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## Nascar 2011: CTCC drivers race on Villeneuve circuit for first time

AUGUST 17, 2011

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Competitors in the Castrol Canadian Touring Car Championship presented by Continental are eagerly looking forward this weekend to racing Montreal's historic Circuit Gilles Villeneuve for the first time.

Tomorrow afternoon's (Aug. 19) 20-lap NAPA Auto Parts 200 event, Round 13 this season, will leave just two CTCC races on the 2011 calendar.

As such, this day will be a hugely important test for the class leaders, since racing on a track for the first time can be extremely challenging and could potentially ruin their lead.

In Super Class, only 70 points separate the top three in the standings: Richard Boake of King City, Ont., leads in his Subaru STI with 1,229 points, ahead of Montreal's Étienne Borgeat, with 1,181 in his Pontiac Solstice, and Dean Fastin of Amherstburg, Ont., with 1,159 in his BMW 328.

Though not running in the championship battle, watch also for Montreal's Nick Wittmer, returning to his usual Honda Civic Si. Wittmer has earned three podiums this season while driving for Fastco Motorsports in a Hyundai Tiburon.

From Sainte-Anne-des-Lacs, Que., is Mathieu Audette in an Acura RSX. Audette won Round 11, a night race, in Trois Rivières and was close to a victory in Round 12 on the same course when he was forced to retire with a blown engine during the final laps, handing the win to Wittmer.

In Touring Class, Markham, Ont., native Tom Kwok has been leading the championship all season in his Honda Civic Si. With his 1,357 points, it looks like the title already belongs to him. But things could change with three rounds to go.

Vaudreuil-Dorion's Alain Lauzière is second with 1,259 points, followed by teammate Michel Sallenbach of Roxton Pond with 1,094. Both run Mini Coopers.

The Lauzière-Sallenbach team has encountered many incidents during the past rounds. Sallenbach twice got together with Toronto's P.J. Groenke, those incidents costing the drivers many points and potentially a higher position in the standings.

Nevertheless, Groenke in his VW GTI ranks fourth with 1,025 points and should be racing his VW GTI Friday (Aug. 19) even after his car was almost demolished while trying to pass Sallenbach in Round 11 at Trois-Rivières.

In Touring Class, watch for Quebec's Jacques Bélanger and Trois Rivières's Jocelyn Hébert, both driving the Honda Civic Si. The two finished first and second, respectively, in Round 12.

Rounds 14 and 15 of the CTCC season will be run Sept. 10-11 on Circuit iCAR at Mirabel, north of Montreal.

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