**KIA RACING HOLDS PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP LEAD HEADING TO SONOMA RACEWAY FOR PENULTIMATE DOUBLEHEADER RACE WEEKEND**

*Kia Leads Pirelli World Challenge Grand Touring Sport (GTS) Manufacturer Championship by a Nine-Point Margin Ahead of Ford, Chevrolet, Porsche, Nissan and Aston Martin*

* No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima turbo driver Mark Wilkins leads GTS Driver Championship by 143 points with four races remaining
* Nic Jönsson, pilot of No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima turbo, currently second in Driver Championship title chase

**Irvine, Calif., August 21, 2014** – Coming off back-to-back podium finishes during rounds 11 and 12 of the Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, Kia Racing takes its championship lead to the picturesque vineyards of northern California for rounds 13 and 14 in the penultimate weekend at Sonoma Raceway. With only four races remaining in the 16-race PWC season, Kia currently leads the Grand Touring Sport (GTS) Manufacturer Championship by a nine-point margin, ahead of rivals Ford, Chevrolet, Porsche, Nissan and Aston Martin. Kia Racing’s Mark Wilkins, driver of the No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima turbo, leads the GTS Driver Championship by 143 points, while teammate Nic Jönsson, pilot of the No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima, is currently second.

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“It’s been a remarkable season for our team, and a large part of the credit goes to our Kia Optimas – they’ve been rock solid. But we’ll have to work hard and remained focused in these last two events to have a shot at the championship,” said Wilkins. “I think we will be competitive at Sonoma Raceway with the package we’re bringing; the racetrack suits the Optima well. We all know what’s at stake, so we need to do what we’ve done all year and execute at the highest level.”

Kia Racing looks to make its own special blend of racing red in Sonoma’s wine country with the crimson-and-white turbocharged Optimas, which have already scored an impressive 14 podium finishes this season – including five race wins.

“This will be our third year competing at Sonoma with our Kia Optimas, and we will use the data from those previous years to help us bring the best setup for this year,” said Jönsson. “But nothing ever remains static in racing. The rest of the field will apply their own lessons learned from past seasons, and the already-fierce level of competition will ratchet up even higher as we get closer and closer to the end of the season. The goal remains the same for Mark and I: score as many points as possible in pursuit of a Manufacturer Championship for Kia.”

Rounds 13 and 14 at Sonoma Raceway take place Saturday, August 23, at 2:35 p.m. PT and Sunday, August 24, at 4:40 p.m. PT, respectively. NBC Sports Network will air the televised coverage of the GTS rounds on Saturday, August 30, at 1:00 p.m. ET. Fans can also watch live streaming online at www.world-challengetv.com, and race fans can keep up-to-date with the team via the Kia Racing Facebook page at www.facebook.com/kiaracing and by following along on Twitter: @KiaRacing.

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**About Kia Motors America**

Kia Motors America (KMA) is the marketing and distribution arm of Kia Motors Corporation based in Seoul, South Korea. KMA proudly serves as the "Official Automotive Partner" of the NBA and LPGA and surpassed the 500,000 annual sales mark for the second consecutive year in 2013 following the launch of seven all-new or significantly redesigned vehicles. KMA offers a complete line of vehicles, including the rear-drive K900 flagship sedan[[1]](#endnote-1), Cadenza premium sedan, Sorento CUV, Soul urban passenger vehicle, Sportage compact CUV, Optima midsize sedan, Optima Hybrid, the Forte compact sedan, Forte5 and Forte Koup, Rio and Rio 5-door sub-compacts and the Sedona midsize multi-purpose vehicle, through a network of more than 765 dealers across the United States. Kia’s U.S. manufacturing plant in West Point, Georgia, builds the Optima\* and Sorento\* and is responsible for the creation of more than 14,000 plant and supplier jobs.

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

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1. **\*The Sorento and Optima GDI (EX, SX & Limited and certain LX Trims only) are assembled in the United States from U.S. and globally sourced parts.**

 2015 K900 V8 available in select trims and in select markets with limited availability. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)