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# Rally Sweden: Tidemand on course to finish on the podium for ŠKODA at his home rally

- › ŠKODA works duo Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) worked their way up from fourth place into second on Saturday
- › Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) win two special stages and are now fourth
- › Final sprint: Now only the final power stage covering 15.87 kilometres is scheduled for Sunday

**Karlstad, 13 February 2016 – Clear upward trend for ŠKODA Motorsport on day two of the Rally Sweden. After a mixed start to the second event of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) on Friday, the two ŠKODA works drivers Pontus Tidemand (S) and Esapekka Lappi (FIN) worked their way significantly up the field with outstanding stage times in the WRC 2 classification. This leaves local hero Tidemand and his co-driver Jonas Andersson (S) in second place going into the final day of his home rally, and his deficit of 17.9 seconds to leader Elfyn Evans (GB) even gives him a minimal chance of victory. Team-mate Lappi and co-driver Janne Ferm (FIN) are also dreaming of a podium finish. The “flying Finns” are just 8.7 seconds off third place.**

Four of the five stage best times on Saturday went to a ŠKODA Fabia R5 driver. Lappi won the special stages Rämmen 2 and Vargåsen 2 – narrowly beating Tidemand on each stage, who previously won the stage Vargåsen 1 and the spectator stage in the Karlstad equestrian stadium in the evening. Meaning that a ŠKODA works driver set the pace on both passes of the legendary stage on which the teams have to master the acclaimed Colin's Crest, popular with rally fans.

“We had a lot of fun on the special stages today,” said Tidemand. “The ŠKODA Fabia R5 ran perfectly and I was in excellent harmony with my new co-driver Jonas Andersson. Jonas really is a pace note guru! Today’s stages were pure gravel tracks during the recce, but they were completely covered in snow today. Despite this, we were able to push thanks to Jonas’ experience, and increasingly reduced the deficit to the leaders. It’s a shame that so many classified kilometres were cancelled and there is only one stage left for tomorrow. However, we will give it our all once again to try and make the impossible possible.”

Lappi, who complained he was suffering with a cold on Saturday, hasn’t given up on the dream of a place on the winner’s podium either. “I’m a little surprised that I made up so many places today and even won two stages,” said the Finn. “I didn’t actually feel that well during the day. But in the afternoon in particular I found a good rhythm and got through the stages cleanly. The aim was to make up as many places as possible. Maybe



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we will even manage to move up another place, even though it will be far from easy on the relatively short power stage on Sunday.”

The two ŠKODA works drivers really don't have a lot of time, or more accurately, many kilometres left to continue their pursuit. Due to the unusually mild weather conditions in the Swedish province of Värmland, which caused eight special stages to be cancelled at the beginning of the week, only the final power stage covering 15.87 kilometres will be held on Sunday. Four stages covering 61.74 kilometres were originally planned for the final day. This sees the overall distance of the Rally Sweden reduced from 331.21 to 226.48 classified kilometres.

### Classifications Rally Sweden (WRC 2) after six of 12 SS:

|                                 |                |              |
|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Evans/Parry (GB/GB)          | Ford Fiesta R5 | 1h 56m 49.4s |
| 2. Tidemand/Andersson (S/S)     | ŠKODA Fabia R5 | + 17.9s      |
| 3. Grøndal/Walfridsson (N/S)    | Ford Fiesta R5 | + 1m 50.6s   |
| 4. Lappi/Ferm (FIN/FIN)         | ŠKODA Fabia R5 | + 1m 59.3s   |
| 5. Brynildsen/Fredriksson (N/S) | Ford Fiesta R5 | + 2m 28.8s   |

### Number of the day: 1.13

Mission Impossible? Maybe. But Pontus Tidemand will leave no stone unturned on Sunday. His deficit to leader Elfyn Evans stands at 17.9 seconds going into the final special stage of the Rally Sweden. To claim the win in the WRC 2 classification at his home rally, Tidemand would have to be 1.13 seconds per kilometre faster than his rival. An almost impossible task to master in modern rallying.

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### Media images:



#### ŠKODA at the Rally Sweden

Asia-Pacific champion Pontus Tidemand (S) is on course to finish on the podium at his home rally.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



#### ŠKODA at the Rally Sweden

Esapekka Lappi (FIN) pulled off a splendid catch-up from ninth place to fourth on Saturday.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

### ŠKODA Motorsport Overview:

ŠKODA has been on the motorsport scene since 1901. Be it on the circuit or in rallies, ŠKODA has celebrated victories and won titles all around the world. Historical highlights include numerous title wins in the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC), the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) and the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), as well as the victory in the European Touring Car Championship in 1981. ŠKODA teams have also triumphed in the world's oldest and most famous rally, taking several class victories in the legendary Monte Carlo, which was first held in 1911.

In 2015, ŠKODA celebrated four victories in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) with their new ŠKODA Fabia R5 rally car. The high-tech 4x4 was homologated by the International Automobile Federation FIA on 1 April 2015. In the ŠKODA Fabia R5's very first season, factory duo Pontus Tidemand/Emil Axelsson (S/S) secured the fourth APRC title in a row for ŠKODA. In addition, the brand claimed five national titles with their new winning model.

ŠKODA's new Fabia R5 proudly continues the brand's long tradition in motorsport. Its predecessor, the Fabia Super 2000, was the most successful model in ŠKODA's 115-year motorsport history. With the 4x4 from Mladá Boleslav, factory duo Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) achieved the historic feat of becoming the first duo in history to win the drivers' title in the ERC and the APRC in consecutive years. Between 2009 and 2014,



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ŠKODA Fabia Super 2000 drivers won a total of 50 national and international titles around the world.

In 2016, the factory teams Pontus Tidem and/Jonas Andersson (S/S), Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler and Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (F/F) are competing with the ŠKODA Fabia R5 in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2).

### 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, Rapid, Octavia, Yeti and Superb.
- > delivered more than 1 million vehicles to customers worldwide in 2015.
- > 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 such as engines and gear transmissions.
- > operates at three locations in the Czech Republic. It also produces in China, Russia, Slovakia and India, mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- > employs about 25,900 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

