



Press Information
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Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Winward Racing Secures Victory in Sunday's IMSA WeatherTech GT Daytona (GTD) Race at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park

Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing Team Winward Racing and Mercedes-AMG Are the First Team and Manufacturer Repeat Race Winners of the 2026 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship GT Daytona (GTD) Season After a Convincing and Much-Needed Victory Sunday in the Two-Hour and 40-Minute Race at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park. Russell Ward and Philip Ellis Co-Drove the No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 to the Team's First GTD Victory Outside of the United States and Moved Back into the Fight for a Third-Straight IMSA WeatherTech GTD Championship with Four Races Left on the 2026 Schedule of Events.

BOWMANVILLE, Ontario, Canada – Two-time and reigning IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar GT Daytona (GTD) Champions Winward Racing and Mercedes-AMG became the first team and manufacturer to secure a repeat 2026 GTD class victory Sunday with a competitive and convincing victory in the two-hour and 40-minute race at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park (CTMP) just outside of Toronto. Starting driver Russell Ward held in tight formation in a close group of GTD leaders from the drop of the green flag before pitting from the top-five to hand off the No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 to co-driver Philip Ellis late in the race's opening hour.

Pitting during a well-timed full-course caution just past the 45-minute mark, Ward stopped with the other GTD front runners and Ellis took over for the run to the finish. Top pit work by the Winward Racing crew moved the No. 57 back into the race in the top four and, on a restart a few laps later, Ellis went right to work and quickly moved up to second in the GTD running order. Closely tracking the leader for the next 25 minutes, Ellis pulled off a pass for the lead on lap 51 and quickly opened up to a three-second plus lead.

Ellis maintained the comfortable lead for the next 15 laps and dashed into the pits for the final time with just over an hour to go. Another spot-on stop by the Winward Racing crew quickly put the No. 57 back into the race and – as the other GTD leaders made their final stops – Ellis cycled back into a lead he would hold to the finish less than five minutes later.

From there, Ellis maintained a close but steady one to two second gap on the second-place challenger straight to the checkered flag. He crossed the finish line with a 1.886-second margin-of-victory for Winward's first victory since capturing the team's third-career Rolex 24 At Daytona GTD win in January. Ellis had the No. 57 in the lead for a GTD-class high 65 laps, including the final 50 around the 2.459-mile, 10-turn road course.

Sunday's victory moved the Winward drivers and the No. 57 team back into the mix for the season championship after a string of bad luck following the Daytona victory. More gains need to be earned in the season's final four races, but the No. 57 squad has moved to fourth in the respective GTD team and driver championship standings with 1,618 points, 207 markers shy of the class-leading drivers and team.

Sunday's victory in part made up for a frantic and full-contact IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge Grand Sport (GS) race on Saturday that saw both the sister No. 57 Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT4 and the No. 24 Murillo Racing with P1 Motor Club Mercedes-AMG GT4 both take more than one hard hit or shove off course in the two-hour battle.

For the Winward No. 57 Mercedes-AMG GT4, and co-drivers Bryce Ward and Daan Arrow, the hard hits began in Saturday morning's qualifying session. Ward was sideswiped by another competitor in a frantic finish to the session that derailed the qualifying effort and forced the No. 57 to make a rare start from the back of the pack.

Uncharacteristically racing deep in the field, Ward continued after being forced off course early in his stint while closing driver Arrow sustained front-end damage when he in turn was forced to battle in heavy traffic deep in the field. Despite several late pit stops for repairs, the No. 57 still finished high enough to earn points that keep Ward in the top-five of the GS championship standings with 1,420 points, just 50 shy of the fourth-place competitors.

The Murillo No. 24 picked up the fight after Winward's setback following another strong race-opening stint by Aurora Straus, who advanced half a dozen positions before pitting to hand the car off to her husband and race-closing driver Kenny Murillo.

Murillo, a past polesitter and podium finisher in GS competition at CTMP, held steady in the hard-fought race but lost the chance to make a late charge on the top-10 when he was spun out by an experienced but overly aggressive competitor in the race's closing minutes. Murillo quickly continued but the damage from the incident – for which the competitor was penalized – ultimately made parking the No. 24 a few laps from the finish the smart move.

Next up for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport Customer Racing teams in IMSA competition is the WeatherTech Championship and Michelin Pilot Challenge weekend at Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, July 30 – August 2.

“We had some pretty poor luck the past couple of races. Now, we had a clean race, not a lot of yellow flags, and this is just a great team. We have great strategy, the guys just did an amazing job on the pit stops, and we were able to work our way up to the front. You just have to rely on what you have accomplished and really try to push on every single lap. Philip did a great job on that restart and managed to get a couple of spots. I did some fuel saving on my stint, I think that really paid off, and we were able to jump one or two cars. We need a little bit of this luck to continue through the rest of the year, and I think we can claw back some of that points lead.”

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

“It was perfect execution by the team. We were a bit unlucky at the race start and got bottled up a bit, but Russell and the team did a great job getting us back to where we needed to be to fight for the win. All props to the team and him. The team did a perfect job on the pit stops and also on the strategy calls. You couldn't ask for more. I am happy with it, taking the win home and closing the gap.”

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

“Having a better car than our results show is the theme of our 2026 season! The Mercedes-AMG GT4 is really strong here and has been for a while. Murillo Racing has had some really good results here at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, Watkins Glen and Mid-Ohio and Laguna Seca before that, so I have felt extraordinarily supported by this entire team, particularly for tracks I haven't been to or only been to once. Unfortunately, the results don't reflect the pace we had, but the starting stint was great, and Kenny did a bang-up job

driving the Mercedes-AMG GT4 right up until the point where he was put in a position outside of his control.”

Aurora Straus, Driver – No. 24 Murillo Racing with P1 Motor Club Mercedes-AMG GT4

“Aurora had another great opening stint, and it's a testament to the hard work she puts into this. As a team, we work really hard to make sure that we hit our potential. We know that if we're just clean and consistent, we will get some good results. Unfortunately, it was a little bit out of our hands at the end, but the Mercedes-AMG GT4 was great. It was pretty difficult when we didn't take front tires when we pitted, so it was two hours on the same fronts. It was tough, but overall, we are super happy with the crew. We had some blazing fast pit stops. I mean, just incredible work from the team. One of the first things I said on the radio to the crew at the end was that there were a lot of positives and we will string it all together. It's just going to take a little time, but there's no other group of people I would want to do this with. Then, the most exciting thing is that we will have the P1 Motor Club up and running soon, and that will give us a racetrack to test and develop on, which will hopefully allow us to show up to races a little bit more prepared.”

Kenny Murillo, Driver – No. 24 Murillo Racing with P1 Motor Club Mercedes-AMG GT4

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