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# SENTRA CUP MAGAZINE



Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières  
**AUGUST 9, 10, 11, 2024**

**EVENT 4**



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Summary



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## Valérie Limoges and Éric Chaput won the races presented at the Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières

Races 7 and 8 of the 2024 Nissan Sentra Cup took place this weekend as part of the popular GP3R

The Nissan Sentra Cup's 10<sup>th</sup> season entered its second half this weekend with two new races that took place as part of the fifty-fourth edition of the Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières. Both were eventful; with the first race won by Valerie Limoges and the second by Éric Chaput.

Following Friday's intense rainfall, summer weather returned on Saturday where the first race was carried out in front of packed grandstands. Qualifying in pole position the day before, 2023 champion Alexandre Fortin was joined in front row by Valérie Limoges, leader of the drivers' championship, past winner of two GP3R races (both Nissan Sentra Cup) and 2022 champion. Frédéric Chaput, Mathieu Miron, Éric Chaput and Nicolas Barrette complete the top six.

An uneventful start saw Fortin narrowly managing to hold onto first place. However, not even five minutes later, Valérie Limoges overtook him in a spectacular turn of events, taking control of the seventh race in the season. No one was able to catch up to her as she inched towards her third win in Trois-Rivières (a record for a female driver) and in the 2024 Nissan Sentra Cup season.

Following her, the leaderboard changed every lap. Having missed a corner, Alexandre Fortin fell from second to tenth place while Mathieu Miron, having secured his first two victories in the series three weeks earlier, took second place. Third on the starting grid, Frédéric Chaput, managed to maintain his position all 40 minutes of the race, ahead of Nicolas Barrette, who fought hard throughout, exchanging positions with Éric Chaput, Frédéric's father, seven times. Barrette managed to give himself a lead by a few tenths in the final laps, claiming fourth place, who later climbed to third place following Frédéric Chaput's disqualification due to technical infraction. Nicolas Miron has been classified fourth, followed by Éric Chaput, Sylvain Vincent, Alexandre Fortin, Jean-François Couture, Raphaël St-Pierre et Steve Poulin.





On Sunday, still under the sun, fans have seen one of the most beautiful races in the history of the series, with the top eight swapping positions lap after lap. Alexandre Fortin, Valérie Limoges, Mathieu Miron, Nicolas Barrette and Éric Chaput took the lead, in that order. During a restart with two laps to go, Barrette seemed set to take his second victory of the season but he was the victim of contact with Éric Chaput and dropped to tenth place. Resisting pressure from Mathieu Miron until the last turn, Éric Chaput won his first victory in the series. Valérie Limoges completed the podium, ahead of Nicolas Lévesque, Simon Vincent, Frédéric Chaput, Raphaël St-Pierre, Jean Audet, Nicolas Barrette and Jean-François Couture.

This weekend also gave spectators the opportunity to see two Nissan dealership owners on the track, Steve Poulin (Nissan Thetford) who is competing the entire season, and Luc Beaudoin (Ste-Foy and Beauport Nissan), who was making his motorsport debut. There are now three Sentra's wrapped in Beaudoin's dealership colours, including Daniel and Alexandre Fortin. Luc Beaudoin managed to complete both races in 14<sup>th</sup> and then in 15<sup>th</sup> position, thus gaining valuable experience. For his part, Steve Poulin competed two very good races, without making any mistakes and finishing tenth and then fourteen.



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## GP3R news

### DOWNTOWN PARADE

As is tradition at the Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières, several cars representing all the series at the event paraded the city's downtown on Thursday evening. Parked at the Old Port, the race cars were admired by a large crowd that came to watch for free. The Nissan Sentra Cup cars and drivers were of course among the competitors present at this activity.



### A NISSAN Z, A PORSCHE AND A MICRA!

Three drivers Nissan Sentra Cup fans might recognize shone at the GP3R, racing in series other than the Cup. Ontario's Justin DiBenedetto, who made his road racing debut in the Micra Cup before driving a Sentra, has now graduated to the SportsCar Canada Championship series. On Saturday in Trois-Rivières, he won his first overall victory in the series at the wheel of a Porsche GT4. In the Super Production Challenge series, Sylvain Ouellet and Frédéric Bernier, a long-time competitor in the Micra Cup, were also present. Ouellet, who is also



competing in the 2024 season with his Sentra, won the race at the wheel of a Nissan Z, while Bernier won in the Compact class with a Micra.

