**KIA RACING HEADS NORTH OF THE BORDER TO THE STREETS OF TORONTO FOR ROUNDS NINE AND TEN OF THE PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE**

*Toronto Native Mark Wilkins and Teammate Nic Jönsson Aim to Extend Kia’s Lead in Grand Touring Sport (GTS) Manufacturer Championship Following Double Victory at Road America*

* Jönsson, driver of No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima turbo, is front-runner in GTS Driver Championship standings
* Canadian Wilkins, driver of No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima turbo, is second in title chase, just one point behind Kia Racing teammate Jönsson

**Irvine, Calif., July 16, 2014** – Coming off back-to-back triumphs at Road America in rounds seven and eight, the Kia Racing team is en route to Toronto to do battle north of the border in yet another Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) doubleheader weekend for rounds nine and ten of the 16-race season. Kia Racing drivers Nic Jönsson and Mark Wilkins are leading the Grand Touring Sport (GTS) pack, ranking first and second, respectively, separated by only one point. Meanwhile, Kia holds the top spot in the Manufacturer title chase, ahead of Ford, Porsche, Chevy, Nissan, and Aston Martin. Success comes at a price, however, as an extra 50 pounds of weight will be added to the Optimas for this weekend’s races, along with other technical changes made by series officials.

Toronto, Ontario, native Wilkins, pilot of the No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima turbo, expects his home race to be a thriller thanks to the challenging 1.755-mile, 11-turn temporary street circuit that snakes through the downtown cityscape. Finishing fourth at Toronto in 2013 and having scored a race win and three podium finishes during the first half of 2014, Wilkins is excited to carry his current momentum back to Canadian soil.

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“I love to race in front of my home crowd. The Toronto circuit is demanding; it’s bumpy and different surface materials make for constantly changing levels of grip,” said Wilkins. “That said, I’m confident that the off-season testing we did to improve the Optima’s handling and braking package will serve us well.”

As witnessed earlier this year on the streets of Long Beach, California, where Kia Racing finished first and third, the front-wheel-drive, turbocharged, four-cylinder Optimas are more than capable of holding their own on temporary racing circuits against the rear-wheel-drive V8 pony cars and other more exotic GTS entries from Porsche and Aston Martin. Facing another street course this weekend, all PWC teams and drivers will be faced with the challenge of quickly re-familiarizing themselves with the track layout and then identifying the subtle changes that have occurred to these public roads during a year’s use by city traffic.

“We learned a lot from our race here last year that we are applying to this weekend, and I’m hopeful that we can pull off another strong performance for Kia and keep us on top of the Driver and Manufacturer points,” said Jönsson. “Street circuits are never exactly the same two years in a row, and when you combine those unknown factors with the added ballast and other technical changes from our victories at Road America, we know we have a big challenge ahead of us – but we’re up for it. The Kia Racing and Kinetic Motorsports crew have been working hard to keep our cars reliable and competitive all season, and it shows in the results.”

The action-packed rounds nine and ten of the PWC at The Streets of Toronto take place Saturday, July 19 and Sunday, July 20. NBC Sports Network will air the televised coverage of the GTS rounds on Sunday, August 10 at 1:30 p.m. ET. Live coverage of the competition is viewable 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)