Porsche triumphs in the “Petit Le Mans” at Road Atlanta

04/10/2026 The Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG factory team won the season finale of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship with the Porsche 963. Factory drivers Kévin Estre of France, Laurens Vanthoor of Belgium, and Matt Campbell of Australia took the win in the 10-hour “Petit Le Mans” race. For the first time ever, a manufacturer managed to win the endurance classics at Daytona, Sebring, and Road Atlanta in a single season. At the season finale in the U.S. state of Georgia, Porsche once again clinched the manufacturers', teams', and drivers' titles in the IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup.

The “Petit Le Mans” at Road Atlanta marked the conclusion of the 2026 season. A total of 16 safety car deployments, a red-flag interruption, and heavy rain in the early stages repeatedly shook up the order. The race was ultimately decided in a 12-minute sprint. Laurens Vanthoor successfully fended off all attacks from the competition. The No. 6 Porsche 963 ultimately crossed the finish line with a lead of 1.205 seconds.

“Congratulations to the entire team and to our drivers. That was an incredibly strong performance,” said Thomas Laudenbach, Vice President Porsche Motorsport. “This victory is historic. For the first time,

Porsche has won the 'Petit Le Mans' in the top class with a prototype. This success simply feels great. After a strong start to the season, we went through a long, difficult slump. Today, we witnessed motorsports at its finest across all classes. Our customer teams were also very successful with the Porsche 911 GT3 R. Congratulations to everyone involved!"

"What Laurens Vanthoor delivered in the final stages was simply impressive. On top of that, he also had to drive conservatively to make sure the fuel would last until the end," says Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh. "It's a nice way to wrap up a season that wasn't always easy. The 'Petit Le Mans' was tough for all the competitors. There were a lot of incidents and yellow flag periods. Our No. 7 car was also affected. I'm glad that Felipe Nasr wasn't injured."

Porsche Penske Motorsport's No. 7 car also made its mark on the IMSA series season finale. The winning car from Daytona and Sebring ran at the front alongside its sister car for long stretches. However, about 90 minutes before the end, reality set in: Felipe Nasr made contact with a competitor while passing and was forced to retire due to an accident. The Brazilian shared the hybrid prototype with Laurin Heinrich from Germany and Julien Andlauer from France.

Porsche finished the 2026 season in second place in the manufacturers' standings. Former Porsche Junior Laurin Heinrich finished his first season behind the wheel of the Porsche 963 as runner-up. As in the previous two years, the titles in the IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup once again went to Porsche. This special classification encompasses the major endurance races at Daytona, Sebring, Watkins Glen, Road America, and Road Atlanta.

Even after the conclusion of this year's IMSA season, the Porsche 963 remains the most successful car since the introduction of the LMDh regulations in 2023. Over the past four years, the Stuttgart-based 'Sportwagenschmiede' has secured a total of eight titles in the North American racing series. The hybrid prototype from Weissach has won 15 races in the process.

JDC-Miller MotorSports strikes bad luck in the final third of the race

The Porsche 963 from the JDC-Miller MotorSports customer team did not see the checkered flag in the finale. About two hours before the end of the race, the No. 5 car was forced off the track while lapping several GT cars and crashed into the barriers. Tijmen van der Helm was uninjured in the incident. The Dutch driver shared the Laguna Seca-winning car with factory driver Nico Müller from Switzerland and American Kaylen Frederick.

GT Classes: "Halloween-Rexy" celebrates another podium finish

In the GTD Pro class, the two Porsche 911 GT3 R cars from AO Racing and Manthey put on a great show. Both customer teams led the field at various points. Right up until the finish, the 911s battled it out for the class victory. In the end, the AO Racing race car nicknamed "Rexy" finished in second place,

while Manthey's identical car dropped back to seventh place shortly before the end due to a lack of fuel.

In the GTD category, the 911 GT3 R entered under the Manthey 1st Phorm entry finished in second place. The identical cars from Wright Motorsports and RS1 led the race several times over the course of the ten hours but ultimately had to settle for seventh and twelfth places.

Drivers' comments on the race

Laurens Vanthoor (Porsche 963 #6): "I have no idea how we pulled this off. We all did a perfect job: Porsche, the Porsche Penske Motorsport team, and us drivers in the cockpit. A difficult season is thus coming to an end with an absolute highlight. After this nail-biter at Road Atlanta, I'm exhausted and very happy."

Kévin Estre (Porsche 963 #6): "What a wonderful evening! We in the #6 car have had so much bad luck this season. We've finally secured a big win. Many thanks to the entire team. Behind a success like this at the track lies the work of 40 or even 50 people. Everything has to come together. My teammates were absolutely incredible today. A special thank you to Laurens Vanthoor, who put up a great fight during the final stint. As far as I'm concerned, he's the man of the race!"

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 963 #7): "Our race came to a premature end after an unfortunate incident in the closing stages. We were always right up there at the front; things were going really well. Unfortunately, that's how it sometimes goes in motorsports. Especially in a race like the 'Petit Le Mans.' It's a somewhat sad ending to a great season. I'm proud of our victories at Daytona and Sebring. Thanks to everyone who supported us along the way."

Nick Tandy (Porsche 911 GT3 R #77): "It was an intense race, as always at 'Petit Le Mans.' I'm feeling a mix of joy and disappointment. We were so close to winning our class. We were just 1.5 seconds short in the end. Our car was really strong, and the team delivered a flawless performance. It was a pleasure to compete in the race. It was a great way to end the season."

Riccardo Pera (Porsche 911 GT3 R #912): "The podium finish is, of course, very nice. I gave it my all and was very close to the leader a few times. In the end, though, we didn't have a realistic chance at the class victory. We would have loved to give our teammate Ryan Hardwick one last big triumph to cap off his racing career. We missed that by a mere 0.7 seconds."

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Image Sublines

Path: Porsche triumphs in the "Petit Le Mans" at Road Atlanta/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Race 11, Braselton, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh

Path: Porsche triumphs in the "Petit Le Mans" at Road Atlanta/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Laurens Vanthoor (BEL), Matt Campbell (AUS), Kévin Estre (FRA) (l-r), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6), IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Race 11, Braselton, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Laurens Vanthoor, Matt Campbell, Kévin Estre (l-r)

Path: Porsche triumphs in the "Petit Le Mans" at Road Atlanta/Images/img_7.jpg
Title: Kévin Estre (FRA), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6), IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Race 11, Braselton, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Kévin Estre

Path: Porsche triumphs in the "Petit Le Mans" at Road Atlanta/Images/img_8.jpg
Title: Laurin Heinrich (DEU), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#7), IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Race 11, Braselton, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Laurin Heinrich

Path: Porsche triumphs in the "Petit Le Mans" at Road Atlanta/Images/img_9.jpg
Title: Nick Tandy (GBR), AO Racing (#77), IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Race 11, Braselton, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Nick Tandy

Path: Porsche triumphs in the "Petit Le Mans" at Road Atlanta/Images/img_10.jpg
Title: Riccardo Pera (ITA), Manthey 1st Phorm (#912), IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Race 11, Braselton, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Riccardo Pera

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