## VALÉRIE LIMOGES BREAKS MORE RECORDS

By winning the Nissan Sentra Cup race on Saturday, Valérie Limoges broke more records at the Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières by securing her third overall victory; the only female driver to do so. Limoges has now won the GP3R three times... in the Nissan Sentra Cup series! Previously, only Swiss driver Simona de Silvestro had registered her name on the GP3R overall winners' list thanks to a victory in Formula Atlantic in 2009. Despite the growing presence of women in motorsport, Valerie, who currently leads the 2024 Nissan Sentra Cup championship, is expected to hold this record for a few years.



## A SUCCESS DESPITE DIFFICULT WEATHER...

According to organizers, this year's GP3R event secured record attendance in the grandstands, but also in the corporate lodges, including Nissan Canada's. The two Nissan Sentra Cup races were probably among the most exciting in the series' history, as expressed by fans who have followed the series since the beginning. For example, when the halfway mark was reached during Sunday's race, the first eight Sentra drivers were grouped within five seconds!



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## Postcard from the 54<sup>th</sup> Edition

Rally competition, synchronized swimming or GP3R qualifying session? The torrential rain caused by Hurricane Debby made for a complicated Friday event at the GP3R. Despite these difficult conditions, free practice and qualifying for the Nissan Sentra Cup took place and on time, on an obviously tricky track. Here in action, Sylvain Ouellet at turn 1.



Still there, still the object of fantastic attention from fans! At the GP3R, spectators were able to discover, or rediscover, the LEAF Nismo RC with its new colours, the 100% electric Nissan prototype.



Despite the rain on Friday, organized announced that this year's event, originally launched in 1967, hosted a record number of spectators. At the track, fans could see 20 Sentra models in action, which is also a record in the history of the series, since the end of the Micra class.

Couldn't be at either of the Nissan Sentra Cup races in-person? There is still time to watch both on the series' Facebook page. The two races were presented in English and French. Simply choose your language of choice on Nissan Sentra Cup's official Facebook.



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# Steve Milette : The Transition from Micra to Sentra

**Steve Milette, President of Nissan Canada since 2019, was recently named Divisional Vice President, Dealer Network Development, Customer Resources and Training at Nissan USA. He now reports to Vinay Shahani, Senior Vice President, U.S. Marketing and Sales. In his new role, Steve will be based at the regional headquarters in Franklin, Tennessee, while Trevor Longley, currently Vice President of Sales Operations for Nissan Canada, will replace him as President of Nissan Canada next month. Therefore, the 2024 Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières was Steve's last Sentra Cup event as President.**

Here in front of the LEAF Nismo RC, Steve Milette was on site for the 54<sup>th</sup> edition of the Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières.





Born in Shawinigan, near Trois-Rivières, Steve Milette served as Nissan Canada's President for five years. In his role, he was a key player in the transition from the Nissan Micra Cup to the Nissan Sentra Cup. He has also attended several series events, including, of course, the Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières.

While the transition to the Sentra cup during the 2020-2021 off-season went well, initiating new projects at the time, marked by the Covid crisis, was anything but easy. "We already had a lot of success with the Nissan Micra Cup. When we knew that we had to finish production of this subcompact model and that the series would now evolve with the all-new Sentra model, a car that reaches a larger part of the population, we thought that the series would play a positive role in demonstrating the quality of our cars, their durability at the same time as their sporting qualities," emphasizes Steve Milette, who adds: "It helped rejuvenate the image of this model. It was important, even though it was the Covid era, that

President from 2019 to 2024, Steve Milette therefore attended the last two seasons of the Nissan Cup with the Micra model.

we continue with what we had as a philosophy and so far, I think it's been a success."

From a business perspective, this transition between the Micra Cup and the Sentra Cup was necessary. Steve Milette highlights that, "we have a team dedicated to the series internally at Nissan Canada, but there is also the involvement of the promoter's staff Jacques Deshaies and all the drivers who evolve with us. It contributes positively to the Nissan brand and specifically to the Nissan Sentra."

