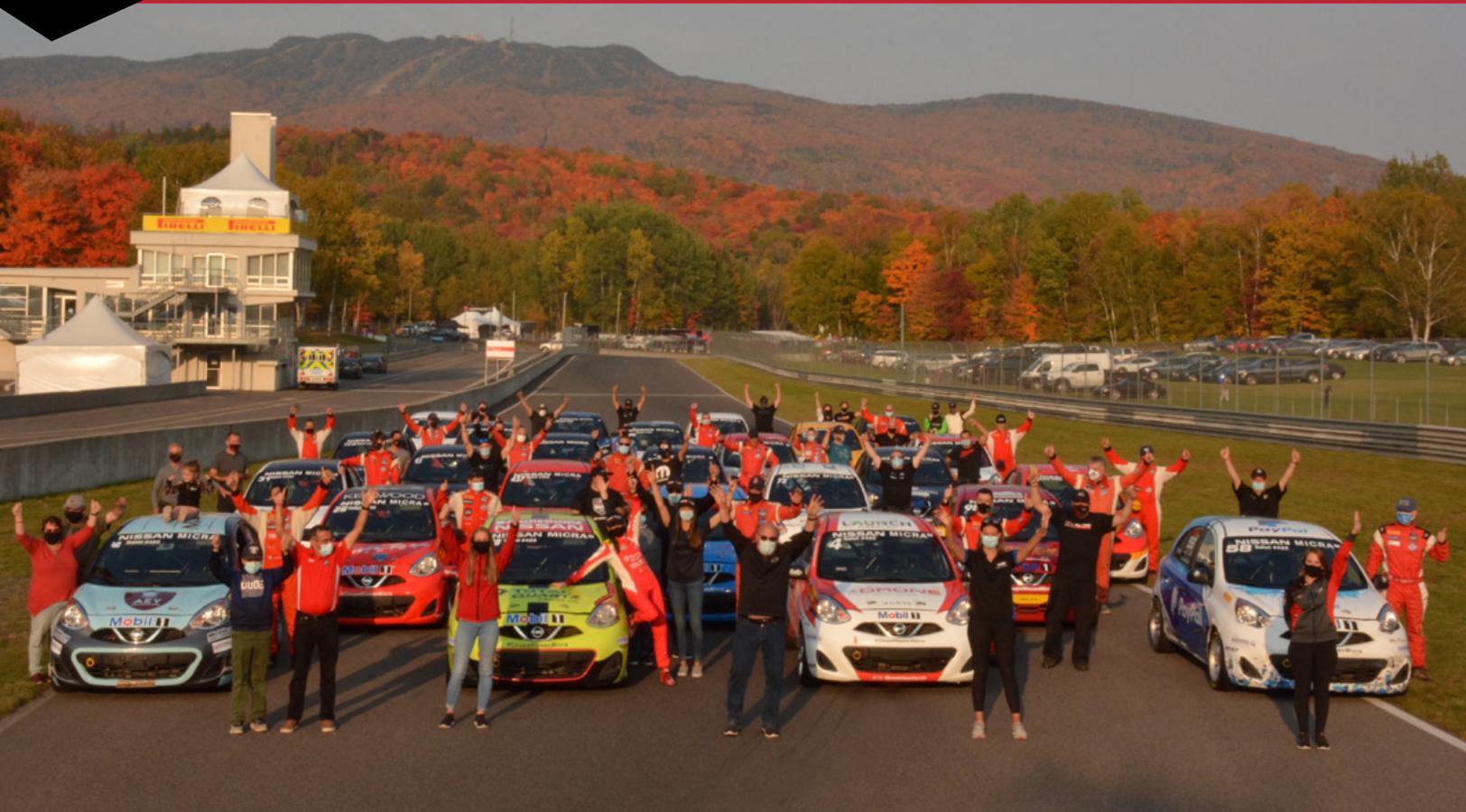




# MICRA CUP

## MAGAZINE



**CIRCUIT MONT-TREMBLANT**

*SEPTEMBER 25-26-27, 2020*

**EVENT**

**4**

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Mobil 1



## Double victory for Jesse Lazare while Kevin King claims the title in the Nissan Micra Cup

- The final event of the 2020 season marked a record number of entries. Gavin Sanders is the Rookie of the Year and Éric Chaput is the champion in the Senior class -

The Nissan Micra Cup staged the final event of its 2020 season at the picturesque Circuit Mont-Tremblant in the Laurentians, as part of the Fall Classic. As Mother Nature dressed up in its most beautiful fall colors, Jesse Lazare claimed victory in the seventh and eighth races of the season. Kevin King clinched the all-category title, Gavin Sanders earned the Rookie of the Year title, and Éric Chaput claimed first place in the Senior category. These races concluded a very exciting and highly disputed season.

