivers, Frédéric Bernier, Mario Berthiaume and Mario Charette. "In the evenings, our conversations are about our performance on the track! We watch videos, especially from the onboard cameras of other competitors so we can see what they are doing, like their trajectories," notes André.

Micra Cup and karting

We talk a lot about young drivers who made the jump from winning titles and victories in karting to the Nissan Micra Cup. A lesser known fact is that the drivers who are already well established in the series go karting as practice between two races or to improve their physical form for an upcoming Micra Cup event! This year, the championship leader, Kevin King is competing in two classes in the Coupe de Montréal karting. King is leading the championship in one and is second in the other. If he wins these titles in addition to the 2020 Nissan Micra Cup Championship, he could claim three titles this season! On the other hand, Nicolas Barrette had no experience in competitive karting before starting in the Nissan Micra Cup three years ago. But this year, he bought a 125cc kart to practice in between the Nissan Micra Cup events. Unlike King, he doesn't intend to compete in a real karting championship, but says due to the high level of competition in the Micra Cup, training in karting is a real asset



Next event: The Circuit ICAR, Mirabel!

The cancellation of the Canadian Grand Prix in July led to the cancellation of the Micra Cup event, scheduled on the circuit Gilles-Villeneuve in Montreal. Jacques Deshaies, head of JD Promotion & Compétition and promoter of the Nissan Micra Cup, replaced the Grand Prix with a new event north of Montréal. This event will be held at Circuit ICAR on the grounds of the Montréal-Mirabel International Airport on September 11 and 12. "Circuit ICAR is certainly one of the most beautiful motorsport facilities in Canada. Moreover, holding both races on Saturday, September 12, will lower costs for the teams, which fits perfectly with the philosophy of the Nissan Micra Cup: to offer maximum fun for minimal expenses," says Deshaies.



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2...3 QUESTIONS TO **JUSTIN DI BENEDETTO** ROOKIE OF THE YEAR CONTENDER

It's already mid-season in the 2020 Nissan Micra Cup and the fight for the Rookie of the Year title has come down to two teammates – two young Ontario drivers from karting. Compared to Gavin Sanders, who has raced a few times in 2019, Justin Di Benedetto, 23, has five years of kart racing experience, but is a complete rookie in road racing. Now, he tells us about his debut in the series and his ambitions!

Justin, since both you and Marco Signoretti have a history in karting, did his success as the 2019 season champion influence your decision to enter the Nissan Micra Cup?

When Marco joined the Nissan Micra Cup, it certainly opened a lot of peoples' eyes to the series in the karting community, many of them started to look into the series. One of those people was Gavin Sanders. When he told me he was planning to make his move into the series, I began looking into it from afar and said – maybe this is something I should look into. I kept up with the series as the year went on, and talked to Gavin about making my own move into the series. I think it was around the end of summer last year that I decided to take on the opportunity and enter the 2020 Micra Cup season – and that's how it all started.

Is defeating your teammate Gavin Sanders for Rookie of the Year your main goal?

My goal is ultimately to win the Rookie championship, it doesn't matter whether or not it's against my teammate. I want to do it fairly and as a part of a team, with no incidents, so that everyone goes home happy at the end of the weekend.

What are your favourite and what are the most challenging aspects of competing in the Nissan Micra Cup?

I really don't think I have any complaints since joining this season. Driving a road-



racing car is a new experience for me – I love driving my Micra. The level of competition in the series is also really great, as racing spec vehicles always makes it a really close and tight race. I also like overall the environment. Since I've come up in karting, which is more of a grassroots sport – when I stepped

into the Nissan Micra Cup world, it felt like a more professional space. Everything is well structured while still remaining family-friendly, so I took a liking to it right away. The entire production that Nissan Canada, the series, and the promoter puts on is very well done.