At the beginning of the 2021 season, the new Sentras performed well and attracted a large audience. Steve Milette saw this, but he also stressed the importance and prevalence of the

series' human side. He explains: "I love the fact that there is motorsport, with all its challenges, but also the human side. There are a lot of participants who are new to motorsport. This single-make series that is the Nissan Sentra Cup allows for a level playing field, it offers the same opportunities to everyone with these identical cars. This is where we can most see the differences in driving levels. There are those who have more experience and those who are new, there are drivers who aim to progress in our series and later, perhaps in another, or those

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*The Nissan Sentra Cup helped rejuvenate the image of this model*

- Steve Milette.

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For Steve Milette, the human aspect of the Nissan Sentra Cup is very important. Here in picture, Frédéric Chaput and his father Éric, both drivers in the series.

who simply want to have access to motorsport at a reasonable price. We also have two dealers who participate in the series and I like to see that. On the personal side too, during the years that I was there as president of Nissan Canada, we saw great human stories develop, other than pure motorsport. I especially liked that."

The Micra garnered strong interest from motorsport fans and the general public when the series was created in 2015. The transition to the Sentra Cup was a different challenge. "I asked that we keep the best practices of the Micra Cup, which were very good in terms of employee engagement, dealer engagement and customer engagement. These three areas had to remain, which is why we are investing in this formula. With the launch

of the Nissan Sentra Cup, we have also seen the development of great new features, such as the Nissan Grand Prix for example, which allowed us to have a unique event at Nissan, with for example more than 3,000 spectators coming to attend the Complexe ICAR last July. This notably allowed the general public to test drive our models, to attract potential future customers for Nissan".

One element that the general public and even fans of the series are less aware of is the fact that



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*We brought the Nissan Sentra Cup, a Canadian product, to the American market. I am very proud of that because usually, it is the opposite.*

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- Steve Milette

Steve Milette also almost found himself behind the wheel, driving in the Nissan Sentra Cup. He shares this little-known anecdote: "I do like to say that it came very close to happening. It was for the Grand Prix du Canada in 2021. All the internal authorizations were obtained, Valérie Limoges was supposed to be my instructor but unfortunately the Grand Prix was cancelled that year due to Covid. I am sure that I would have liked it, even if I was at the back of the pack; it was not a big deal... Being able to live the experience like the series drivers do during the events, I really would have liked that. I still did a few laps in a Sentra racecar with Valérie as co-driver, but I don't have the experience to push the car to the limit like the regular drivers in the series do."

Finally, Steve Milette, who will be moving across the border next month, enjoyed seeing the Nissan Sentra Cup make its debut in the United States, on the Lime Rock track, last July. "The feedback on this debut in the United States has been very positive. We are going back next year and there is talk of a potential two events there. The special thing is that we brought the Nissan Sentra Cup, a Canadian product, to the American market. I am very proud of that because usually, it is the opposite that happens, it is American series that then come to race in Canada. Here again, we innovated!" he explains.

In his new role, Milette will be responsible for establishing and maintaining the representation of the Nissan and INFINITI dealer network in the United States and Canada. In addition, he will manage all customer resource operations as well as training responsibilities for the field organization and dealer employees in the United States. "Steve was the first Canadian to lead Nissan Canada and is also the longest-serving president in our nearly 60-year history in the country," said Jérémie Papin, President of Nissan Americas. "During his five years leading Nissan Canada, Steve has been a catalyst for change within the Canadian organization for the benefit of employees, dealers and customers, and has had a positive impact on the Nissan family. I am excited to see Steve bring his leadership to the U.S. headquarters and continue to develop his career," he concluded.



# Results and standings

## ■ Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières - Event 4

### QUALIFICATION RACE 1

1) Alexandre Fortin	#1
2) Valérie Limoges	#777
3) Frédéric Chaput	#63
4) Mathieu Miron	#191
5) Éric Chaput	#116
6) Nicolas Barrette	#427
7) Sylvain Ouellet	#99
8) Nicolas Lévesque	#50
9) Daniel Fortin	#95
10) Nicolas Miron	#192
11) Christian Thibault	#46
12) Simon Vincent	#91
13) Raphaël St-Pierre	#419
14) Jean-François Couture	#7
15) Jean Audet	#22
16) Martin Harvey	#08
17) Marie-Soleil Labelle	#27
18) Stéphane Pouliot	#210
19) Steve Poulin	#37
20) Luc Beaudoin	#69

