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CSM Signs Ayrton Houk as Ismaeel Ellahi Steps Up to Michelin Pilot Challenge GS

Both CSM GS entries transition to Aston Martin Vantage AMR GT4 EVO machinery for the final three rounds; Houk's four-race agreement also includes the Pirelli GT4 America finale at Indianapolis



Ismaeel Ellahi



Ayrton Houk

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. - August 12, 2026 - Czabok-Simpson Motorsport (CSM) today announced that Ayrton Houk will join the team for the final three rounds of the 2026 IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge season, beginning at VIRginia International Raceway on the August 21-23 race weekend. Houk will share CSM's No. 3 GS entry with Ismaeel Ellahi, who steps up from the IMSA VP Racing SportsCar Challenge for the same three-race program.

The CSM GS No. 3 lineup will contest VIR, Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta. CSM regulars Gordon Scully and Morgan Burkhard will continue together in the team's No. 2 GS entry, giving CSM two Aston Martin Vantage AMR GT4 EVO cars for the balance of the championship.

The manufacturer transition is a strategic move ahead of the 2027 season. CSM will switch both Michelin Pilot Challenge entries from the Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport to the Aston Martin Vantage AMR GT4 EVO platform, allowing the team to accelerate its technical development program across two cars while continuing to pursue results in the final three rounds.

Scully and Burkhard enter VIR ninth in the 2026 Michelin Pilot Challenge GS Championship standings. Their season includes a runner-up finish at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca, and the continuity of the No. 2 pairing will provide an important benchmark as CSM introduces the Aston Martin to its Michelin Pilot Challenge operation.

"Moving both cars to the Aston Martin now is an important step in our preparation for 2027. It gives our engineers and drivers three race weekends to build a meaningful base of knowledge in Michelin Pilot Challenge conditions. Ayrton has already tested with us several times and has consistently impressed the team with his pace, feedback and approach. Ismaeel's development in such a short period has been exceptional, and his CTMP victory showed that he is ready for this next challenge. Gordon and Morgan give us the experience and continuity we need, so we believe these lineups create a very strong foundation for the rest of this season and for 2027."

- Stephen Simpson, CSM co-owner

Houk begins four-race CSM program

Houk's agreement covers the three remaining Michelin Pilot Challenge rounds plus the SRO Motorsports Group's Pirelli GT4 America season finale at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, October 8-11. His co-driver for the GT4 America event will be announced at a later date.

The 23-year-old from McCordsville, Indiana, is a Purdue University finance student and a 2023 Team USA Scholarship recipient. Houk's versatile background includes Formula Ford 1600, USF2000, Kenyon and Allstar midget racing, Formula 1000 and pavement sprint cars, along with experience in Porsche GT4 and GT3 Cup machinery. Before signing the four-race agreement, Houk completed multiple tests with CSM, giving both driver and team an established working relationship ahead of his GT4 race debut.

"The testing I have done with CSM gave me a real appreciation for how the team works and how committed everyone is to performance. To now join the Michelin Pilot Challenge program for VIR, Indianapolis and Road Atlanta is a huge opportunity. I am excited to share the No. 3 with Ismaeel, learn the Aston Martin quickly and contribute to the team's preparation for 2027. Adding the GT4 America finale at my home track in Indianapolis makes this four-race program even more special."

- Ayrton Houk

Ellahi continues rapid rise from sim racing

Ellahi's move to Michelin Pilot Challenge continues one of the most unusual development stories in the IMSA paddock. The 19-year-old American-Pakistani driver from Mountain Lakes, New Jersey, began sim racing only two years ago and made his first transition into car racing in 2025 after attending Skip Barber's Formula 4 school. He has since gained GT4 experience in Europe and the United States, including the GT4 European Series and Porsche Sprint Challenge Deutschland.

