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Korthoff Competition Motors Carries the Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Flag with Podium Success in the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen

Press Information

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Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Korthoff Competition Motors Perseveres to Season-Best Third-Place Finish Sunday at the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen

WATKINS GLEN, New York – Nearly four years ago at Watkins Glen International, Korthoff Competition Motors made its professional racing debut under the Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing flag. On Sunday, the team carried it straight to victory lane.

The last of three Mercedes-AMG GT3 entries in contention in a chaotic and ever-changing edition of the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen, the No. 32 Korthoff Competition Motors Mercedes-AMG GT3 team, and co-drivers Kenton Koch, Daniel Morad and a debuting Mikey Taylor, turned in a no-quit performance for a season-best third-place finish in the grueling endurance race.

The third-place finish was the first podium result for the Korthoff team at Watkins Glen since its debut and seventh-place finish with the No. 32 Mercedes-AMG GT3 in an IMSA WeatherTech Championship race at The Glen on July 2, 2021.

The No. 32 team – after Morad's qualifying run Friday – both started and finished the six-hour race in third place but rarely ran in that position. They endured an early heavy rain shower, an alarmingly damaged exhaust system in a multi-car contact incident and a penalty for passing under the yellow.

Despite the setbacks, the No. 32 team and drivers never quit, stayed on the lead lap and moved into podium contention just before the start of the

final hour with a strategic decision to take only two tires in their final pit stop. That moved closing driver Koch – who shook off a Saturday bout of food poisoning – into the top-10 in a tight train of race-leading GT Daytona (GTD) contenders.

Koch steadily moved up the order, passing some competitors while others pit for a final splash of fuel. He was up to fourth for a final restart in the caution-plagued-race and, in a four-lap dash to the finish, pounced on the final podium position when the overall GTD class leader ran out of fuel on the last lap.

The third-place showing topped last month's previous season-best finish of fourth at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca and was delivered by a driver lineup that wasn't even finalized until just days before the race.

Koch is a full-season Korthoff driver, but Morad was a one-race fill-in for the team's regular Endurance Cup specialist Maximilian Götz. Morad also joined the No. 32 team as the fourth driver for January's season-opening Rolex 24 At Daytona.

Taylor, who tested the No. 32 last December, was added to the roster only Friday morning and made his debut in both the GT3 machinery and the GTD category in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. He is the 2024 IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge TCR Champion.

Korthoff stepped up to carry Mercedes-AMG's hopes for victory after the weekend's other pair of entries were sidelined from winning contention in the first half of the race.

The championship-leading No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 team, and co-drivers Russell Ward, Philip Ellis and Indy Dontje, endured their hardest race of the last two seasons. Starting driver Ward was caught up in the same multi-car incident that damaged Korthoff's car, but the No. 57 sustained even more significant left-rear suspension damage.

Down but not out, the team elected to repair the car and continue in the race, albeit 11 laps down from the leader and with no realistic chance of victory. The high-risk decision paid off in the very end, however, as the

race leader that ran out of fuel on the last lap is also the No. 57's closest championship contender.

Winward retained the team and driver championship leads leaving The Glen at the mid-season mark, topping the GTD class with 1,550 points. Unofficially, the No. 57 team and drivers have a 60-point lead on the second-place team and driver and are 76 clear of the third-place team and drivers. Mercedes-AMG continues to lead the GTD manufacturer championship standings with 1,734 points, a full 157 clear of the nearest challenger.

IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup contenders Lone Star Racing returned to GTD competition for the first time since March's 12 Hours of Sebring with team drivers Dan Knox, Scott Andrews and the debuting Wyatt Brichacek in the No. 80 Lone Star Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3.

The team capably endured the early deluge and various on-track incidents that sidelined others after the start only to be caught up in a multi-car incident of their own before the halfway mark. Brichacek was uninjured, but the No. 80 was too damaged to continue and retired from the race.

Next up for the GTD class in IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship competition is Canadian Tire Motorsport Park just outside of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, July 11 - 13.

Kenton Koch, Driver – No. 32 Korthoff Competition Motors Mercedes-AMG GT3: “Daniel said it the best when we got out of the car: 'We started third, were in every place, but third, and then finished third!' So, it feels good to actually finish on that note because it was a really difficult race. It was a bit tricky, with the balance of the car in the middle of the race, but by the end it came in really nice, and it was good driving. We had Daniel again and he did great, and Mikey did great in his debut too. The strategy call at the end there was to make the stop extra short, taking only two tires and a short fill of fuel. Then we got the late yellow that we needed and ended up where we were. It's good to get Herb Korthoff a podium, on the track where he debuted this team four years ago. He said he 'had a good feeling about today,' and it's nice that we were able to deliver on that good feeling.”

Daniel Morad, Driver – No. 32 Korthoff Competition Motors

Mercedes-AMG GT3: “I think the team since Daytona, when I joined them, has made really good steps in developing the car. We put that on display here with the actual pace of the car in qualifying and just the performance in the race. The race had all sorts of attrition, and we went down pit lane 11 times, but the guys nailed it in terms of strategy. We really took advantage of the lemons that were given to us, and we turned them into lemonade. And very, very sweet lemonade actually! It's nice to be on the podium, better than not being on the podium for sure, but we weren't really in that position until the very end.”

Mikey Taylor, Driver – No. 32 Korthoff Competition Motors

Mercedes-AMG GT3: “It's been a crazy, crazy month with so many great things, and I just really love this entire team. They gave me an opportunity to test at Sebring last December, just out of the goodness of their hearts, and then I got the late call up just a couple of days ago to step in and drive. It's just a dream come true. I've been dreaming of coming into GTD for a while, and now to get that chance and go straight to the podium. I just can't believe it, and I am so thankful for the chance.”

Russell Ward, Driver – No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3:

“I have to really give a hats off to our team owner and lead engineer who said we should continue and our great team who put our car back together. Initially when we pulled the car in, so many laps down and changing suspension components, it's kind of like 'guys, do we really even want to do this?' There's a lot that can go wrong, you are not 100 percent sure in the mechanical reliability of the car, and it's expensive, but I'm really glad that we decided to continue. I had complete faith in the team that we would have a safe car, and it shows the grit in the team that they can do this. Like the saying, 'winners never quit and quitters never win,' and that's what they were all about. It was a really good showing to get the car back out there and get points. You never want to wish ill will on your competitors, we experience bad luck too, but today we put ourselves back in a position to take advantage of any problems for our competition. We can go on to the next track, and we can go race still with the points lead. That's good stuff.”

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