

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2010

Antoine L'Estage and Nathalie Richard One Step Away from the Rally America Championship Title

Montréal (Québec), July 14 2010.— Current leaders of the Rally America series, Antoine L'Estage and Nathalie Richard, both of St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, will be amongst the front-runners at this weekend's New England Forest Rally (Maine and New Hampshire), the last round of the series' 2010 season. At the wheel of their Rockstar Energy Drink Royal Group Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X, the duo only needs a few points to go down in history as the first Quebec team to capture an American rally championship.

Victorious at the last round of the season in Pennsylvania just over a month ago, L'Estage and Richard are headed south of the border, confident of their chances : We have a thirteen point lead over second place, which is a pretty comfortable position to be in and it allows us to manage our own rally without too much pressure. The New England Forest Rally is an event that Nathalie and I really enjoy, it's not too far from home and we've been competing here for years. We got our Rockstar Royal Group Evo X onto the podium at every round of the championship this year and I'm confident that we'll continue that streak this weekend. They're calling for mixed weather conditions but whatever we're faced with, we've got the full line of Yokohama tires to help us adapt explains Antoine L'Estage, two-time Canadian and North American champion. Winning the Rally America championship would mean a lot to me, especially since it's the first year that I've done the complete season of this series he adds. To date, no American rally championship has ever been won by a Quebec team. If successful, this will only be the second time a Canadian driver wins the Rally America title.

We have had a great season so far, finishing on the podium at all five events this year. John Buffum has re-prepped our car after our problems during the last Canadian event and everything is in place for us to have a solid rally mentions Nathalie, the co-driver of the Rockstar Royal Group team.

During the Rallye Baie-des-Chaleurs, round three of the Canadian Rally Championship, the L'Estage/Richard duo was relegated to using a substitute stock vehicle at the very last minute in order to participate in the competition. Heading for a third place finish, the team suffered problems on Saturday, eventually crossing the finish line in sixth. It was a tough rally for us on many different levels. Despite it all, we were able to come away with crucial points that allow us to remain in the hunt for the Canadian title adds Nathalie Richard.

Antoine L'Estage has won two Canadian championship titles (2006 and 2007), as well as two North American titles (2007 and 2008) and twenty-one overall victories in Canada and the United States. Co-driver Nathalie Richard has earned four national championship titles (two Canadian and two American) and thirty outright national rally victories. In 2009, she won her fifth North American Championship for co-drivers.

The start of the nineteenth edition of the New England Forest Rally will take place on Friday, July 16th, in Sunday River (Maine) at 11h30. Saturday's leg of the rally will be based in and around Erroll (New Hampshire), with an expected finish at 8pm. 66 teams are registered.

Two weeks after the New England Forest Rally, the entire Rockstar Royal Group team will find themselves in Los Angeles for X Games 16. Antoine L'Estage has qualified for his third trip back to the Rally Car Racing competition and was subsequently invited to take part in the new Super Rally event (rallycross), both being held on July 31st.

Antoine L'Estage and Nathalie Richard participate in the entire 2010 Rally America and Canadian Rally championships with the support of [Rockstar Energy Drink](#), [Royal Group](#), [Yokohama Tires](#), [Mitsubishi Canada](#), [Drenth Motorsport Gearboxes](#), [Garrett Turbos](#), [Énergie Cardio](#), [Libra Racing](#), [Driver's Edge Autosport \(OMP\)](#), and [VP Racing Fuels](#). For more information on the team or on rallying in general, visit [Coyote Rallye](#) .