



Press Information
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Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Winward Racing and Mercedes-AMG Secure Record Third-Straight WeatherTech SportsCar Championships at Petit Le Mans

Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Winward Racing and Mercedes-AMG Raced to a Record “Three-peat” of IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship GT Daytona (GTD) Titles Saturday in the 10-Hour Motul Petit Le Mans at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta. Joined by Longtime Endurance Racing Teammate Indy Dontje, Reigning GTD Champions Russell Ward and Philip Ellis and the No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 Team Joined Mercedes-AMG in Pulling Off an Unprecedented Across-the-Board Haul of Three Consecutive GTD Driver, Team and Manufacturer Championships.

BRASELTON, Georgia – Putting an exclamation point on an incredible comeback, Winward Racing and Mercedes-AMG secured a series-leading fifth victory of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship season at Motul Petit Le Mans to seal a record “three-peat” of IMSA GT Daytona (GTD) class driver, team and manufacturer championships Saturday at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta.

Leading the GTD points race by just six points, the No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3, and full-season co-drivers Russell Ward and Philip Ellis, came into the race locked in their closest title fight to date but somewhat surprisingly this year’s championships were the easiest to clinch. Winward’s season-long and closest challengers both encountered ultimately terminal mechanical issues from the start of the 10-hour Petit Le Mans championship finale. The only remaining but distant contender fell more than 10 laps off the pace after extended pit stops following a contact incident in the race’s third hour.

From there, starting driver Ellis – who won the pole in the No. 57 on Friday to earn 35 important championship points before the green flag – joined Ward and their endurance race teammate Indy Dontje in a competitive but clean and cautious run to the checkered flag in the race’s final seven hours.

Ellis returned to the No. 57 for the run to the checkered flag and went to work on his final run to the front after a late caution period in the race’s final hour. Jumping from fourth to third at the restart, Ellis then reeled in the duo at the front of the field and pulled off passes on both with 35 minutes remaining. The No. 57 crossed the finish line with a 0.733-second margin of victory.

While Winward was primed for a fight to the finish that never materialized at Petit Le Mans, the team’s incredible comeback in the second half of the season to win the championship was nothing short of a heavyweight title bout.

The team’s third career Rolex 24 At Daytona victory last January started the year on a high note but an unfortunate run of bad luck followed in the next four races. The Winward team and drivers, and Mercedes-AMG, went from leading all championships after Daytona to falling well out of first place.

The Winward team and drivers alone were down a full 300 points in the championship standings at the mid-season mark, but Winward quickly buckled down to start the final half of the year with three straight victories at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, Road America and VIRginia International Raceway (VIR). The VIR win moved them back into first place in the championships and, along with a second-place finish two weeks ago in Indianapolis, the Petit victory wrapped up a nearly perfect second half of the championship.

Adding to the achievements, Winward's dominant run on Saturday also gave Ward, Ellis and Dontje and the No. 57 team enough to secure from seemingly out of nowhere the IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup GTD driver and team championships.

Mercedes-AMG's third consecutive WeatherTech manufacturer championship is the most for any manufacturer in IMSA GTD history and moved the Silver Star above a group of four other globally recognized brands that have each won two apiece. Winward earned the championship points for Mercedes-AMG at eight of the year's 10 races.

The No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 team and drivers ended the GTD championship standings with 3,078 points, a sizable 235 tallies clear of the class runner-up finishers after beginning the finale with just a six-point margin. Mercedes-AMG cleared the competition in the manufacturer battle by 173 points, ending with 3,339 points after bringing a 94-point lead to Petit.

The IMEC GTD titles were the closest of all with the Winward drivers and team capturing the honors at the checkered flag by a single point after scoring the maximum five points in the final segment of the year.

Winward's five victories accounted for half the races and no other GTD team or manufacturer earned more than one race win this season. They are also the first GTD team in the 13-year history of the category to win three straight championships with the same core team and drivers.

