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Kia Sorento Named Best SUV Value at Annual Mudfest Competition

**High Performance Marks Coupled with High Quality
Bring Sorento its Third Award in Three Years**

IRVINE, Calif., November 3, 2004 – The 2005 Kia Sorento added another feather to its cap today when the Northwest Automotive Press Association (NWAPA) named the popular mid-size sport utility vehicle the “Best SUV Value” at their annual Mudfest competition. The award, voted upon by 20 members of the Pacific Northwest automotive press, is Sorento’s third Mudfest honor in three years. The Sorento was named “Best SUV Value” and “Best SUV Under \$25,000” at the 2002 competition.

“We are very pleased with the Sorento’s major accomplishments and are honored to accept this award from the Northwest Automotive Press Association,” said Peter M. Butterfield, president and CEO, Kia Motors America (KMA). “The Sorento is packed with desirable features and true off-road capability and it continues to set a new standard for value in the mid-size SUV segment and is the perfect choice for consumers looking for styling, comfort, convenience and performance at an affordable price.”

Each year NWAPA members gather during the second week of October to evaluate SUVs from every segment to determine the best vehicle in each category. Each vehicle is equipped similar to the way 80 percent of U.S. buyers equip their cars and include such items as automatic transmission, anti-lock braking systems, CD players, power windows, door locks, remote keyless entry, four doors and more. In addition to new vehicles, the group brings back the best of the best from previous years as well.

The Sorento was tested alongside 16 other SUVs on- and off-road at the Portland International Raceway on the first day of competition and performed well throughout acceleration and braking tests and a slalom course. Ride-and-drive segments were held on the second day of the competition.

“The Sorento was a true performer,” said Jerry Smith, a founding member of NWAPA and co-chair of Mudfest 2004. “This unit offers all the capabilities of more expensive SUVs, thus it was an obvious winner for Best Value SUV because of its standard equipment offerings, on- and off-road handling characteristics, safety aspects, and overall quality – all for a price that makes it a real-world competitor in today’s SUV market.”

For Sorento, the biggest news for the 2005 model year is the availability of an electronically controlled five-speed Sportmatic™ transmission, which replaces last year’s four-speed automatic. At highway speeds, the Sportmatic™ transmission automatically downshifts from fifth gear to fourth gear when the manual select mode is engaged, providing instant throttle response in anticipation of a passing situation.

The Sportmatic™ compliments the five-speed manual transmission offered on the Sport Package. Besides the transmission, the Sport Package also includes side step bars, fog lights, Michelin tires, alloy wheels, roof rack, leather-wrapped steering wheel and keyless remote control. The Sport Package is available with LX trim for both two- and four-wheel-drive models

The five-passenger Sorento is equipped with a powerful DOHC, 24-valve, 3.5-liter V6 engine that generates 192-horsepower and 217 lb.-ft. of torque at a low 3,000 rpm.

Available in both two-wheel and four-wheel-drive configurations, the two-wheel-drive version directs power to the rear wheels, while the 4WD offering includes a part-time or a Torque-on-Demand™ automatic full-time four-wheel-drive system, depending on the trim level. The part-time four-wheel-drive system engages with the turn of a knob for convenient shift-on-the-fly operation and has a transfer case equipped with a low range for the most challenging off-road situations.

To address the varied needs of its buyers, the Sorento is offered in two trim levels: LX and EX. Priced below the “base” models of most competitors, the LX is a full-featured vehicle offering only a handful of options. Standard comfort and convenience features include air conditioning, power windows/door locks/heated mirrors, cruise control, eight-speaker CD sound system, full overhead console with sunglass storage, map lights and garage door opener pocket, four 12-volt power outlets, eight-way adjustable driver’s seat and 60/40 split flip-and-fold rear seats. Standard safety features include dual front airbags and front and rear side-curtain airbags, front pretensioners, front force-limiters and three-point seatbelts and headrests to accommodate all occupants.

The upscale EX model adds alloy wheels, two-tone body cladding, power sunroof, fog lights, eight-way power driver's seat, HomeLink® programmable remote system, a Delphi® premium AM/FM/CD/cassette audio system with 10 speakers and steering-wheel mounted audio controls, remote keyless entry system, which operates the doors, rear flip open glass and panic alarm and a multi-meter including outside temperature gauge, compass, altimeter and barometer to the overhead console.

For those who yearn for even more comfort and convenience, the Sorento is available in an EX Luxury Package, which includes chrome exterior trim, a Delphi® 280-watt six disc-in-dash CD player, automatic climate control, auto headlights, leather seats and available Torque-on-Demand™ system. Because of its high level of content, the Sorento offers only a few free-standing options, including four-wheel drive, antilock brakes and a rear spoiler.

Like all Kia models, the Sorento is covered by a comprehensive warranty program, which offers unprecedented consumer protection. Included in the package are a 10-year or 100,000-mile limited powertrain warranty; a five-year or 60,000-mile limited basic warranty; and a five-year or 100,000-mile anti-perforation warranty. A five-year/unlimited mileage roadside assistance plan is also part of the comprehensive coverage program.

Kia Motors America is the U.S. sales, marketing and service arm of Kia Motors Corp. in Seoul, South Korea.

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