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KMA Team Captures First Place in Worldwide Skills Competition
After Facing Top Techs from Around the Globe, KMA Brings Home Two Medals and Two Honorable Mentions

IRVINE, CALIF., May 11, 2004 – Kia Motors America today announced that its team has taken the gold in the 2nd Kia Skill World Cup 2004 technician competition, ranking them as the top Kia Motors Corporation technicians in the world. In addition to the gold, KMA team members also captured a bronze and two honorable mentions. This is the second time the U.S. team has taken top honors – the first was at the 1st Kia Skill WorldCup.

Proudly coming in first to win the gold medal and the 2004 WorldCup champion title was Ron Heaton from Hanson Kia (WA). Not to be outdone, Jeffrey Jacobs from Delray Kia (FL) clinched third place and took home the bronze medal. Outstanding performances were also made by Jim Simpson from Kia of Ottawa (IL) who took 4th place and received an Excellent mention and Michael Schwartz from Red Ridge Kia (VA) who received a Superior mention. These four talented technicians earned the right to represent Kia Motors America in the 2004 Kia Skill WorldCup Competition held in Seoul, Korea.

It was this skilled quartet who finished as the top four technicians in the US, one from each region, to receive the highest scores in the NationalCup Technician Competition, which included challenging hands-on drills and a written exam.

"The talent that our technicians possess is a testament to Kia's commitment to quality," said Peter M. Butterfield, Kia's president and chief executive officer. "After hosting the NationalCup here at KMA headquarters and seeing their skills firsthand, I'm certainly not surprised that the KMA team performed extremely well in the WorldCup."

Out of the 170 Kia service technicians nominated by their District Parts and Service Managers based on their technical skills; diagnostic abilities; professionalism; and commitment to excellence, only 16 technicians (top four in each region) were selected to participate in the NationalCup competition.

The KMA team traveled to Seoul, Korea on April 25 to experience the country's culture and take on the world. They went up against Kia's best techs from 44 countries for a chance to win the WorldCup champion by not only being tested on their diagnostic accuracy and time, but also their approach and their ability to follow proper procedures, service information and correct tool usage.

The competition was started just two years ago to recognize the finest technicians whose excellent skills deliver unprecedented customer satisfaction. In April 2002, four technicians representing Kia Motors America and U.S. Kia dealers competed against technicians from other Kia distributors around the world in the very first Kia Skill WorldCup. The technicians beat out almost all of the competition and placed 1st, 3rd and 2 technicians tied for 4th.

Kia Motor America, Inc. is the U.S. sales, marketing and service arm of Kia Motors Corp. in Seoul, South Korea. For more information, visit www.kiamedia.com.

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