

Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

2006 Kia Optima LX

BY KATHLEEN CARR

Kia's midsize sedan is based on the 2002-2005 Sonata produced by Kia's corporate parent, Hyundai, and receives only minor changes for 2006. A redesigned '06 Sonata went on sale in spring 2005; a similarly redesigned Optima is due as an '07 model in mid 2006. The Optima has always been an appealing alternative to those who frown at the idea of paying \$20 grand for a four-cylinder Camry or Accord. For thousands less, you get an Optima fully equipped and with V6 power.

The Optima comes standard with a 2.4-liter inline four-cylinder on the LX. Optional on the LX and

standard on the EX is a 170-hp, 2.7-liter V6. In my experience, the four-cylinder comes up short in power and refinement. While the V6 won't inspire thrills, it's smooth and quiet, and offers passable acceleration on the highway. The four-cylinder can be mated to a five-speed manual transmission or a four-speed automatic with a manual-shift mode; the V6 comes with the automatic only. Mileage ratings are 23 mpg city/30 highway with the four-cylinder and 20/27 with the V6.

The Kia Optima will appeal to commuters who want comfortable transportation for the day-to-day grind. The ride is stable and smooth, though bumps and ruts are trans-



mitted to the cabin a little more harshly than they should be. The steering, while light and somewhat flighty on the highway, is nonethe-

less linear and direct, and around-town maneuvers are accomplished with ease.

Inside, the Kia Optima offers

attractive if not upscale accommodations. The seats are plush and most drivers will be able to find a comfortable driving posi-

tion. Interior materials are on the economy side, but they're acceptable in a car that costs less than \$20,000. Drivers will find logically arranged radio and climate controls, along with plenty of storage areas for cell phones and spare change. The 14-cubic-foot trunk offers a low lift-over height and closes with struts and hidden hinges to avoid crushing cargo.

Optima trails its competitors when it comes to performance and interior accommodations, but remains a decent buy for those seeking a stylish, well-equipped family sedan for less than \$20,000.

Tested Vehicle Information:
Price: \$16,895; Engine: 2.7L 24V DOHC V6; Transmission: 5-Speed Sportmatic.

SPORTS

Celebrating a Championship

Oregon State hits many firsts in World Series win

(AP) — Oregon State was an underdog the moment it took the field at the College World Series in Omaha, Neb. The Beavers didn't come from the right part of the country. They didn't have enough pitching. They couldn't keep fighting off elimination.

Bill Rowe had one parting message for all those who doubted them: "This is how the ring looks," the senior first baseman said.

Rowe scored the go-ahead run on second baseman Bryan Steed's throwing error in the bottom of the eighth inning, and Oregon State held on to beat North Carolina 3-2 for its first College World Series title Monday night.

The Beavers (50-16) became the first team in CWS history to lose twice at the tournament in Omaha, and win the national championship. Oregon State also is the first truly Northern-based school to win the series since Ohio State in 1966.

"I think we came here and a lot of people out there picked us to lose every single game, so thank you for doing that," closer Kevin Gunderson said. "It gave us a lot of motivation to go out there and prove those people wrong."

With the game tied at 2 in the eighth, Rowe drew a two-out walk and Tyler Graham blooped a single



Oregon State's Bill Rowe (second left) celebrates after scoring the go-ahead run in the bottom of the eighth inning of the deciding game of the College World Series and OSU's first baseball title. (AP photo)

into left. Tar Heels ace Andrew Miller, the No. 6 overall pick by Detroit, came on in relief of Daniel Bard and got pinch-hitter Ryan Gipson to one-hop a grounder to Steed.

The second baseman, who came in as a defensive replacement in the fifth, threw wide and past first baseman Tim Federowicz for the Tar Heels' fourth error of the game as Rowe slid into home with the go-ahead run.

"There was two outs, so I was just thinking about getting to third and I knew it was going to take either a bad hop or a bad throw to

score me on that," Rowe said. "I turned third, looked and saw the ball going toward the dugout, took two hard steps and realized I was going to be able to coast into home."

The Beavers stormed out of their dugout and mobbed Rowe as the Tar Heels (54-15) grew silent on the other side of the field.

