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Rally Germany: Jan Kopecký leads WRC 2 in the ŠKODA Fabia R5

- › Works duo Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler shone on day one with eight best times
- › Setback for Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm: Out on special stage 2 and restart on Saturday
- › Record number of five ŠKODA Fabia R5 at the Rally Germany

Trier, 21 August 2015 – ŠKODA works driver Jan Kopecký (CZ) lived up to his reputation as an asphalt specialist and has a commanding lead in the WRC 2 standings after the first day of the Rally Germany. Alongside his co-driver Pavel Dresler (CZ), the 33-year-old won all eight special stages at the ninth event of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) season on Friday. The Rally Germany is the first WRC event that ŠKODA's new high-tech rocket has contested on asphalt.

"I'm happy to be back at the WRC rally in Germany. Our car worked perfectly, today was a lot of fun. However, there was a lot of dirt on the track, so you had to be extremely vigilant at all times while driving," said Kopecký. The reigning Asia-Pacific champion and current front-runner in the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) was more than convincing on this sunny day. The Czech took the lead on the very first special stage and extended it bit by bit to build up a buffer of more than one minute.

Parts of the track on the first day of the Rally Germany wound through picturesque vineyards with tricky hairpin bends on slippery asphalt. And it was one of these slow bends that proved to be the demise of WRC 2 overall front-runner Esapekka Lappi (FIN). "It was a real blow. I was in second gear on a turn with dirt on the track and slipped off the road completely. I can only apologise to the entire ŠKODA Motorsport team," said Lappi. The Finn and his co-driver Janne Ferm are eager to return to hunting best times in the ŠKODA Fabia R5 on the nine special stages on Saturday, when the drivers will take on the legendary Panzerplatte.

Lappi celebrated the first two WRC wins for the ŠKODA Fabia R5 on gravel at the two previous rallies in Poland and Finland. And it wasn't only Jan Kopecký who showed that the new car is also fast on asphalt at the Rally Germany. A total of three customer racing teams were in action in the Fabia R5. Former European champion Armin Kremer (D) staged a duel with Kopecký for first place up until the fourth special stage, when he was unable to continue after suffering technical problems. Reigning WRC 2 champion and Dakar winner Nasser Al-Attiyah (Q) came off the track on the very first special stage and lost a lot of time.



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The 22-year-old talented rally driver Fabian Kreim (D) of ŠKODA AUTO Deutschland was in fourth place after the sixth special stage, but then lost ground. More than 250 kilometres of tricky stages await Jan Kopecký and his rivals at the weekend.

Number of the day for the Rally Germany: 8

The ŠKODA Fabia R5 was the outstanding car in the WRC 2 field once again on the first day of the Rally Germany. Jan Kopecký won all eight special stages with the new rally car.

Rally Germany – WRC 2 standings

1. Kopecký/Dresler, ŠKODA Fabia R5	1:23:20.7 hrs
2. Breen/Scott, Peugeot 208 T16 R5	+ 1:22.6 min.
3. Camilli/Veillas, Ford Fiesta	+ 1:36.9 min.
4. Giordano/Sarraud, Citroën DS3 S2000	+ 2:38.9 min.
5. Suninen/Markkula, Ford Fiesta R5	+ 3:49,6 Min.

FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Rally Monte Carlo	22.01.–25.01.2015
Rally Sweden	12.02.–15.02.2015
Rally Mexico	05.03.–08.03.2015
Rally Argentina	23.04.–26.04.2015
Rally Portugal	21.05.–24.05.2015
Rally Italy	11.06.–14.06.2015
Rally Poland	02.07.–05.07.2015
Rally Finland	30.07.–02.08.2015
Rally Germany	20.08.–23.08.2015
Rally Australia	10.09.–13.09.2015
Rally France	01.10.–04.10.2015
Rally Spain	22.10.–25.10.2015
Rally Great Britain	12.11.–15.11.2015



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ŠKODA at the Rally Germany:

Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) have a commanding lead in their Fabia R5 after day one.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at the Rally Germany:

WRC 2 front-runners Esapekka Lappi (FIN) and Janne Ferm (FIN) will attack again on Saturday.

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ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

ŠKODA has been involved in the world of motorsport since 1901. The brand has taken home many trophies from the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), FIA European Rally Championship (ERC), FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) and several famous races, such as the oldest rally in the world – the Monte Carlo, which has taken place annually since 1911.

The Fabia Super 2000 rally car is the most successful model in ŠKODA's 114-year history in motorsport. In 2014, ŠKODA won a hat-trick of titles in the Manufacturers' and Drivers' competitions in the APRC. The new reigning champions Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) achieved the momentous feat of becoming the first duo in history to win the Drivers' title in the ERC and then the APRC in consecutive years.



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In the ERC, ŠKODA Motorsport took the title for the third time in a row in 2014, thanks to Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) with the ŠKODA Fabia Super 2000. Before Lappi, the Finn Juho Hänninen (2012) and Jan Kopecký (2013) had won the European title with the ŠKODA Fabia Super 2000.

Between 2009 and 2014, ŠKODA Fabia Super 2000 drivers won nearly 50 national and international titles.

The International Automobile Federation FIA approved ŠKODA's new rally car - the Fabia R5 on 1 April, 2015. The new rally car was presented to the International Press in the Czech Republic on 15 April. The ŠKODA Fabia R5 celebrated its competitive début at the Šumava Rally, Czech Republic in 2015.

ŠKODA AUTO

- > is one of the longest-established vehicle production companies in the world. In 1895, the Czech headquarters in Mladá Boleslav began producing bicycles, followed by the production of motorbikes and cars.
- > currently offers the following models in the range: Citigo, Fabia, Roomster, Rapid, Octavia, Yeti and Superb.
- > in 2014 delivered more than 1 million vehicles to customers worldwide for the first time in a single year.
- > has belonged to Volkswagen since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful automotive groups in the world. ŠKODA, in association with the Group, independently manufactures and develops vehicles, as well as components, engines and gear transmissions.
- > operates at three locations in the Czech Republic, produces in China, Russia, Slovakia and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- > employs over 25,900 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.