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Racing series **CARS**

Date 2005-02-07

Peter Thomson wins the Perce-Neige Rally

Maniwaki (Quebec), February 6, 2005.- Ontario driver Peter Thomson and his American co-driver Rod Hendricksen piloted their Group N Subaru Impreza to victory in the 40th running of the Perce-Neige Rally held in Maniwaki (QC) this weekend.

Antoine L'Estage and Yanick Napert from St-Jean sur Richelieu, Quebec, driving a 4WD [Hyundai Tiburon](#) led the early stages of the event held in perfect winter conditions. L'Estage and Napert, the favourites for overall victory were unfortunately forced into a retirement at mid-event due to a broken transmission.

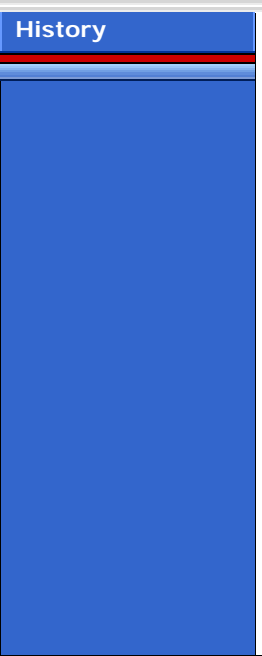
With L'Estage and Napert out of the running, the fight for victory involved Quebecers Joel Levac and Jean-Paul Perusse and Peter Thomson of Toronto. Thomson took the advantage in the twisty Special Stage 7, setting a time that was 25 seconds faster than that of his closest rival. This stunning performance gave Thomson the overall lead -- a position he kept until the end of the rally. In previous years, Thomson had clinched national class wins and victories in Ontario rallies but this was his first overall victory in a Canadian event.

Joel Levac and Eric Bourbonnais, driving a [Subaru Impreza WRX](#), finished second followed by Jean-Paul Perusse and Marcel-Paul Raymond in their Mitsubishi Lancer Evo.6. American Matthew Iorio (Subaru Impreza WRX) finished in fourth place.

One of the brilliant performances of the 2005 Perce-Neige Rally was that of Bill Beacon and Peter Watt of team Suzuki Canada. Driving their two-wheel drive Suzuki Swift+, they captured a stunning top five finish and even set the fastest time in the last special stage. To beat the Group N four-wheel drive cars and the Open class cars in a two-wheel drive car is quite astonishing! In their first rally behind the wheel of the other Swift+ entered by Suzuki Canada, Frank and Dan Sprongl did very well, finishing in eighth position.

The Perce-Neige Rally marked the opening round of the 2005 Canadian Rally Championship. The second event -- the Rocky Mountain - will be held in Calgary, Alberta, May 27 and 28. For additional information about the Canadian Rally Championship, please visit the web site at www.carsrally.ca.

Final standings (Top 10 -- the complete results can be found at www.rallyscoring.com):



1)	Peter Thomson - Rod Hendricksen	Subaru Impreza WRX	- 2h39' 39"
2)	Joël Levac - Eric Bourbonnais	Subaru Impreza WRX	at 40 sec.
3)	Jean-Paul Perusse - Marcel-Paul Raymond	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo. 6	at 2' 59"
4)	Matthew Iorio - Ole Holter	Subaru Impreza WRX	at 3' 20"
5)	William Bacon - Peter Watt	Suzuki Swift +	at 12' 52"
6)	Frederic Labrie - Robert Labrie	Subaru Impreza WRX	at 13' 28"
7)	John Cassidy - Dave Getchell	Subaru Impreza WRX	at 13' 37"
8)	Frank Sprongl - Dan Sprongl	Suzuki Swift +	at 14' 03"
9)	Ken Block - Marc Goldfarb	Subaru Impreza WRX	at 17' 43"
10)	Philippe Dube - Daniel Paquette	Subaru Impreza RS	at 18' 39"

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