Despite having completed only eight car races, Ellahi has already become a consistent IMSA podium contender. He finished second in his IMSA VP Racing SportsCar Challenge debut at Daytona, added further podiums during the 2026 season and earned his first victory at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park on July 12. The CTMP win came in CSM's newly introduced No. 25 Aston Martin Vantage AMR GT4 EVO and made Ellahi the first known driver of Pakistani heritage to win an IMSA-sanctioned race.

Ellahi is also the only known driver of Pakistani heritage currently competing at this level of professional sports car racing in the United States, providing a distinctive point of representation as he advances into Michelin Pilot Challenge competition.



"Two years ago, I was sim racing in my basement, and after only eight car races I am now preparing to make my Michelin Pilot Challenge debut. Winning at CTMP was an unforgettable moment, but it also made me even more motivated for this next step. I am grateful to CSM, my family, my partners and everyone who has helped me progress so quickly. I am especially proud to represent my Pakistani heritage at this level, and I hope this opportunity shows other young drivers that there can be a path into professional motorsport even if they start in a simulator."

- Ismaeel Ellahi

Scully and Burkhard lead No. 2 Aston Martin transition

Scully and Burkhard will remain together in the No. 2 entry as CSM's established Michelin Pilot Challenge pairing. Their experience, communication and season-long championship perspective will be central to the team's two-car Aston Martin development program across the closing rounds.



Gordon Scully – Stephen Simpson – Morgan Burkhard

"We are still focused on finishing the championship as strongly as possible, and the Aston Martin gives us a fresh technical challenge for the final three races. Morgan and I have built a strong working relationship, and with two cars collecting data we should be able to learn quickly. I am looking forward to helping CSM establish a competitive baseline for 2027 while continuing to fight for results this year."

- Gordon Scully

"The timing of this transition gives us a valuable head start. We already know how Gordon and I communicate inside the No. 2 program, and now we can apply that consistency to learning the Aston Martin. Having Ayrton and Ismaeel in the No. 3 creates another strong source of feedback, and I am excited to work together across both cars to move the program forward."

- Morgan Burkhard

Remaining 2026 CSM program

- IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge - VIRginia International Raceway: August 21-23
- IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge - Indianapolis Motor Speedway: September 18-20
- IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge - Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta: September 30-October 3
- Pirelli GT4 America - Indianapolis Motor Speedway: October 8-11

About Ayrton Houk

Ayrton Houk is an American race driver from McCordsville, Indiana, with experience across open-wheel, oval and sports car competition. A 2023 Team USA Scholarship recipient and Purdue University finance student, Houk has competed in Formula Ford, USF2000 and midget racing and has tested GT4 and GT3 Cup machinery. His partners and community relationships include Wings and Wheels Foundation and Little Red Door Cancer Agency. Learn more at www.AyrtonHoukRacing.com

About Ismaeel Ellahi

Ismaeel Ellahi is a 19-year-old American-Pakistani race driver from Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. After beginning in sim racing, he moved into race cars in 2025 and rapidly progressed into GT4 competition in Europe and the United States. In 2026 he joined CSM in the IMSA VP Racing SportsCar Challenge, earning multiple podiums and his first IMSA victory at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park. Learn more at www.IsmaeelEllahiRacing.com

About Czabok-Simpson Motorsport (CSM) www.czaboksimpsonmotorsport.com

Czabok-Simpson Motorsport (CSM) is a professional race team founded by Stephen Simpson and Matthias Czabok, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, one of the leading motorsport hubs in the United States.

Built on more than 30 years of combined motorsport experience, CSM brings together a proven background in team ownership, professional driving, driver development, and race program management across IMSA, WEC, IndyCar, and Champ Car. The team was created with a clear focus: to provide competitive, well-structured racing programs for drivers who want to progress, perform, and be part of a professional team environment.

CSM currently operates multi-car programs in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge, IMSA VP Racing SportsCar Challenge, and Porsche Carrera Cup North America. In 2026, the team competes with Aston Martin Vantage AMR GT4 Evo and Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS Clubsport machinery, delivering strong results that include multiple podium finishes and a victory at CTMP earlier this season.



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