With twenty-six cars on track, the Mont-Tremblant event marked the second largest entry list in the history of the series since its beginning in 2015. The first was in 2017, when The Nissan Micra Cup had 28 competitors on the grid at the Trois-Rivières Grand Prix. Twenty-six cars in action also reflected the largest starting grid of the 2020 season.

The qualifying session turned in another massive battle for pole position between the two title favorites - Kevin King (L&P Apparel / Nissan Gabriel team) and Jesse Lazare (PayPal / Motorsports In Action). They qualified first and second, respectively, with King lapping the track just one tenth of a second faster than Lazare. Éric Chaput qualified fastest in the Senior class and third overall ahead of Valérie Limoges, Gavin Sanders and Sacha Gagnon.

Round 7 was held under a sunny Saturday sky and saw Lazare, King, Limoges and Chaput



race for victory. Behind them, eleven drivers engaged in a spectacular and intense battle for fifth place.

At the end of a race that saw no full course yellows, Lazare crossed the line in first place, beating King, Limoges and Chaput. Sanders completed the Top 5, securing the Rookie of the Year title. Taylor Near pushed Frédéric Bernier out of sixth place, and was followed by Mark Davis, Justin Di Benedetto and Nicolas Barrette.

On Sunday, still under clear skies, everything was in place for the season's grand finale. That morning, Jesse Lazare emerged fastest in the qualifying session, followed by Éric

Chaput and Kevin King. Valérie Limoges and Gavin Sanders completed the Top 5.

At the green light, the top nine competitors entered a captivating battle as the Micras circulated around the track bumper-to-bumper. At the end of the forty-minute race, Lazare crossed the line first, ahead of Éric Chaput who marked his best performance in the Micra Cup, securing the title in the Senior class. Gavin Sanders finished third, ahead of Valérie Limoges and Kevin King. A fifth-place finish was enough for King, a Trois-Rivières resident, to claim the overall title of 2020 Nissan Micra Cup. Justin Di Benedetto finished sixth, ahead of André Lapointe, Sylvain Ouellet, Sacha Gagnon and Nicolas Barrette.



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**Q&A WITH...**

# **STEVE MILETTE, PRESIDENT OF NISSAN CANADA**

*It must be great satisfaction to Nissan Canada that they, together with the promoter, were able to deliver an amazing 2020 season with a record number of entries, despite this year's challenges. How does its president see all of this?*

This season was exceptional! We are living in a year when nothing is easy and we must adapt to a new normal. For us, we wanted the Nissan Micra Cup to continue as long as the safety of the participants was ensured. What the series promoter and everyone involved were able to do is remarkable. I'm proud of how this 2020 season unfolded.

*Several series have reduced or even canceled their 2020 season. Was it important for Nissan Canada that the series had eight races, despite the current situation?*

It was very important, we wanted to be there. As soon as we ensured sanitary standards would be guaranteed, we wanted the series to continue. Unfortunately, this year, spectators weren't admitted to the races, but at least we are very happy to have met the drivers' and their teams' demand - all passionate lovers of the series and their cars. And we were right to continue with the season when we saw the season finale put together a record starting grid for the 2020 season. This was the second most successful series in its history, with 27 drivers on the track.

*On the track, this 2020 season was marked by many spectacular duels, including one between Jesse Lazare and Kevin King for the overall title. This mix of very experienced drivers and young people from karting, or amateurs in the series just for fun - does it match Nissan Canada's vision for the Nissan Micra Cup?*

Great diversity of the participants has always been one of the series' biggest strengths. Let's remember the presence of young Austin Riley in previous seasons, a driver with autism. Racing in the Nissan Micra Cup served as a springboard for him to advance to other series. And there have been others. Young drivers who come to the Nissan Micra Cup after karting see it as an opportunity to improve their driving skills in the car. There are a lot of amateur drivers who signed up for the pure sake of racing as well and have now progressed over time. Our youngest driver is 15 years old and the oldest is in his 60s. The series is a democratizing motorsport, one we rarely see, with an almost production-like car and affordable. Few series offer such



an opportunity, while for us it all also meets our corporate goal - to expose as many people to the Nissan brand as possible.