### RESULTS RACE 1

1) Valérie Limoges	27 laps
2) Mathieu Miron	-1.481
3) Nicolas Barrette	-3.202
4) Nicolas Miron	-4.433
5) Éric Chaput	-5.598
6) Simon Vincent	-6.870
7) Alexandre Fortin	-12.437
8) Jean-François Couture	-13.338
9) Raphaël St-Pierre	-14.205
10) Steve Poulin	-1 lap
11) Stéphane Pouliot	-1 lap
12) Martin Harvey	-1 lap
13) Daniel Fortin	-1 lap
14) Luc Beaudoin	-1 lap
15) Nicolas Lévesque	-5 laps
16) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-10 laps
17) Jean Audet	-22 laps
18) Christian Thibault	-25 laps
Excluded) Frédéric Chaput	-----
Excluded) Sylvain Ouellet	-----

### QUALIFICATION RACE 2

1) Alexandre Fortin	Ste-Foy Nissan / Fix Auto
2) Valérie Limoges	BetGRW.com
3) Mathieu Miron	191 Motorsport
4) Nicolas Barrette	Groupe RM
5) Éric Chaput	Groupe Gabriel / Mallette
6) Daniel Fortin	Ste-Foy Nissan / Fix Auto
7) Nicolas Lévesque	Lévesque Motorsport
8) Nicolas Miron	191 Motorsport
9) Christian Thibault	Équipe Christian Thibault
10) Raphaël St-Pierre	Sensei Groupe-Conseil
11) Simon Vincent	Vincent2 racing team
12) Jean Audet	Grand Times Hôtel
13) Jean-François Couture	Céramique O-Nivo
14) Martin Harvey	Wingho Racing
15) Marie-Soleil Labelle	Musée Gilles-Villeneuve
16) Stéphane Pouliot	Équipe Stéphane Pouliot
17) Steve Poulin	Nissan Thetford
18) Luc Beaudoin	Ste-Foy & Beauport Nissan
Excluded) Frédéric Chaput	Groupe Gabriel / Mallette
Excluded) Sylvain Ouellet	Ouellet Motorsport

### RESULTS RACE 2

1) Éric Chaput	26 laps
2) Mathieu Miron	-0.128
3) Valérie Limoges	-0.523
4) Nicolas Lévesque	-0.907
5) Simon Vincent	-1.258
6) Frédéric Chaput	-1.720
7) Raphaël St-Pierre	-9.062
8) Jean Audet	-11.571
9) Nicolas Barrette	-11.845
10) Jean-François Couture	Penalty
11) Marie-Soleil Labelle	-14.646
12) Stéphane Pouliot	-15.124
13) Martin Harvey	-17.601
14) Steve Poulin	-20.270
15) Luc Beaudoin	-1 lap
16) Daniel Fortin	-1 lap
17) Sylvain Ouellet	-5 laps
18) Alexandre Fortin	-10 laps
19) Nicolas Miron	-16 laps
20) Christian Thibault	-24 laps


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# Results and standings

■ Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières - Event 4

## CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

Position	#	Driver	Races	Points
1.	777	Valérie Limoges	8	341
2.	427	Nicolas Barrette	8	310
3.	191	Mathieu Miron	8	300
4.	1	Alexandre Fortin	8	291
5.	91	Simon Vincent	8	280
6.	116	Éric Chaput	8	235
7.	50	Nicolas Lévesque	8	209
8.	95	Daniel Fortin	8	193
9.	192	Nicolas Miron	6	184
10.	22	Jean Audet	8	179
10.	419	Raphaël St-Pierre	8	179
12.	7	Jean-François Couture	8	177
13.	99	Sylvain Ouellet	8	157
14.	210	Stéphane Pouliot	8	140
15.	46	Christian Thibault	8	138
16.	27	Marie-Soleil Labelle	8	134
17.	37	Steve Poulin	8	133
18.	63	Frédéric Chaput	5	108
19.	08	Martin Harvey	6	100
20.	69	Luc Beaudoin	2	33
21.	63	Mario Charette	1	14





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The next event will take place on August 30, 31 and September 1 as part of the Labour Day Weekend at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park in Bowmanville, Ontario. These will be the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> rounds of the 2024 season. The Nissan Sentra Cup will share the spotlight with Canadian and American motorsport series such as Formula 3, US F4 and Trans Am.



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