The banner day for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams at the Petit Le Mans season finale included a race-leading and no-quit performance by IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup (IMEC) contenders Lone Star Racing. With Lin Hodenius, James Roe Jr. and Luca Stolz co-driving the No. 80 Lone Star Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 this weekend, the team and drivers stayed in lead-pack contention for the majority of the race and were ready to pick up the manufacturer fight for Mercedes-AMG if Winward faltered.

Lone Star had already been a critical contributor to Mercedes-AMG's repeat championship bid two times this season. When Winward was knocked out of both the 12 Hours of Sebring and the Watkins Glen 6 Hour endurance rounds through no fault of their own, it was the Lone Star entry that stepped up to earn the manufacturer points for AMG. This included a season-best fourth-place finish at Sebring that was matched by another near-podium showing at Petit Le Mans with an additional fourth-place result.

In addition to a schedule of both team and official IMSA test sessions during the offseason, next up for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams in WeatherTech SportsCar Championship competition is the annual Roar Before the Rolex 24 test event at Daytona International Speedway, January 22 – 24, 2027.

“No manufacturer ever before has won three consecutive GTD titles in IMSA. This is a significant achievement for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport and underlines the strength of our commitment to an extremely important market. My warmest congratulations go to Winward Racing, as well as to Indy Dontje, Philip Ellis and Russell Ward. They have once again done an impressive job and represented our brand in an excellent manner throughout the season.”

Simon Wilbers, Head of Mercedes-AMG Motorsport

“Following our opening victory at Daytona, we had a few difficult races. However, Winward Racing remained focused throughout and, in the second half of the season, impressively demonstrated just how competitive the team is with our Mercedes-AMG GT3. Today, they drove a flawless race again, made the right strategic decisions and were rewarded with a class victory and the championship titles. Congratulations to everyone involved on this success. I would also like to congratulate Lone Star Racing on their fourth place.”

Stefan Wendl, Head of Customer Racing, Mercedes-AMG Motorsport

“This success is the result of the hard work that everyone in the team puts in every day. They work so hard to give us the best program we could possibly have. It’s just incredible, and the three of us having been driving really for almost seven years together now. I drove with Indy for the first time in 2018, and with Philip in 2019. The consistency with which we have been successful since then is incredible. It’s a shame that we weren’t able to go head-to-head with our title rivals on the track today. At the same time, it’s a testament to the Mercedes-AMG GT3 that we’ve been spared any technical faults this season.”

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

“That was by far the toughest of the last three seasons. The competition was incredibly close all year round. But we pulled it all together – once again today. That’s why this championship feels so good. We fought our way back to the front time and again and made the right strategic decisions. So, it was a massive pleasure to secure victory and the titles today in the Mercedes-AMG GT3.”

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

“It was a special season. I took part in five races, three of which we won. Winning Petit Le Mans had long been a dream of mine. In GTD with Winward, I have only stood on the podium with wins. It’s amazing. We secured the GTD championship early on in the race, but we were still determined to take the win. I’m very proud of the whole team. In 2018, I drove the Mercedes-AMG GT4 for Winward Racing in North America for the first time. It’s incredible to see how we’ve evolved together during this time.”

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

“I think it is a good finish, matching our best result of the season back in March at Sebring. There’s a lot to be happy about because it was quite a hectic and messy race, so to survive this is something to be proud of, and maybe we could have achieved something more, maybe a podium, but that’s part of the game. This is one of the best championships out there with so much racing.”

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

“A crazy race to be honest. A lot of crashes and a lot of yellows but I think we operated really well. The team has huge potential and can continue to improve. On one side I am happy. On the other side I am a little disappointed because it would have been nice to end the season with a podium, but a good race for us.”

Luca Stolz, Driver – No. 80 Lone Star Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3

“I am super happy with how the year went from a team perspective. We finished every lap all year, and you can’t ask for much more than that in endurance racing. We are disappointed again with a P4 finish, but that just shows where our heads are with this program, what we have here and what we think we can do. Next year we’re looking forward to building on everything from this season.”

James Roe Jr., Driver – No. 80 Lone Star Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3

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