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## Hard Rally Italy: Kopecký in fifth place in WRC 2

- › Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler win their first special stage in WRC 2 at the Rally Italy in the ŠKODA Fabia R5 – but are awarded a time penalty
- › European Champion Esapekka Lappi crashes into a stone while in the lead
- › Many top teams fail to survive Friday unscathed
- › Record Saturday has an abundant 212 km and the legendary 'Micky's Jump' in store

**Alghero, 12 June 2015 – The hard Rally Italy also took its toll on ŠKODA works drivers Jan Kopecký (CZ) and Esapekka Lappi (FIN). Eight years after his last appearance in the FIA World Rally Championship for the Czech car manufacturer, Kopecký won his first special stage in WRC 2, but ended the second day of rallying in just fifth place in the WRC 2 overall standings after receiving a time penalty. European Champion Esapekka Lappi (FIN) was even in the lead on the Mediterranean island of Sardinia, but lost a lot of time after colliding with a stone.**

Nothing is decided yet: Only about a third of the approximate 400 kilometres of special stages have been mastered at the most difficult WRC event of the year, which many top teams failed to survive unscathed on Friday. The most difficult stages await the best drivers in the world on Saturday and Sunday.

"We will go on the attack again over the remaining two days. It's simply awesome to be on the great world championship stage once again. The Rally Sardinia has proved to be the difficult test we expected," said Jan Kopecký. The reigning Asia-Pacific Champion and current front-runner in the Czech Rally Championship got his first best time in WRC 2, alongside co-driver Pavel Dresler (CZ) on Special Stage 4 "Montiferru 1". Despite this, a time penalty sees him start the final weekend with a deficit of 2:58.9 minutes to front-runner Paolo Andreucci (I) in the overall standings.

The conditions were unexpected as 33-year-old Kopecký made his return. The overnight rain meant that the tracks on Sardinia weren't as dusty as feared - and the mostly cloudy sky kept the feared oppressive heat at bay. However, it was incredibly slippery on sections of the narrow gravel tracks on the 133.50 kilometres of special stages on Friday, which put paid to Esapekka Lappi's chance of winning. "The boulders at the edge of the track really are massive - and unfortunately one of them was my downfall. I'm really annoyed about making that mistake. After all, the Fabia R5 was in perfect form once again and has great potential," said Lappi.

Almost 212 kilometres are scheduled for Saturday - this is the longest WRC leg since 2012. On this day, on the 42.22 kilometres of the longest special stage "Monto Lerno",



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the legendary "Micky's Jump" must also be mastered. It's the highest jump in the WRC circus - the drivers also jump distances of up to 40 metres.

Three weeks ago, the new ŠKODA Fabia R5 celebrated an impressive WRC debut with two podium positions at the Rally Portugal. Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN) finished second ahead of ŠKODA newcomer Pontus Tidemand (S). A ŠKODA Fabia R5 is also on track to finish on the podium at the Rally Italy: Armin Kremer (D) is second in the interim standings of WRC 2.

## Number of the day for the Rally Italy: 3

To date, a ŠKODA Fabia R5 has topped the timesheet three times in WRC 2 at the Rally Italy. Esapekka Lappi was the fastest on the first special stage on Thursday evening and was also number 1 on the fifth stage. WRC home comer Jan Kopecký got his first best time in WRC 2 on Special Stage 4 "Montiferru 1". When the new Fabia R5 made its world championship debut at the Rally Portugal, Esapekka Lappi won five special stages in WRC 2.

## Rally Italy – Intermediate standings WRC 2

1. Andreucci/Andreussi (I/I), Peugeot 208 T16	1:39:16.3 hrs.
2. Kremer/Winklhofer (D/D), ŠKODA Fabia R5	+ 1:26.3 min.
3. Al Rajhi/Orr (SA/GB), Ford Fiesta RRC	+ 1:33.4 min.
4. Protasov/Cherepin (UKR/UKR), Ford Fiesta RRC	+ 2:05.6 min.
5. Kopecký/Dresler (CZ/CZ), ŠKODA Fabia R5	+ 2:58.9 min.
... Lappi/Ferm (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA Fabia R5	+ 31:15.5 min.

## FIA World Rally Championship 2 (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
<b>Rally Italy</b>	<b>11.06.–14.06.2015</b>
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 Italy on Sardinia:

Asia-Pacific Champion Jan Kopecký (CZ) and his co-driver Pavel Dresler (CZ) won their first special stage in WRC 2.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### ŠKODA at the Rally Italy on Sardinia:

European Champions Esapekka Lappi (FIN) and Janne Ferm (FIN) want to go on the attack again on Saturday.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

## 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.

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



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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.