*In 6 years, the Nissan Micra Cup has built a reputation that has reached beyond Canada's borders. More importantly, it is supported by NISMO, Nissan's motorsport entity. What is the perception of this specific Canadian initiative in the Nissan world?*

The Nissan Micra Cup is viewed in a very positive light, right up to the headquarters in Japan. We went from the series being very Québécois, to an all-Canadian series with international fame. For example, recently I had a conversation with a top executive in Japan who spoke about the success of the show and its future. What we had set out to do with the Nissan Micra Cup, when it was first created, happened as we wanted it to. And even better! It is certain that the series had a positive effect on the brand.

*Are there any plans for 2021; Will Nissan Canada still be involved in motorsport next year?*

We are evaluating several solutions. The Micra will no longer be imported into Canada but we are working on other options. Such a motorsport series, with all the promotion surrounding it, is a very interesting business model for our brand. We consider the Nissan Micra Cup a success and we are working to continue it. News on this will be given shortly.



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## KEVIN KING, *THE 2020 CHAMPION!*

He made his Nissan Micra Cup debut at the second event of the 2015 season. Since then, he hasn't missed a single race weekend! Almost always at the front of the pack, Québec driver Kevin King finally saw his determination be rewarded this season. He concluded the 2020 season this weekend at Circuit Mont-Tremblant as the winner of the first five races. This was an exceptional season that led him to the 2020 overall title champion.

***After finishing 11<sup>th</sup> in the 2015 championship, 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2016 and 2017, 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2018 and 2019, you are now the 2020 Nissan Micra Cup champion! Kevin, what feeling dominates for you after having won this title?***

I'm very happy. This is the reward for all the hard work and years of effort, I would say. I have wanted this title since I started taking part in the Nissan Micra Cup series in 2015.

***Did the fact that 2020 was a season of only 8 races change the situation for you?***

It gave me a lot of time to prepare, since there was a lot of time between races. You would think it's a shame that there were only eight races this season, because it's always good to compete as much as possible. But, I understand that with the situation this year, this was the maximum we could hold. We are lucky to have held these 8 races in the Nissan Micra Cup, because I saw that other series had even less.

***Can you tell us about your duel with Jesse Lazare and the fact that you managed to get these 5 consecutive victories during the summer?***

It was, of course, exciting but not easy. I know Jesse very well, I often see him racing in karting, and we did a lot of laps together at Kart-O-Mania - an indoor track in Montreal. That was our place to practice when we were younger, so we know each other's strengths and weaknesses well. That said, I trust him. On several occasions during our duels, it would

have been impossible for me to slip my hand between our two cars because we were so close, but I had no fear that there was always respect between us.

***From the outside of the track, it looked like the overall level of skill was higher than ever this year in the series. Is this also your impression?***

Yes, I noticed that too. There was strong competition this year! Just having Jesse Lazare present, a driver who raced IMSA Endurance races, for the entire season added a plus. A driver of his experience pushes everyone to step up their game. The average number of drivers registered in each race was also higher than ever in the series. In 2016 and 2017, I remember there was a lot of competition for victory with Xavier Coupal and Olivier Bédard. I had some great battles with them, but it was different. The mood was more tense. Meanwhile, it was more enjoyable this year. Everyone got along well in the paddock and on the track. It was pure competition.

***The other years you started the seasons well too and often led the championship,***



***but everything fell apart at the end. What was different this time around?***

I would say I was a lot more confident this year than in the past, and the team spirit was there throughout the season. Winning the Nissan Micra Cup is not easy because it is extremely competitive but mentally, I felt very strong this year. For example, I could have attacked to win the last race, but instead, I was able to calculate and secure positions to win the title. I felt in control of my emotions all season and it paid off.



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**POSTCARD  
OF THE CIRCUIT  
MONT-TREMBLANT**





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# CIRCUIT MONT-TREMBLANT RACE 7 AND 8 RESULTS

## QUALIFICATION RACE 1

1) Kevin King	#40
2) Jesse Lazare	#21
3) Éric Chaput	#116
4) Valérie Limoges	#220
5) Gavin Sanders	#10
6) Sacha Gagnon	#27
7) Frédéric Bernier	#28
8) Justin Arseneau	#73
9) Charles Robin	#7
10) Nicolas Barrette	#427
11) Mark Davis	#31
12) Justin Di Benedetto	#4
13) André Lapointe	#47
14) Nicolas Touchette	#55
15) Mario Charette	#728
16) Taylor Near	#58
17) Sylvain Ouellet	#98
18) François-Xavier Lassus	#6
19) Francis Bellerive	#36
20) Michel Barrette	#57
21) Jean Audet	#5
22) Raphaël St-Pierre	#419
23) Mario Dufour	#96
24) Alan Sanders	#410
25) Marie-Josée Massicotte	#53
26) Marie-Soleil Labelle	#999

