**KIA RACING CAPTURES SECOND IN PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE MANUFACTURER CHAMPIONSHIP AT WILD SEASON FINALE ON THE STREETS OF HOUSTON**

*Kia Racing’s Mark Wilkins wraps the season with his sixth podium finish in the No. 38 B.R.A.K.E.S. Optima turbo, securing third in the Grand Touring Sport (GTS) Class Driver Championship*

* Mark Wilkins posts fastest lap of the race en route to third-place finish at Houston, Kia Racing’s sixth podium performance of 2013, including victories at Detroit and Mid-Ohio
* Nic Jönsson, driver of the No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima turbo, finishes the season 10th

**IRVINE, Calif., October 8, 2013** – The 2013 Pirelli World Challenge season finale was a three-way, sudden-death shootout for the Grand Touring Sports (GTS) class driver championship, with only Kia Racing’s Mark Wilkins, Camaro driver Lawson Aschenbach and Porsche driver Jack Baldwin remaining with a shot at the title. Instead of a high-noon, frontier-town duel, the setting for this showdown was a tight and rain-soaked 1.7-mile street circuit near Reliant Park in Houston. And when the brake dust settled, Wilkins emerged third, securing second place for Kia in the manufacturer championship.

Entering the race ranked third and trailing leader Baldwin by 47 points, Wilkins needed to finish on the top step of the podium for a chance at the championship. Even then, he could only clinch the title if his two closest rivals finished a few places behind. The situation was made even more complicated when a last-minute decision by race officials to modify the track for safety reasons forced the cancellation of qualifying. Drivers would grid for the start according to their position in points, and the race would begin under a full-course caution to allow the field to acclimate to the treacherously wet track.

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“We just had to be smooth and get the most out of the car in difficult circumstances. We struggled a bit in the wet, but the Optima turbo absolutely came alive as the track dried out,” said Wilkins, who set the fastest lap of the race in GTS with a time of 1:21.338. “I really have to thank Kia Motors America, its team members, Kinetic Motorsports and everyone involved in the Kia Racing program for this great opportunity. It’s an honor to drive the No. 38 Optima for this team. We have made huge strides in just two years, and I cannot wait to see where 2014 takes us.”

Teammate Nic Jönsson, driver of the No. 36 DonorsChoose.org Optima turbo, finished the race in 12th place, ending the challenging season 10th in the driver championship. Jönsson set the second-fastest race lap of the weekend (1:22.238) behind his teammate, but an electrical issue slowed his pace and kept him out of contention.

 “Racing demonstrates the power, performance and reliability of Kia vehicles, and on-track success – especially among such world-class competition – adds to the allure of the Kia brand,” said Michael Sprague, executive vice president of marketing and communications, KMA. “We are very proud of Mark and the entire Kia Racing team and grateful for their hard work and dedication. We look forward to even greater success together in 2014 and beyond.”

 Televised coverage of Round 14 of the Pirelli World Challenge at Houston will air on Sunday, October 20 at 4 p.m. ET on the NBC Sports Network. Race fans can always tune in online for live race coverage at [www.world-challengetv.com](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ckma99868%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CKD51ZAOR%5Cwww.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). 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.**