



Press Information
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Reigning GT Daytona Champions Winward Racing and Mercedes-AMG Bring IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar GTD Points Leads to Season Finale After Second-Place Finish in Indianapolis

Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Winward Racing Brings the Fight for Their Third Consecutive IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship GT Daytona (GTD) Championships to the Season-Ending Race at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta (MRRA) in Two Weeks after a Comeback Second-Place Finish this Weekend at Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS). The No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 Team and Two-Time and Reigning GTD Champions Russell Ward and Philip Ellis Bring a Six-Point Lead in the 2026 Team and Driver Points Standings to the 10-Hour Petit Le Mans Finale at MRRA, October 3, after the Runner-Up Finish Sunday in the Battle on the Bricks at IMS. Meanwhile, Mercedes-AMG has Built a Larger Cushion in its Pursuit of its Third Straight GTD Manufacturer Championship and Takes a 94-Point Lead to Petit Le Mans after the Winward No. 57 Finished Well Clear of the Brand's Main Pair of Competitors at Indianapolis.

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana – A championship caliber comeback drive from last on the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship starting grid in Sunday's Battle on the Bricks at Indianapolis Motor Speedway will see the No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 Team, co-drivers Russell Ward and Philip Ellis and Mercedes-AMG bring the fight for their third consecutive GT Daytona (GTD) championship to the season-ending Motul Petit Le Mans at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta in two weeks.

Sent to the rear of the field after an on-track miscue in the pre-race formation lap kept the Winward entry from gridding the car by the required time, starting driver Ward and the race's closer Ellis combined to get the No. 57 back to the front throughout the majority of the race's two hours and 40 minutes. A typically well executed final pit stop with less than 60 minutes remaining put Ellis back in the race in the top five.

The GTD lead battle then evolved into a two-car contest between Ellis and the eventual winner in the race's closing minutes, but the heavy traffic with all four classes of IMSA sports cars competing on the 2.439-mile track kept the fast closing Ellis from making a move for the win. The No. 57 took the checkered flag a close 0.501 of a second in second place, continuing a strong string of finishes in the second half of the season that has produced three victories and the Indianapolis runner-up finish.

The No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 squad leads the GTD driver and team points standings with 2,693 points, six clear of the nearest challenger's 2,687. Mercedes-AMG came into Indianapolis with a 20-point lead in the GTD manufacturer championship battle but is now 94 points clear of the closest competitor, 2,954 – 2,860.

Winward's comeback in Sunday's WeatherTech Championship race was somewhat foreshadowed in another rebound run by the team's sister No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4, and co-drivers Bryce Ward and Daan Arrow, in Saturday's two-hour IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge race.

Starting driver Ward and the No. 57 team shook off a closely called incident responsibility penalty and, with Arrow taking over for the run to the finish, the co-drivers combined to improve more than a dozen on-track positions. Arrow was keeping the pressure on and looking at the team's first top-three finish in nearly three months only to see a late caution slow the field.

The race returned to green for a one-lap dash to the checkered flag, but the close competition and heavy traffic kept Arrow from getting close enough to make a move for the third and final podium spot. The fourth-place showing, however, was the best result for the No. 57 Mercedes-AMG GT4 since Ward and substitute driver Ellis co-drove to a win at Watkins Glen in late June. The P4 was also the top performance for a Mercedes-AMG GT4 in the Indy race and the best for the full-season pairing of Ward and Arrow since another recovery race in early May at Laguna Seca that produced another fourth-place finish.

Next up for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams in both the IMSA WeatherTech and IMSA Pilot Challenge series is the season-ending Motul Petit Le Mans race weekend at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta, September 30 – October 3.

"A bit of a setback at the start but I knew that we had the car and the package to move through the field, and we did that. Good overtaking from Philip and my part, we had some good strategy, a little bit of luck with the yellows, and that put us right back into the mix. Great result by the team. It's tough out there but it is the same as it has been the last couple of years. We are going to go into Petit Le Mans and we know we have to beat our closest challenger by at least one position. We just need to make sure we finish well at Road Atlanta, and I know we will. I am looking forward to it."

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

"It was a very tough race from the get-go with the start, that was very unfortunate, but we all took it on the chin and made the best out of that situation. Russell had a very strong first stint and went through half the field by himself, and then we had two really good pit stops that kind of put us in contention for making something happen. Then we just had to take some risks really, especially on the restarts, to climb up those positions. It's going to be a very exciting race in Atlanta and I am looking forward to fighting it out."

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

"I am proud of what we did. Bryce did a great job, we had a penalty that was hard to take, but that is part of the game and the cards we were dealt. Bryce did a great job overtaking several cars in his stint, and after the pit stop, we were 15th. With the right calls and the right mindset of bringing it home safe and being smart, I am really happy that we finished in the fourth position. I had a lot of fun and some fair battles. We really maximized the package that we had."

Daan Arrow, Driver – No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4

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