**KIA RACING EYES PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE GTS POINTS LEAD HEADING INTO ROUNDS SIX AND SEVEN AT DETROIT BELLE ISLE**

*Driver of the No. 38 Optima turbo, Mark Wilkins, Currently Third in Championship Standings after Podium Finish at Circuit of the Americas*

* Nic Jönsson, No. 36, currently ninth in Championship standings, looks to bounce back after promising run in Austin was cut short by late-race incident
* Kia Racing returns to Detroit’s Belle Isle after making history in 2012, becoming the first Korean manufacturer to race on the historic island road course

**Irvine, Calif., May 30, 2013** – Kia Racing is riding a wave of momentum into the Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix, May 31-June 2, having scored the team’s first podium finish of the 2013 Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) season in Austin, Texas, two weeks ago. Kia Motors America’s (KMA) racing partner Kinetic Motorsports had to execute a quick turnaround to make preparations for the Motown event, including repairing damage to the No. 36 Optima turbo of Nic Jönsson, who narrowly missed a top-three finish in Austin due to a late-race incident. Meanwhile, teammate Mark Wilkins, pilot of the No. 38 Kia Racing Optima, currently holds third in the Grand Touring Sport (GTS) Driver Championship and has set his sights on the title-chase leaders during Rounds Six and Seven at a newly reconfigured 2.3-mile Belle Isle circuit.

“We learned a lot about this bumpy street circuit after running here last year for the first time, and this year’s new track layout opens up a bit, allowing the Optima more room to stretch its legs,” said Wilkins who, after fighting handling issues, finished 11th and 15th here in 2012. “The guys at Kinetic always do a great job of prepping the Optima, and it’s my job to go out there and perform with the goal of winning a championship for Kia at the end of the season. I’m looking forward to getting back on track and hopefully closing the gap on the top two in the GTS standings.”

-more-

With just two weeks between the May 18-19 races at Austin, Texas’ Circuit of the Americas (COTA) and the doubleheader at Belle Isle, the team had barely enough time to wring the celebratory champagne from second-place finisher Wilkins’ driving suit. The turnaround task was made more challenging by the need to repair damage Jönsson’s No. 36 Optima suffered in the closing laps at COTA.

“The crew did an amazing job this past week working to get the cars ready for Detroit, and I’m hoping to reward their hard work with a result that will put our COTA disappointment behind us. The Belle Isle track has changed a bit from what we ran last year and the changes should benefit the Optima a little more,” said Jönsson, who hasn’t raced on Belle Isle since a 1999 stint behind the wheel of Super Touring car. “I’m looking forward to getting out there to see just how much the track has changed.”

While many may not associate the Kia brand with Motown, nearly 100 Kia Motors America (KMA) guests from the company’s nearby research and development center outside Ann Arbor, Mich., will be on hand to watch the action unfold in Detroit. Jönsson continued, “It’s always gratifying to race in front of your fans – especially engineers who are usually gearheads like us – so we’re going to do our best to put on a good show for them.” In addition, the race team will visit Detroit-area dealer Kia of Canton on Friday, May 31 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. ET as part of a special race-week sales promotion for fans and Kia customers.

Televised coverage of Rounds Six and Seven from Detroit Belle Isle is scheduled to air Sunday, June 16 at 5 p.m. ET on the NBC Sports Network. Race fans can always tune in online for live race coverage at www.world-challengetv.com, and catch the latest news and updates from the track at www.facebook.com/kiaracing and can follow the team on Twitter at @KiaRacing.

-more-

**Kia: One of the World’s Fastest Moving Global Automotive Brands**

Kia Motors America is one of only three auto brands to increase U.S. sales in each of the past four years, and in 2012 the company surpassed the 500,000 unit mark for the first time. With a full line of fun-to-drive cars and CUVs, Kia is advancing value to new levels of sophistication by combining European-influenced styling – under the guidance of chief design officer Peter Schreyer – with cutting-edge technologies, premium amenities, affordable pricing and the lowest cost of ownership in the industry. Kia recently joined the exclusive ranks of Interbrand’s “Top 100 Best Global Brands,” and is poised to continue its momentum with seven all-new or significantly redesigned vehicles scheduled to arrive in showrooms in 2013. Over the past decade Kia Motors has invested more than $1.4 billion in the U.S., including the company’s first U.S. assembly plant in West Point, Georgia – Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia – which is responsible for the creation of more than 11,000 plant and supplier jobs. The success of the U.S.-built\* Optima and Sorento in two of the industry’s largest segments has fueled Kia’s rapid growth and is complemented by Kia’s comprehensive lineup which includes the Cadenza flagship sedan, Soul urban passenger vehicle, Sportage compact CUV, Optima Hybrid, the Forte sedan, 5-door and Koup compacts, Rio and Rio 5-door sub-compacts and the Sedona minivan.

**About Kia Motors America**

 Kia Motors America is the marketing and distribution arm of Kia Motors Corporation based in Seoul, South Korea. KMA offers a complete line of vehicles through more than 765 dealers throughout the United States and serves as the "Official Automotive Partner" of the NBA. In 2012, KMA recorded its best-ever annual sales total and gained U.S. market share for the 18th consecutive year. Kia is poised to continue its momentum and will continue to build the brand through design innovation, quality, value, advanced safety features and new technologies.

Information about Kia Motors America and its full vehicle line-up is available at its website – www.kia.com. For media information, including photography, visit www.kiamedia.com. To receive custom email notifications for press releases the moment they are published, subscribe at http://www.kiamedia.com/us/en/newsalert.

**\* The Sorento and Optima GDI (EX Trims and certain LX Trims only) and GDI Turbo are built in the United States from U.S. and globally sourced parts.**

# # #