



Eight Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Teams Launch 2020 Campaigns in Season-Opening IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge Races at Daytona International Speedway

Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Teams Set for 2020 IMSA Season Debut at the Rolex 24 At Daytona

Press Information

January 24, 2020

Daytona Beach. Eight Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams compete in two different IMSA sports car racing series this weekend at Daytona International Speedway (DIS), during the 58th running of the Rolex 24 At Daytona, January 23 – 26. The full weekend of competition on the 3.56-mile DIS road course features the season-opening rounds of both the 2020 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and this year's IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge series.

This weekend's featured twice-around-the-clock IMSA WeatherTech Championship race follows the annual Roar Before the Rolex 24 At Daytona test earlier this month. Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams in both championships made the most of the annual three-day Roar test and return to Daytona wellprepared for the first races of the season.

Riley Motorsports tested a new-for-2020 Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo in preparation for its IMSA WeatherTech Championship and Rolex 24 debut this weekend with team drivers Gar Robinson, Lawson Aschenbach, Ben Keating and Felipe Fraga. The Rolex 24 also marks the North American debut of the Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo in the highly competitive GT Daytona (GTD) class.

Robinson and Aschenbach are the new full-season drivers in the No. 74, and will be joined by familiar Riley Motorsports driver Ben Keating in the IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup this year. The four-race series within the overall WeatherTech Championship awards the top performers in the season's four endurance races, starting with this weekend's Rolex 24. In 2019, Mercedes-AMG Team Riley Motorsports, team co-drivers Ben Keating, Jeroen Bleekemolen and Felipe Fraga, as well as Mercedes-AMG, won the IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup GT Daytona (GTD) team, driver and manufacturer championships for the third-straight year.

Robinson, Aschenbach and Keating co-drive the No. 74 this weekend with Felipe Fraga, who returns to Riley Motorsports for his second-consecutive Rolex 24 with the team.

Robinson co-drives with Fraga for the first time, but he is in his second year as full-season teammates with Aschenbach and has also shared some Rolex 24 success with Keating and the Riley team before.

In his Rolex 24 debut and only previous start in the race, Robinson co-drove with Keating and three other drivers to a third place GTD class finish in a Riley entered car in 2016.

Seven Mercedes-AMG GT4 teams compete at Daytona in the four-hour IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge race that takes place this Friday.

The Mercedes-AMG GT4 competes in the top-level Grand Sports (GS) class in which Mercedes-AMG won the GS manufacturer championship last year.

The No. 33 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4 set the pace early at the Roar Test by setting the fastest lap in the first three of the weekend's six Michelin Pilot Challenge practice sessions.

Now carrying No. 4, the Roar-leading Winward entry is co-driven for the second-straight year by Russell Ward and Indy Dontje.

Winward's sister No. 57 Mercedes-AMG GT4 entry is driven by Russell Ward's father Bryce Ward and his new-for-2020 co-driver Philip Ellis, who makes his Daytona race debut after taking his first laps of the DIS road course at the Roar test.

Longtime teammates Jeff Mosing and Eric Foss were on pace at the Roar and begin another season together this weekend in the No. 56 Murillo Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4. The No. 56 was third fastest overall at the Roar in both the Saturday afternoon and test-ending Sunday afternoon session.

Tim Probert and Brent Mosing are another returning Murillo Racing driving duo that is set for another season in the team's similar No. 65 Mercedes-AMG GT4.

The No. 35 Riley Motorsports Mercedes-AMG GT4, which is co-driven by Jim Cox, Dylan Murry and Jeroen Bleekemolen, looks for its third-straight four-hour race win on

Friday. The same three-driver lineup won last June's four-hour Michelin Pilot race while Cox and Murry co-drove to the GT4 victory in November's Michelin Encore at Sebring International Raceway.

A pair of teams are set for their first races with Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing, debuting Mercedes-AMG GT4 entries in Friday's Michelin Pilot race.

The No. 14 Autometrics Bluff City Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4 of Anton Dias Perera, Cory Friedman and Dan Clarke are set for their first race after a successful Roar test. Atila Abreu and Leo Sanchez also debut their No. 51 MCC Motorsport Mercedes-AMG GT4 in the team's first visit to Daytona with the new car.

The 58th running of the Rolex 24 At Daytona gets under way with day and night practice sessions and qualifying on Thursday, January 23, with the green flag flying on the day-long race at 1:40 p.m. EST this Saturday, January 25.

The NBC network will have live network coverage of the start of the race beginning at 1:30 p.m. EST this Saturday, and returns to televise the race finish beginning at 12 p.m. EST on Sunday, January 26 as part of NBC Sports' complete coverage of the event. The coverage includes programming on the NBC Sports Network (NBCSN), the NBC Sports App and TrackPass on NBC Sports Gold.

Coverage of the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge race is live on TrackPass this Friday from 1:10 – 5:10 p.m. EST with an encore two-hour telecast on NBCSN on Thursday, February 6 starting at 1 p.m. EST.