## QUALIFICATION RACE 2

1) Jesse Lazare	#21
2) Éric Chaput	#116
3) Kevin King	#40
4) Valérie Limoges	#220
5) Gavin Sanders	#10
6) Taylor Near	#58
7) Frédéric Bernier	#28
8) Justin Di Benedetto	#4
9) Sacha Gagnon	#27
10) Justin Arseneau	#73
11) Nicolas Barrette	#427
12) André Lapointe	#47
13) Charles Robin	#7
14) Sylvain Ouellet	#98
15) Mario Berthiaume	#728
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21) Alan Sanders	#410
22) Michel Barrette	#57
23) Mario Dufour	#96
24) Marie-Josée Massicotte	#53
25) Marie-Soleil Labelle	#999
DNS) Francis Bellerive	#36

## RACE 1

1) Jesse Lazare	19 laps
2) Kevin King	-1.937
3) Valérie Limoges	-2.215
4) Éric Chaput	-2.468
5) Gavin Sanders	-15.446
6) Taylor Near	-20.801
7) Frédéric Bernier	-21.922
8) Mark Davis	-23.637
9) Justin Di Benedetto	-24.201
10) Nicolas Barrette	-24.810
11) Justin Arseneau	-25.069
12) Nicolas Touchette	-27.153
13) André Lapointe	-32.792
14) Sylvain Ouellet	-33.798
15) Mario Charette	-34.116
16) Jean Audet	-1:03.900
17) Michel Barrette	-1:05.000
18) François-Xavier Lassus	-1:06.221
19) Raphaël St-Pierre	-1:33.109
20) Alan Sanders	-1:46.600
21) Mario Dufour	-1:47.149
22) Francis Bellerive	-1 lap
23) Marie-Josée Massicotte	-1 lap
24) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-2 laps
25) Sacha Gagnon	-13 laps
26) Charles Robin	-14 laps

## RACE 2

1) Jesse Lazare	-19 laps
2) Éric Chaput	-0.479
3) Gavin Sanders	-3.546
4) Valérie Limoges	-3.667
5) Kevin King	-4.151
6) Justin Di Benedetto	-4.649
7) André Lapointe	-7.592
8) Sylvain Ouellet	-10.190
9) Sacha Gagnon	-10.974
10) Nicolas Barrette	-11.385
11) Mario Berthiaume	-11.586
12) Justin Arseneau	Penalty
13) Jean Audet	-12.003
14) Nicolas Touchette	-12.521
15) Taylor Near	-19.561
16) Alan Sanders	-19.817
17) Michel Barrette	-20.287
18) Raphaël St-Pierre	-20.806
19) Mario Dufour	-1:03.100
20) Frédéric Bernier	-1 lap
21) Marie-Josée Massicotte	-1 lap
22) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-1 lap
23) Mark Davis	-8 laps
24) Charles Robin	-19 laps
25) François-Xavier Lassus	Excluded
DNS) Francis Bellerive	-----



## DRIVERS STANDINGS

1) Kevin King	308 points	15) Samuel Rowe (rookie)	44 points
2) Jesse Lazare	300 points	16) Mario Berthiaume (Senior)	40 points
3) Valérie Limoges	244 points	17) Francis Bellerive (rookie)	33 points
4) Gavin Sanders (rookie)	216 points	17) Marie-Josée Massicotte (R.+S.)	33 points
5) Taylor Near	145 points	19) Charles Robin	31 points
5) Justin Di Benedetto (rookie)	145 points	20) Mario Charette (Senior)	29 points
7) Éric Chaput (Senior)	140 points	20) Marie-Soleil Labelle (rookie)	29 points
8) Sylvain Ouellet (Senior)	113 points	22) Raphaël St-Pierre (rookie)	28 points
9) Frédéric Bernier (Senior)	109 points	23) Sacha Gagnon (Senior)	25 points
10) Mark Davis (rookie)	94 points	24) Nicolas Touchette (Senior)	16 points
11) André Lapointe (Senior)	70 points	25) Michel Barrette (Senior)	15 points
12) Nicolas Barrette	69 points	26) Mario Dufour (R.+S.)	13 points
13) Justin Arseneau (rookie)	63 points	26) Jean Audet (Senior)	13 points
14) François-Xavier Lassus (Senior)	49 points	28) Alan Sanders (R.+S.)	8 points

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