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**POSTCARD
OF THE
CALABOGIE CUP
WEEKEND...**





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CALABOGIE MOTORSPORTS PARK RACE 3 AND 4 RESULTS

QUALIFICATION RACE 1

1) Kevin King	#40
2) Gavin Sanders	#10
3) Justin Di Benedetto	#4
4) Taylor Near	#58
5) Valérie Limoges	#220
6) Jesse Lazare	#21
7) Nicolas Barrette	#427
8) Éric Chaput	#116
9) Frédéric Bernier	#28
10) Sylvain Ouellet	#98
11) André Lapointe	#47
12) François-Xavier Lassus	#6
13) Mark Davis	#31
14) Mario Berthiaume	#728
15) Francis Bellerive	#36
16) Marie-Josée Massicotte	#53
17) Marie-Soleil Labelle	#989

QUALIFICATION RACE 2

1) Kevin King	#40
2) Jesse Lazare	#21
3) Gavin Sanders	#10
4) Justin Di Benedetto	#4
5) Taylor Near	#58
6) Frédéric Bernier	#28
7) Valérie Limoges	#220
8) Éric Chaput	#116
9) André Lapointe	#47
10) Sylvain Ouellet	#98
11) Nicolas Barrette	#427
12) François-Xavier Lassus	#6
13) Mario Charette	#728
14) Mark Davis	#31
15) Francis Bellerive	#36
16) Marie-Josée Massicotte	#53
17) Marie-Soleil Labelle	#989

RACE 1

1) Kevin King	15 laps
2) Gavin Sanders	-2.682
3) Valérie Limoges	-9.761
4) Taylor Near	-12.847
5) Justin Di Benedetto	-28.629
6) Jesse Lazare	-34.703
7) Sylvain Ouellet	-37.947
8) Frédéric Bernier	-46.155
9) Éric Chaput	-46.402
10) François-Xavier Lassus	-53.517
11) Mark Davis	-53.587
12) André Lapointe	-54.981
13) Mario Charette	-55.518
14) Francis Bellerive	-1 lap
15) Marie-Josée Massicotte	-1 lap
16) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-2 laps
17) Nicolas Barrette	-3 laps

RACE 2

1) Kevin King	14 laps
2) Jesse Lazare	-0.459
3) Justin Di Benedetto	-0.878
4) Valérie Limoges	-2.299
5) Gavin Sanders	-4.104
6) Taylor Near	-6.794
7) Éric Chaput	-7.218
8) Nicolas Barrette	-15.471
9) Frédéric Bernier	-15.734
10) Sylvain Ouellet	-17.286
11) Mario Berthiaume	-17.879
12) Mark Davis	-18.125
13) François-Xavier Lassus	-18.869
14) Marie-Josée Massicotte	-1:24.538
15) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-1 lap
16) Francis Bellerive	-8 laps
17) André Lapointe	-11 laps



DRIVERS STANDINGS

1) Kevin King	170 points	13) Nicolas Barrette	29 points
2) Jesse Lazare	132 points	14) Charles Robin	28 points
3) Valérie Limoges	124 points	14) François-Xavier Lassus (Senior)	28 points
4) Taylor Near	104 points	16) Mario Berthiaume (Senior)	20 points
5) Gavin Sanders (Rookie)	100 points	17) Marie-Josée Massicotte (R.+S.)	19 points
6) Justin Di Benedetto (Rookie)	77 points	18) Marie-Soleil Labelle (Rookie)	17 points
7) Éric Chaput (Senior)	68 points	19) Mario Charette (Senior)	15 points
8) Sylvain Ouellet (Senior)	64 points	20) Samuel Rowe (Rookie)	10 points
8) Frédéric Bernier (Senior)	64 points	21) Raphaël St-Pierre (Rookie)	9 points
10) André Lapointe (Senior)	41 points	21) Sacha Gagnon (Senior)	9 points
11) Mark Davis (Rookie)	32 points	23) Michel Barrette (Senior)	7 points
12) Francis Bellerive (Rookie)	31 points		

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