



Press Information
August 3, 2026

Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Winward Racing Secures IMSA GTD Series-Leading Third Win of the Season Sunday in the Inaugural Six-Hour SportsCar Endurance Grand Prix at Road America

Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Winward Racing Continued to Race its Way Back into The Fight for a Third-Straight IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar GT Daytona (GTD) Championship with a Convincing Victory Sunday in the Inaugural Six-Hour SportsCar Endurance Grand Prix at Road America. The No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 and Team Drivers Russell Ward, Philip Ellis and Indy Dontje Ran in Lead-Pack Contention from the Race's Opening Hour, and Closing Driver Ellis Pulled Off the Winning Pass on a Restart with Just Under 30 Minutes to Go. Winward Scored its Second-Straight GTD Victory and Third of the Season While No Other GTD Team has Won More than a Single Race this Season. The Winward Victory Capped a Strong Day for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Teams at Road America with the No. 80 Lone Star Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 and Team Drivers Scott Andrews, Lin Hoenen and James Roe Jr. Finishing on the Lead GTD Lap in Seventh Place.

ELKHART LAKE, Wisconsin – Two-time and reigning IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar GT Daytona (GTD) Champions Winward Racing secured a second-straight “must-win” victory Sunday in the inaugural Six-Hour SportsCar Endurance Grand Prix at Road America. The No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 team and drivers Russell Ward, Philip Ellis and Indy Dontje ran in lead-pack contention from the race's opening hour, and closing driver Ellis pulled off the winning pass on a restart with just under 30 minutes to go.

The win follows a victory one race ago by Ward, Ellis and the No. 57 last month at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park and a victory with Dontje in the season-opening Rolex 24 At Daytona last January. Winward's trio of victories lead the GTD class as no other competitor in the division has won more than a single race to date this season.

The recent victories have moved the Winward drivers and the No. 57 team back into the mix for the season championship after a run of bad luck following Daytona. Coming into Road America fourth in the season points standings, and 207 markers shy of the class-leading drivers and team, the No. 57 squad has made a massive jump to second in the respective GTD team and driver championship standings with 1,993 points. Gaining a remarkable 183 points, Ward, Ellis and the No. 57 are now just 24 points out of first place.

Winward only led Sunday's race twice for a total of 12 laps but was up front when it counted despite a pair of GTD competitors that led more laps than the No. 57. After taking the late lead, Ellis led the race's final 10 laps as the race was slowed by two more caution periods, including a finish under dual waving yellow and checkered flags.

Winward joined Lone Star Racing in an overall competitive day for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams at Road America. The No. 80 Lone Star Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 and team drivers Scott Andrews, Lin Hodenius and James Roe Jr. finished seventh Sunday. The team led two race laps of their own and maintained their record of competing every lap run to date in the opening 48 hours of this year's IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup GTD Championship at Daytona, Sebring, Watkins Glen and Road America. Lone Star's top finish in that opening quartet of races was a career-best fourth-place finish at Sebring in March.

The Lone Star team and drivers join the overall IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar GTD championship leaders as the only teams in the class to have completed every lap run to date in the IMEC championship.

Next up for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams is the IMSA Michelin GT Challenge at VIRginia International Raceway (VIR), August 21 – 23.

"The bad luck we've had throughout the year has been a result of other competitors' poor driving, crashing early in these endurance races, taking us out. When we can have some semi-clean racing, this is what this team is capable of. I think the win is just a combination of things. We kind of raced this like an endurance race, really focused on the final pit stop, making sure that we pushed the fuel all the way to the end as far as we could. Then at the end we kind of jumped a couple of people. I think it's also just a combination of how good the Mercedes-AMG GT3 is around this place, and good strategy on our part."

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

"I made the pass for the lead right at the restart because if there was another yellow, like we had, they obviously would have had the track position, and we would have lost the win. I just went all in on the last two or three restarts to make up that last position and it worked out. It all went well. It's been a really, really good day for us. I would say close to perfect, honestly, with how the race all played out. Obviously, a little more unlucky for some competitors, but that's what we needed as well. So, I am super happy with the result with the team and the guys and looking forward to the next one. I think we have the best guys in the paddock. Every time we do a pit stop, we usually jump people, and we did that a lot today. The crew had perfect pit stops. Russell and Indy did a good job as well keeping the car in one piece but also making up the positions on track again and taking opportunities when it arrived. We just do our thing and keep winning. It's awesome."

Philip Ellis, Driver – No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3

"It feels really good. I think that our main goal is the championship fight, and we did a really good job on that today. I am really happy for the boys. I mean, I'm here only for the five Endurance Cup races and I was just trying to do my best and walk away with a win with the team here at Road America. I take a lot of pride in helping them win not just in the Endurance Cup, but also in the overall WeatherTech Championship. I could do a lot of things wrong, but I always give it my best. In the end, good calls from the team, great pit stops. Also, we have no scratch on the car. I think that's also really important in the race. Gave us the win today. Really happy."

Indy Dontje, Driver – No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3

"It was quite good here in my first race at Road America. It's really awesome, I enjoyed the track and it was quite fun. Considering the pace we had, we should have been more up there, but you are never sure where you are going to finish, and we got a bit unlucky at the end there. That's racing, but it was still a clean finish for us. I had good pace on my side, got up to P3, but this is a tricky track with traffic. Next up is Petit Le Mans and I am very excited to get back there."

Lin Hodenius, Driver – No. 80 Lone Star Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3

Contacts:

Adam Saal, +1 321-890-2848, saalgoodpr@gmail.com

Andrew Brudnicki, +1 470-409-8048, andrew.brudnicki@mbusa.com