**DEFENDING MULTIPLE MANUFACTURER CHAMPIONSHIPS, KIA RETURNS TO MID-OHIO SPORTS CAR COURSE TWICE IN TWO WEEKS FOR PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE ACTION**

*Kia Racing Grand Touring Sport (GTS) teammates Mark Wilkins (No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima) and Ben Clucas (No. 36 DonorsChoose.Org Optima) take to the track July 31-Aug. 1 looking to build on recent podium finishes at Road America*

* Defending Touring Car A (TCA) class Driver Champion, Rookie of the Year, and Ohio-native Jason Wolfe, in the No. 36 Richard Wolfe Trucking Kia Forte Koup, looks to extend points lead at his home track Aug. 13-15
* Every Kia model that raced in 2014 won a National Championship in its respective class: Optima, Forte Koup, and Rio 5-door

**IRVINE, Calif., July 29, 2015** – As defending Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) Grand Touring Sport (GTS) Manufacturer Champion, Kia is building momentum heading into Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course for rounds 11-12, July 31-Aug. 1. Just over halfway through the 2015 PWC season, Kia Racing has five podium finishes following back-to-back top-three results in rounds nine and 10 at Road America, and Kia currently sits third in the GTS Manufacturer Championship ahead of Nissan, Chevrolet, and Porsche, but trailing Ford and Aston Martin. Kia Racing Optima pilots, Mark Wilkins and Ben Clucas, are sixth and seventh in the GTS driver standings, respectively. Wilkins prepares for his fourth year behind the wheel of the No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S Optima turbo at Mid-Ohio, where he’s recorded two podiums, including a win in 2013, while teammate Ben Clucas, in the No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima turbo, is returning for the first time since 2011, when he drove a BMW M3 for Kinetic Motorsports.

 “We’ve had a lot of success in the past at Mid-Ohio, and with its aerodynamic shape and turbo power, the Optima performs very well on the track’s fast sweepers and long straights. It’s a circuit where you can find a good rhythm and really have fun, and we’ll need to do just that this weekend to get up front and stay there,” said Wilkins, who has finished seventh or higher in his six previous races at Mid-Ohio. “Both Ben and I finished on the podium at Road America, so hopefully, that gives us the momentum we need to get a good result at Mid-Ohio and accelerate our defense of Kia’s Manufacturer Championship title during the second half of the season.”

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While the factory-backed GTS Optimas compete in rounds 11 and 12 at Mid-Ohio July 31- Aug. 2, the Kinetic Motorsports Kia Forte Koup privateer program hits the track for rounds 10, 11 and 12 of the Touring Car A (TCA) season just two weeks later. Defending 2014 PWC TCA Driver Champion and Rookie of the Year, Jason Wolfe, is no stranger to the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, having grown up in nearby Mount Vernon, Ohio. Wolfe, whose performance last season also earned Kia the TCA Manufacturer Championship, has a strong connection to the track where he regularly serves as a driving instructor.

“Mid-Ohio is definitely my favorite track. As a driving instructor here, I am very familiar with its nuances and look forward to putting on a good show for my friends and family,” said Wolfe who currently leads the TCA driver points.

Rounding out Kia’s 2014 championship sweep, is defending Sports Car Club America (SCCA) B-Spec National Champion Kyle Keenan in his No. 44 Kia Rio 5-door. Keenan, who recently won a doubleheader SCCA Western Conference Major, will aim to repeat as national champion at the 2015 SCCA Runoffs in October at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Florida.

GTS round 11 of the PWC at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course takes place Friday, July 31, at 5:40 p.m. ET.  Round 12 begins Saturday, August 1, at 11:45 a.m. ET.  Tape-delayed televised coverage of the GTS doubleheader weekend will air on the CBS Sports Network Wednesday, August 12, at 9:00 p.m. ET.

TCA round 10 takes place Friday, August 14, at 9:30 a.m. ET, followed by round 11 at 12:15 p.m. ET. Round 12 is scheduled for Saturday, August 15, at 9:55 a.m. ET. Live-streamed coverage of all PWC races is available online at www.world-challengetv.com, and race fans can keep up-to-date with the Kia Racing team via the Kia Motors America Facebook and Instagram pages, and on Twitter @Kia.

**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 set an all-time annual sales record in 2014, surpassing the 500,000 unit mark for the third consecutive year. KMA offers a complete line of vehicles, including the rear-drive K900[[1]](#endnote-1) flagship sedan, Cadenza premium sedan, Sorento CUV, Soul urban passenger vehicle, Soul Electric Vehicle2, Sportage compact CUV, Optima midsize sedan, Optima Hybrid, the Forte compact sedan, Forte5 and Forte Koup, Rio and Rio 5-door subcompacts 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 15,000 plant and supplier jobs.

Information about KMA and its full vehicle line-up is available at 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 www.kiamedia.com/us/en/newsalert.

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**\* 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**

1. 2015 K900 V8 available in select trims and in select markets with limited availability.

2 Soul EV in select markets with limited availability.

 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)