

Orangeville race car driver secures TCA Championship, advances career

By Sam Odrowski

An Orangeville man has achieved great success on the racing track.

Eric Kunz, 21, secured the TCA Championship in the Sports Car Championship Canada (SCCC) race on August 31 in Bowmanville, ON, at the Canadian Tire Motorsport Park Labour Day Sprints.

The SCCC is considered one of the most competitive sports car racing series nationwide, making Kunz success a significant accomplishment and milestone in his motorsports career.

He set the goal of winning the TCA championship at the start of this year's racing season, and despite some challenges, he reached it over the Labour Day weekend.

"This championship is more than just a title—it's the culmination of unwavering support, countless hours of hard work and dedication from my sponsors, team, and family," said Kunz. "When I crossed the finish line in first on Saturday, (August 31) I knew we had won the Championship. I still don't have the words to express the emotions. I'm overwhelmed with joy and gratitude. It is a dream come true!"

Not only is the SCCC considered the most competitive sports car racing series in Canada, it was created to provide talented Canadian drivers with a racing platform that is aligned with the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge series in the United States.

A ladder system is used in the SCCC, made up of three classes: GT4, TCR and TCA.

Drivers who compete in the SCCC race at iconic North American tracks, including Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, Honda Indy Toronto, and Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières.

"Eric's journey to the championship has been nothing short of remarkable. After beginning his racing career in karting just four years ago, he transitioned to car racing last year and quickly excelled," said a press release from Driven Living, a not-for-profit founded by Kunz, focused on using motorsport to raise money and awareness for rare diseases.

"In 2023, he finished as the Vice Champion in the SCCC TCA class. This season, he returned stronger than ever, with victories that ultimately led him to clinch the championship title."

In addition to his success on the race track, as founder of Driven Living, Kunz has dedicated his time to raising awareness for rare diseases, knowing firsthand their impact, as a former SickKids patient himself.

Over the September long weekend, with the help of his title sponsor, Amico Design Build, Kunz hosted an event at the Canadian Tire Motorsport Park Labour Day Sprints with a group of 14 SickKids Patient Ambassadors and their families. They joined Kunz and the Michelin Man for a lunch in the FEL Motorsports hospitality area.

Afterwards, the families were taken through a behind-the-scenes SCCC paddock tour where the children met the other drivers and teams and picked out their favorite cars.

To cap off the day, a memorable podium photo shoot was held.

"Seeing the joy on those kids' faces was one of the highlights of my weekend," Kunz said. "It's a reminder of how important it is to give back and make a difference beyond the racetrack."

In other news, Kunz has partnered with CSN Leggett's Collision Service in Orangeville.

Owner of the collision centre, JP Venditti, he been a supporter of Kunz motorsports career.

'As they say in Days of Thunder, 'Rubbin', son, is racin',? Kunz said with a grin. 'Of course, I do my best to avoid contact, but in close competition, it's inevitable that rubbing happens. Working with the number one auto body shop in town has been a huge help and I cannot thank JP and his team enough!'

With the 2024 racing season wrapping up, Kunz is planning his off-season.

'This period is crucial for drivers and teams, marked by contract negotiations, strategic decisions, and new opportunities. With his recent success, Kunz is focused on building momentum, securing partnerships, and exploring new opportunities that align with his long-term goals. While his ambition is to move up the motorsport ladder, ultimately, it comes down to securing the necessary funding. He is excited for what 2025 holds, aiming to build on this year's success and continue making a difference both on and off the track,' said Driven Living's press release.