Gar Robinson, Driver – No. 74 Riley Motorsports Mercedes-AMG GT3: "Hats off to Mercedes-AMG on creating an Evo that simply refined the Mercedes-AMG GT3. It did not change the driving style or create any uncertainty. It just made it easier to work on, look better, and it helps give me a little more confidence behind the wheel. I always get scared that manufacturers try to re-invent the wheel and completely change the car, but Mercedes-AMG hit a home run with this one and gave us what we all wanted. Last year was full of changes for me personally and our family racing business, so in relation, a new car and one new-to-me driver is nothing to worry about. The Riley Motorsports crew prepares the best car out there and I have complete confidence in them. It's fun going racing this way. I make sure I'm at my best and they make sure they are at theirs. We all have Daytona, Riley, and Mercedes-AMG experience, so what's not to be excited about that."

Lawson Aschenbach, Driver – No. 74 Riley Motorsports Mercedes-AMG GT3:

“The Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo checks all the boxes. It’s a refinement on an already great racecar that’s produced many wins and championships around the world. The Evo is ever so slightly different in the handling department, but it’s an improvement on entry stability. This gives you the confidence needed to attack brake zones and push yourself and the car to the limit. There is no better car for the job at the Rolex 24 At Daytona. As a driver, I believe this is a dream scenario to be competing with Riley Motorsports and the Mercedes-AMG GT3 at the Rolex 24. From the moment I started working with the team at the Encore, I knew this was a highly capable and well-run organization. Their history speaks for itself, and that gives you confidence heading into this great race. I’m looking forward to pushing hard with Gar, Ben, and Felipe.”

Ben Keating, Driver – No. 74 Riley Motorsports Mercedes-AMG GT3:

“The Roar test was good for us. This is not only an Evo car with different parts than the Mercedes-AMG GT3 Riley has been running for the past three years, but it is also a brand-new car. We had the typical break-in procedures and teething issues that you’d expect with a new car, but the test went well. One of the things I was amazed by in 2017 is that in my first ever race in a Mercedes-AMG GT3, we had an absolutely perfect race. This experience gives me a ton of confidence in this car and in this team. I am excited to be running with Robinson Racing in the No. 74. Gar Robinson and I were teammates in 2016 in the “Miss Texas” car with Riley and we ended up on the podium in third. We will be working to improve from that experience, Lawson and Felipe are great to drive with, and I feel really good about this effort. No doubt that the GTD field is the most competitive of any class with almost half the field choosing to race GT3 cars. It will not be easy, but it wouldn’t be as much fun if it were too easy.”

Eric Foss, Driver – No. 56 Murillo Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4:

“I think the four-hour opener at Daytona really suits the Mercedes-AMG GT4 well. It’s very consistent, it’s very driver-friendly, and off all the cars I’ve raced in my career this one gives me the least amount of fatigue. I enjoy being able to drive the car for such a long period of time. Overall, Murillo Racing has done an awesome job in the offseason coming together even more as a team. We’re picking everything apart, finding details we may have missed in the past, and that’s helping us as drivers, too. The overall support from Mercedes-AMG has been awesome and we continue to look forward to that partnership in the 2020 season.”

Tim Probert, Driver – No. 65 Murillo Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4: “Endurance racing is a real team effort. We’re just part of it as drivers. The team is really key to getting us in and out quickly and really ensuring we have the reliability of the car. Murillo Racing has done an awesome job in the offseason to prepare everything. We’re much more data focused in what we do and how we do it. The Roar was an incredibly valuable test. We played with a number of elements on the Mercedes-AMG GT4. It really gave us a lot of confidence that we set the car up really well, not just for the 4-hour but for the races to come. I’m feeling much more at home. The first part of last season was a huge learning experience for me and my co-driver. In the second half we did post some pretty decent results. We’re really looking forward to a solid season this year.”

Dylan Murry, Driver – No. 35 Riley Motorsports Mercedes-AMG GT4: “I have very high expectations for the race this weekend. I think we should be pretty quick. Matt Bejnarowicz and the crew at Riley Motorsports really put a lot of engineering into our Mercedes-AMG GT over the last year. I am excited to see what all that engineering has done. I think a lot of the new success will just come from the bonds with each other at Riley Motorsports and Mercedes-AMG that we have made over the last year. At Daytona, we were all still getting to know each other. Now, we have had a year to spend time together at the track and away from the track. That team bond is what brings our motivation up and makes for a more fluid team effort. Our Mercedes-AMG GT4, our tire changes and our race strategy, along with so many other things, have all improved as a result of teamwork. I love working with these men and women at Riley Motorsports and Mercedes-AMG. This should be a strong year for us.”

Contacts:

Baron Smith	Tel.: +1 770-705-3537	baron.smith@mbusa.com
Adam Saal	Tel.: +1 321-890-2848	saalgoodpr@gmail.com
Jochen Übler	Tel.: +49 (0) 7144 302-92 470	jochen.uebler@daimler.com

Further information from Mercedes-Benz, Mercedes-AMG and Mercedes-Benz USA is available on the Internet: www.media.daimler.com, www.mercedes-benz.com and www.mbusa.com.

For more information on AMG Customer Sports, please visit www.mercedes-amg.com/customerracing.