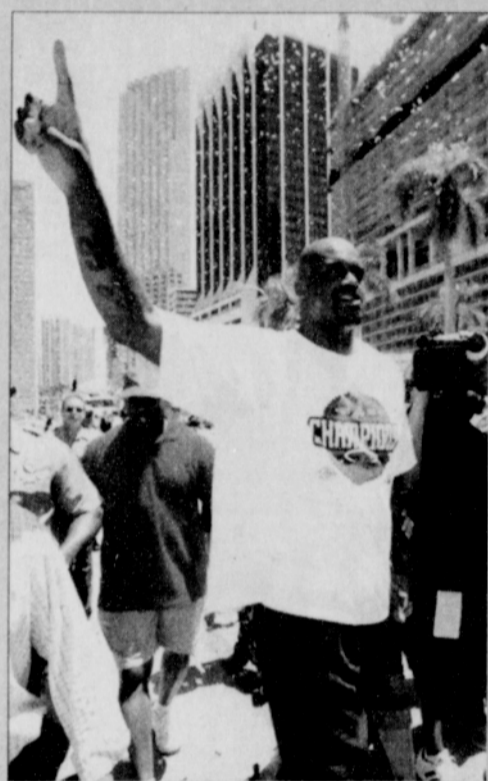
"I probably got rid of it too quick," Steed said. "It was a little bit up the line. Didn't make the play."

North Carolina put two runners on against Dallas Buck (13-3) with one out in the ninth, but Gunderson got Josh Horton to hit into a fielder's

choice, and - with the tying run on third - got slugger Chad Flack to fly out to center to end it.

Gunderson, who won Game 2 by pitching a season-high 5 1-3 relief innings, threw his glove and hat in the air, and waited as his teammates ran to the mound and piled on each other in celebration.

The victory concluded a remarkable run for the Beavers, who lost their first game in the tournament 11-1 to Miami, but reached the championship round with four straight wins. After losing Game 1 to North Carolina, Oregon State pulled out two victories.



Miami Heat's Shaquille O'Neal celebrates the team's first-ever NBA championship during a parade Friday in downtown Miami. (AP photo)

First NBA Title Savored

(AP) — Amid throngs of fans pressed up against barricades, the Miami Heat embarked Friday afternoon on their championship parade - the one Shaquille O'Neal promised when he arrived two seasons ago.

NBA champions O'Neal, Alonzo Mourning and Heat coach Pat Riley were among those on the back of one truck, as trainer Ron Culp, a former Portland Trail Blazer trainer, and point guard Jason Williams sprayed fans with toy water cannons.

"The best. The best," said Heat owner Micky Arison, as his son Nicholas cradled the NBA championship trophy as they rode in a convertible. "It's unbelievable."

Finals MVP Dwyane Wade,

who carried his trophy and wore white sunglasses - played on the Heat's playoff theme of "White Hot."

Mourning said he wasn't sure what to expect from the long-awaited party, which featured tons of confetti and streamers.

"A lot of joy and excitement and celebration, man," Mourning said as he walked toward the parade route.

Already, the question has become this: Can the Heat repeat? "Yes, because Dwyane Wade keeps getting better," said Laurren Webster, 19, a student from Coral Gables.

"And he's already the best," chimed in twin sister, Lindsay, who, like Laurren, wore a new Wade jersey.

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Advocate Guides Native American Ministry

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Rosebud Lakota tribal member and long-time Vancouver resident.

Sato holds a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Political Science and minor in Ethnic Studies from the University of Oregon. She studied politics at Waseda University in Tokyo and has served on a variety of boards and action groups during her extensive career in the Pacific Northwest.

On the appointment to her new position, Sato said, "I am truly humbled that God would bring my life experiences full circle and have confidence in my ability to lead such a wonderful array of people from around the globe to expand the mission of Wiconi International."

edge, experience and skills to Wiconi International but she brings her heart which is what every business looks for and sorely needs from their leaders today," said board chairperson Garland Brunoe, general manager of Kahneeta Resort and former chairperson of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation.

"We needed an individual who was clearly committed to sharing the gospel and understands the significant contribution of indigenous people as well as a business professional who can successfully guide us through the expansion process" said Wiconi Pastor Richard Twiss, a

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