



IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship

Difficult season finale for BMW Team RLL at Road Atlanta.

Road Atlanta (US), 1st October 2016. In the final race of the all-new BMW M6 GTLM's debut season at Road Atlanta (US), BMW Team RLL missed another top result in the 2016 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship (IWSC) due to technical issues.

John Edwards (US), Lucas Luhr (DE) and Kuno Wittmer (CA) came sixth in the GTLM class after ten eventful hours of racing at Petit Le Mans. As had often been the case this season, car number 100 suffered a dose of bad luck at the finale. After two and a half hours the BMW M6 GTLM with Wittmer at the wheel was hit by another competitor and spun off the track. Later on, the alternator had to be repaired during a long stop. Although the team completed this job under yellow, when repairs to the track surface that had broken up were being done, the trio lost several laps that it couldn't make up again by the end of the race.

For several hours it looked as if Bill Auberlen (US), Dirk Werner (DE) and Augusto Farfus (BR) could fight for another podium result for BMW Team RLL. With two hours to go, the number 25 BMW M6 GTLM was running in the final podium position. Unfortunately then bad luck also hit this crew: Long repair work due to a damaged steering rack also made them lose ground – and ultimately forced Auberlen, Werner and Farfus to retire. Victory at the final race of the year went to the number 62 Ferrari.

In January, the new BMW M6 GTLM celebrated its race debut at the 24-hour race in Daytona (US) and mastered this first test of strength at this marathon by finishing fifth. Three podium finishes were recorded by the team during the course of the season, at Sebring (US), Watkins Glen (US) and Road America (US).

Petit Le Mans also marked the end of the debut season in the GTD class for the Turner Motorsport team with the newly developed BMW M6 GT3. Will Turner (US) and his team celebrated two wins – recording one in the IWSC race at Mosport (CA) and another coming in Austin (US). BMW works driver Jens Klingmann (DE) and Bret Curtis (US) topped the podium on both occasions. In Road Atlanta, the duo was supported by Ashley Freiberg (US) and had to retire shortly before the chequered flag with the number 96 BMW M6 GT3. Their team-mates Michael Marsal (US), Markus Palttala (FI) und Cameron Lawrence (US) finished fourth in the GTD class with the number 97 sister car.

Next year's IMSA WeatherTech Championship begins on 28th/29th January 2017. The 24 Hours of Daytona will kick off another exciting season, including a total of 11 races scheduled for the GTLM class.

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Jens Marquardt (BMW Motorsport Director):

"The race in Road Atlanta was a turbulent conclusion to a thrilling debut season with the BMW M6 GTLM in North America. Unfortunately BMW Team RLL missed out on another top result at Petit Le Mans this year. However, two pole positions and three podium finishes in the new car's debut season is a result we can build on for next year. The whole team, in Munich and at RLL in the USA, worked hard to make use of the experience gained and to improve our overall package, race by race. Thanks for all the hard work and dedication. We will now prepare in detail for the new season – and we will be ready to attack at the 2017 24-hour race in Daytona. A big thank you also goes to our customer team of Turner Motorsport. With its two wins in the GTD category, Will Turner's crew successfully proved the competitiveness of the new BMW M6 GT3 here in North America."

Bobby Rahal (Team Principal, BMW Team RLL):

"It is a disappointing end to the year. The 25 car was having quite a good race and maybe could have had a podium, but it had issues at the end. The 100 car got taken out by a Ford GT early on, then we had an alternator failure because of that later on. Everyone worked so hard this year and I feel bad of the team and bad for the drivers as you hate to end it on this note. That is racing. Now we put our heads down and get ready for next year and hopefully have a much better one."

John Edwards (Number 100 BMW M6 GTLM, 6th place):

"It was a hard race and a hard season. I think we learned a lot about the car this year, but unfortunately we don't have a lot to show for it. We have a lot planned for the off season in the way of testing. I am optimistic for next year, and looking forward to putting this season to the back of my memory."

Lucas Luhr (Number 100 BMW M6 GTLM, 6th place):

"The season in a way ended exactly as it had started – with a disappointing result. We wanted to finish the season with a respectable result, maybe even a podium. But this just wasn't to be. Nevertheless, this is racing."

Kuno Wittmer (Number 100 BMW M6 GTLM, 6th place):

"The race didn't go according to plan. The accident with car number 67 was a race changer. Maybe he didn't expect me defending my position that hard, then he made a mistake. We managed to go on, but then the technical issues occurred. We will come back stronger next year."

Bill Auberlen (Number 25 BMW M6 GTLM, DNF):

"The car was good at times, but we are just not where we want to be, as we want to be fighting up front. Right now we are not at that point and hopefully we can get better, come back next year and put our footsteps on the top of the podium. Today I am very disappointed."

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Dirk Werner (Number 25 BMW M6 GTLM, DNF):

"That was very disappointing, especially as, until we ran into the problems with our car, we were running strong. We had the pace. Definitely that was not the way we wanted to end the season, as it would have been nice to end it on the podium. The team tried to repair the car, they didn't give up and showed that they always give everything, but in the end the car could not be repaired in the time we had left."

Augusto Farfus (Number 25 BMW M6 GTLM, DNF):

"This was the first time since 2011 that I have been here and it hasn't rained. I think my stint was strong. I had good pace, good fights on the track and made some positions up. It was all looking good. I think Dirk and Bill did brilliant jobs and unfortunately what happened to us is racing."

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