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## News Release

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### **KIA MOTORS AMERICA EXPANDS SPORTS MARKETING PORTFOLIO TO INCLUDE BASKETBALL ALL-STAR BLAKE GRIFFIN**

***Multi-Year Partnership Makes Griffin a Global Spokesperson for the Kia Brand and Increases the Company's Presence in Professional Basketball***

- Kia Motors builds on position as "Official Automotive Partner of the NBA" with new relationship with the 2010-11 T-Mobile Rookie of the Year
- Griffin famously dunked over a 2011 Kia Optima to become the 2011 Sprite Slam Dunk Contest champion

**IRVINE, Calif., June 22, 2011** – Kia Motors America (KMA) is experiencing unprecedented growth – year-to-date sales are up an industry best 44.8 percent – and the company's diverse sports marketing properties have driven dramatic increases in consumer awareness, perception and consideration for the brand. Today, KMA announced a groundbreaking partnership with one of the most recognizable young players in professional basketball, Blake Griffin, who will serve as an official spokesperson for the Kia Motors brand around the world. The multi-year deal builds upon the memorable connection forged between Griffin and Kia Motors after he leaped over a new 2011 Optima midsize sedan to win the 2011 Sprite Slam Dunk competition and footage of the dunk was featured in Kia's advertising. Griffin is the only current professional basketball player with a global marketing relationship with an automaker.

The partnership with Griffin increases Kia's presence in professional basketball following the brand's extension and expansion of its relationship with the National Basketball Association (NBA) in 2010. In addition to being an "Official Automotive Partner of the NBA," Kia is also the Official Automotive Partner of NBA All-Star, title partner of the Kia NBA Performance Awards, and an Official Automotive Partner of NBA Cares. Earlier this month, Kia became the presenting partner of the 2011 NBA Draft. Kia also has strategic partnerships with 13 NBA teams, including Griffin's Los Angeles Clippers.

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## **Kia Motors Enters Into Partnership with Blake Griffin**

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“Blake Griffin is one of the most exciting players in basketball and has proven that he is an all-star on and off the court with extraordinary talent and a youthful, dynamic style that matches the energy and spirit Kia puts into every vehicle it produces,” said Michael Sprague, vice president, marketing & communications, KMA. “With Kia’s U.S. market share at an all-time high and rising fast, we are more focused than ever before on continuing to raise the brand’s profile with highly-visible strategic partnerships, and expanding our presence in professional basketball by adding Blake Griffin as a global spokesperson will allow us to continue our momentum.”

In his role as a global spokesperson for Kia Motors, Griffin will support Kia Motors’ marketing programs and appear in the company’s advertising materials, make public appearances on behalf of the brand, and be involved in exclusive product promotions, social media engagements and philanthropic initiatives.

“Kia is a company on the rise and knows that to be the best you have to work the hardest,” said Griffin. “Kia's hard work has paid off and their great looking and fun-to-drive products are a testament to their burning desire to be the best. I trust the Kia brand and I’m honored and excited to partner with a company I truly believe in.”

Griffin joins Kia’s growing roster of sports initiatives, including basketball, women’s professional golf and motorsports that are designed to increase brand awareness among a new and more affluent group of consumers. Michelle Wie is the brand’s official golf ambassador and Kia is the title sponsor of the annual Kia Classic LPGA event in Southern California. Kia’s second-year U.S. racing program captured the company’s first-ever victory in the GRAND-AM Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge series in April.

### **2011 Kia Motors America Product Line**

Kia's model year 2011 vehicle line includes the Sorento CUV, Sportage compact CUV, Optima midsize sedan, Soul urban passenger vehicle, Forte compact sedan, Forte 5-door compact hatchback, Forte Koup two-door coupe, Rio sub-compact sedan, Rio5 sub-compact hatchback and Sedona minivan.

**About Blake Griffin**

Selected first overall by the Los Angeles Clippers, Blake Griffin took the NBA by storm in his rookie season and broke records every step of the way. Known for his high-flying dunks and unwavering physicality, Griffin competed on the 2011 NBA All-Star Team, the first rookie All-Star voted to the game by coaches since Tim Duncan in 1998. He also took first prize in the 2011 Sprite Slam Dunk Contest and participated in the T-Mobile Rookie Challenge & Youth Jam. A highlight reel sensation equipped with the size, strength, quickness and skill to keep his household name buzzworthy for many years to come, Griffin has transformed the Clippers into a must-watch franchise. A native of Oklahoma City, Okla., the 6'9" power forward attended the University of Oklahoma, where he was one of the highest rated and most decorated recruits in Sooners history. A media magnet, Griffin already has earned numerous accolades, including the Oscar Robertson Trophy, Adolph Rupp Trophy, John Wooden Award, Naismith Award, Sports Illustrated Player of the Year, multiple NBA Western Conference T-Mobile Rookie of the Month honors and many more; for more information go to [www.blakegriffin.com](http://www.blakegriffin.com) or follow him at @blakegriffin.

**About Kia Motors America**

Kia Motors America (KMA) 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 730 dealers throughout the United States and serves as the "Official Automotive Partner of the NBA." In 2010, KMA recorded its best-ever U.S. sales and 16th consecutive year of increased U.S. market share. Kia is poised to continue its momentum and will continue to build the brand through design innovation, quality, value, safety features and new technologies.

Information about Kia Motors America and its full vehicle line-up is available at its website – [www.kia.com](http://www.kia.com). For media information, including photography, visit [www.kiamedia.com](http://www.kiamedia.com).

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