**KIA RACING IN HOT PURSUIT OF PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP IN SUSPENSEFUL SEASON FINALE AT HOUSTON GRAND PRIX**

*Kia Driver Mark Wilkins Currently third in the Grand Touring Sport (GTS) point standings; top three drivers covered by 50 points; Kia currently second in Manufacturer standings*

* Mark Wilkins, driver of the No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima turbo, continues his pursuit of the Driver Championship coming off a sixth-place finish at Sonoma
* Nic Jönsson, pilot of the No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima turbo, focuses on helping his teammate pursue victory for what would be a milestone moment in Kia Racing’s short four-year history

**IRVINE, Calif., October 2, 2013** – It all comes down to this: After 13 rounds and eight months of intense Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) competition, the 2013 race season makes its final stop at the Houston Grand Prix for a finale where a hotly contested championship chase will finally be decided. Champions will be crowned, and someone will go home empty-handed. The top three drivers in GTS, including Kia Racing’s Mark Wilkins in the No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima turbo, are only 47 points apart and with a total of 152 points on offer, anything can happen once the green flag drops in the Lone Star State.

Being a temporary street course, every PWC driver faces similar circumstances with regards to time and experience on the Houston track as no one has access to test or drive the circuit prior to this weekend. Wilkins thinks that’s an advantage for Kia Racing since Kinetic Motorsports is able to quickly adapt and dial in the Optima.

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“Our guys will bring the best set up to the track and then dial it in during the practice and qualifying sessions. Everyone is well aware of what’s on the line here, and we are all going to be focused on getting Kia that championship,” said Wilkins. “The proof is in the pudding; I won earlier this year at Detroit and had a great run at Toronto before suffering a mechanical issue. Both tracks are tight street circuits similar to Houston, so I have a lot of confidence heading into this final race.”

Teammate Nic Jönsson, driver of the No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima turbo, is currently in 10th place in the Driver Championship. Jönsson is looking forward to a strong finish and helping his teammate secure a win and a championship for Kia in southern Texas.

“The number one priority for the team is our pursuit of the championship. As they have all year, the team’s objectives always trump individual goals, so everyone will be doing whatever they can to support Mark this weekend,” said Jönsson. “The goal is to help Mark win the Driver Championship, and to collect as many points as we can for Kia in the Manufacturer Championship.”

The championship contenders will get acclimated to the area early with a visit to Fort Bend Kia, a dealership in Rosenberg, Texas (www.fortbendkia.com) on Thursday, October 3 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Both Mark Wilkins and Nic Jönsson will be on hand to sign autographs, take pictures and give away prizes to customers.

PWC Round 14 at the Streets of Houston will take place on Sunday, October 6 at 11:45 a.m. ET. Televised coverage of Round 14 at Houston is on Sunday, October 20 at 4 p.m. ET on the NBC Sports Network. Race fans can tune in online for live race coverage at [www.world-challengetv.com](file:///C:\Users\kma99868\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\KD51ZAOR\www.world-challengetv.com), and catch the latest news and updates from the track at [http://www.facebook.com/kiaracing](http://www.facebook.com/kiaracing%20) and can follow the team on Twitter at @KiaRacing.

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**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 moved up in the exclusive ranking of Interbrand’s “Top 100 Best Global Brands” after joining the list for the first time last year, and the company 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 14,000 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, Forte5, and Forte 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 and LPGA. 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](file://C:\Users\kma99868\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\Users\kma99868\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\AX39I3XQ\www.kia.com). For media information, including photography, visit [www.kiamedia.com](file://C:\Users\kma99868\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\Users\kma99868\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\AX39I3XQ\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.**