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ŠKODA driver Lappi ends weather-dominated opening day in third place on Corsica

- › Lappi/Ferm on course for WRC 2 podium after day one
- › Continuous rainfall destroys roads and results in cancellation of one stage
- › Lappi: "Our ŠKODA Fabia R5 ran perfectly, even in these difficult conditions"

Corte/France, 2 October 2015 – ŠKODA works duo Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) kept a cool head amidst the weather-induced chaos to end day one of the Rally Corsica in third place in the WRC 2 standings. Following torrential rain on the eve of the eleventh round of this year's FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2), one of the special stages scheduled for Friday had to be cancelled, as the sheer volume of water had damaged one of the roads.

"That was a real challenge. The second stage of the day was one of the most difficult of my life! It was extremely hard to judge how fast you could actually drive. There was not only a huge amount of water on the route, but also lots of dirt and stones. However, our ŠKODA Fabia R5 still ran very well, even in these difficult conditions," said Lappi. With aquaplaning an ongoing issue, the "Flying Finn" switched into safe mode. Thanks to this cautious but intelligent approach, Lappi is still well-positioned to push for the win. Going into the final two days of the rally, he is currently third in the WRC 2 standings – just 10.2 seconds behind leader Craig Breen (IRL).

The second ŠKODA works duo of Pontus Tidemand/Emil Axelsson (S/S) was less fortunate. A dazzling display had seen the newly-crowned Asia-Pacific Rally Champions take the lead after the morning stage. However, the early leaders hit a stone on the afternoon's only stage, which was delayed by 58 minutes due to the weather, and were unable to complete the stage due to a damaged suspension.

"The conditions were incredibly difficult. We are obviously very disappointed at the moment," said Tidemand. The "Rally of 10,000 Corners", which returns to the WRC calendar after a seven-year absence, is regarded as one of the biggest challenges of the year. The adverse weather has only served to make the task even more difficult. Continuous rain on Thursday and Friday morning has caused flooding and landslides across the entire island of Corsica. The rain was accompanied by storm-force winds, which damaged tents in the Service Park. The ŠKODA mechanics were also halted on their way to Corte, in the centre of the island, by the volume of water on the access roads. However, they did manage to make their destination in time.

"You always have to keep your eyes open in these conditions. There is still a long way to go, and our main goal is to reach the finish in one piece," said Lappi. The 2014 European Champion is currently fourth overall in the WRC 2 class with 70 points. The rally is just 65 kilometres old, with over 220 kilometres against the clock still to come on Saturday



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and Sunday, spread over six stages. Fortunately, the weather is set to improve: a mixture of sun, cloud and thunderstorms is predicted.

Number of the day for the Rally Corsica: 380

A possibly record-breaking time of 380 minutes – 6:20 hours – passed between the start of the first and second special stages on day one of the Rally Corsica. This was primarily due to the torrential rainfall, with up to 200 litres per square metre falling within 24 hours on the Mediterranean island. One special stage had to be cancelled altogether, while the second and final stage of the day was delayed by almost an hour.

Rally Corsica – WRC 2 Result

1. Breen/Scott (IRL/GB), Peugeot 208 T16 R5	49:13.2 min.
2. Maurin/Klinger (F/F), Ford Fiesta S2000	+ 0:03.4 min.
3. Lappi/Ferm (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA Fabia R5	+ 0:06.8 min.
4. Kremer/Winklhofer (D/D), ŠKODA Fabia R5	+ 0:23.3 min.
5. Camilli/Veillas (F/F), Ford Fiesta R5	+ 0:43.6 min.

FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

Event	Date
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 Corsica	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 Corsica

ŠKODA works duo Esapekka Lappi (FIN) and Janne Ferm (FIN) are well-placed in third after a difficult opening day.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at the Rally Corsica

The new Asia-Pacific Rally Champions, Pontus Tidemand/Emil Axelsson (S/S), won the opening stage at the demanding rally.

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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.

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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.