

Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen

29/06/2026 The Porsche 963 is back on the podium in the IMSA Championship: customer team JDC-Miller MotorSports finished third in the six-hour race at Watkins Glen. The Porsche factory team finished the sixth round of the season in fifth and sixth places. In the GTD class, the customer teams Manthey 1st Phorm and Wright Motorsports took the top two places with the 911 GT3 R.

Watkins Glen, N.Y. The six-hour endurance race in upstate New York was marked by accidents and eight safety car deployments for much of the race. Thanks to sound tactics and strong performances from works driver Laurin Heinrich from Germany and his teammates Tijmen van der Helm from the Netherlands and Kaylen Frederick from the U.S., JDC-Miller MotorSports ultimately secured third place overall and in the GTP class. The two hybrid prototypes from Weissach fielded by the Porsche Penske Motorsport factory team were also on course for a podium finish at times before finishing fifth and sixth for the No. 7 and the No. 6 cars, respectively.

"As expected, the race was difficult for us," Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh, said. "We got the most out of our two factory cars under these conditions. Porsche Penske Motorsport seized every opportunity that arose and performed flawlessly. That was all that was possible today. Congratulations to our customer team, JDC-Miller MotorSports. The entire team there, along with our factory driver Laurin Heinrich, did a very good job."

Porsche remains in second place after the sixth race of the season in the IMSA manufacturers' championship. Laurin Heinrich is second in the drivers' championship, while the works driver pairings of Nasr/Andlauer and Estre/Vanthoor occupy fourth and sixth places respectively. In the IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup, which comprises the endurance races at Daytona, Sebring, Watkins Glen, Road America and Road Atlanta, Porsche remains at the top of the standings.

Porsche 911 GT3 R puts in a strong performance in both GT classes

In the GTD Pro class, AO Racing suffered a stroke of bad luck. Thanks to a good strategy and clean driving, the two Britons Nick Tandy and Harry King were in contention for victory in the Porsche 911 GT3 R nicknamed "Rexy" right up until the waning moments of the race. However, a late drive-through penalty dropped the team back to eighth place, just 18 minutes before the checkered flag. For Manthey's car number 911, the race was over after two hours: while running in fourth place, Dutch driver and 2024 Porsche Carrera Cup North America champion Loek Hartog made contact with the barriers at Turn 6, causing irreparable damage to the team's 911.

Things went better for Porsche Motorsport's customer teams in the GTD category. The Manthey 1st Phorm 911 GT3 R, driven by factory driver Richard Lietz from Austria and his team-mates Ryan Hardwick (USA) and Riccardo Pera (Italy), secured a class victory with a well-timed pit stop that gave them enough energy to get to the finish. Second place went to American Adam Adelson, Briton Callum Ilott and Porsche Motorsport North America Selected Driver Tom Sargent from Australia, who crossed the line in the identical car from Wright Motorsports. The 911 from RS1 finished the race in ninth place.

The seventh round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship will take place on July 12 at Canadian Tire Motorsports Park near Toronto. Only the LMP2, GTD Pro and GTD classes will compete there. The next outing for the Porsche 963 in the top GTP category will be on August 2 at Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. That six-hour race forms part of the IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup for the first time in 2026.

Further information and links

High-resolution photos: Porsche at Watkins Glen
All results and overall standings: Alkamelsystems
75 Years of Porsche Motorsport: The history of #Raceborn
Watkins Glen statistics: The race in numbers

Drivers' comments on the race

Kévin Estre (Porsche 963 #6): "At times, we were quite far ahead with our car. However, we had one drawback: in order to keep up with the pace at the front, we used more fuel. That meant longer refueling times during the pit stops. We achieved a good result given our circumstances. Hopefully we'll be right up there again in the next race."

Julien Andlauer (Porsche 963 #7): "We've had a few frustrating race weekends now. Despite everyone involved doing a very good job, we couldn't manage better than fifth and sixth place. We're not going to let it get us down, though. We'll be back on the attack at Road America next month."

Laurin Heinrich (Porsche 963 #5): "What a rollercoaster ride we've been on! I made good progress up the field during my first stint, but then we suffered significant setbacks that temporarily set us back a lap. Nevertheless, we stayed calm throughout and got on with the job. That allowed us to fight our way up from last place to third. It was great fun. Thanks to all my colleagues in the GTP class. Together, we thrilled the fans today with some fair battles."

Ryan Hardwick (Porsche 911 GT3 R #912): "We fought our way from the very back to the front. That was really impressive. I also drove alongside Richard Lietz and Riccardo Pera at the 2025 WEC season finale in Bahrain. There, too, we fought our way from the back to victory – and even to the title. Everyone drove brilliantly today and the team was perfect. In a race full of incidents, we made it through the distance cleanly and are now celebrating a fantastic victory."

Adam Adelson (Porsche 911 GT3 R #120): "I'm thrilled! In recent years, Porsche's GT cars have often been unlucky at Watkins Glen. It's wonderful that we've rewritten that story today. I'm delighted, but at the same time I'm naturally a little disappointed: we finished second behind another Porsche. That means we, too, actually had everything we needed for a win. Congratulations to our colleagues at Manthey. They did a great job and deserve it."

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Image Sublines

Path: Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: Urs Kuratle, Director Factory Motorsport LMDh, Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 6, Watkins Glen, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Urs Kuratle (Director Factory Motorsport LMDh)

Path: Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Porsche 911 GT3 R, Manthey 1st Phorm (#912), Ryan Hardwick (USA), Riccardo Pera (ITA), Richard Lietz (AUT), Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 6, Watkins Glen, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Porsche 911 GT3 R, Manthey 1st Phorm (#912), Ryan Hardwick (USA), Riccardo Pera (ITA), Richard Lietz (AUT)

Path: Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: Kévin Estre (FRA), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6), Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 6, Watkins Glen, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Kévin Estre (FRA), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#6)

Path: Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: Julien Andlauer (FRA), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#7), Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 6, Watkins Glen, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Julien Andlauer (FRA), Porsche Penske Motorsport (#7)

Path: Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen/Images/img_5.jpg
Title: Laurin Heinrich (DEU), Kaylen Frederick (USA), Tijmen van der Helm (NLD) (l-r), JDC-Miller MotorSports (#5), Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 6, Watkins Glen, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Laurin Heinrich (DEU), Kaylen Frederick (USA), Tijmen van der Helm (NLD) (l-r), JDC-Miller MotorSports (#5)

Path: Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Ryan Hardwick (USA), Riccardo Pera (ITA), Richard Lietz (AUT) (l-r), Manthey 1st Phorm (#912), Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 6, Watkins Glen, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Ryan Hardwick (USA), Riccardo Pera (ITA), Richard Lietz (AUT) (l-r), Manthey 1st Phorm (#912)

Path: Porsche secures a podium finish for the 963 and a one-two in the GT class at Watkins Glen/Images/img_7.jpg
Title: Callum Ilott (GBR), Adam Adelson (USA), Tom Sargent (AUS) (l-r), Wright Motorsports (#120), Race, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Round 6, Watkins Glen, USA, 2026, Porsche AG
Subline: Callum Ilott (GBR), Adam Adelson (USA), Tom Sargent (AUS) (l-r), Wright Motorsports (#120)

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