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Jan Kopecký out to extend his lead in the Czech Rally Championship

- › Leaders and defending champions Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler set sights on second win of the season
- › Second guest appearance in the Czech championship for ŠKODA works duo Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson after victory in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) in Portugal

Mladá Boleslav/Český Krumlov, 24 May 2016 – ŠKODA Motorsport has set itself some lofty goals for the 44th Rally Český Krumlov: to repeat last year's success, continue the winning run, and extend the lead in the Czech Rally Championship (MČR). Last year's winners Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) are looking to tighten their grip on top spot at round two of the Czech national championship, preferably with their second win of the season. ŠKODA works duo Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) will be in action in the Czech Republic for the second time this season on Friday and Saturday. The speedy Swedes gave the ŠKODA Motorsport team their first win of the season in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) at Rally Portugal last weekend.

"We made a perfect start to the Czech Rally Championship with the one-two achieved by Jan Kopecký and Pontus Tidemand at the Rally Šumava Klatovy," says ŠKODA Motorsport Director Michal Hrabánek. "We are pleased to be back racing in front of our home crowd again. Last year's Rally Český Krumlov was hard to beat, in terms of drama. Jan Kopecký only secured a thrilling victory on the very last stage," Hrabánek recalls.

Thousands of fans are expected again at the second of six rounds in this season's MČR. The iconic event begins on Friday in České Budějovice and ends after 14 stages and 167.08 kilometres against the clock in Český Krumlov on Saturday.

Not only could Jan Kopecký claim his second win of the season, but he could also win the iconic rally for the third time, having previously triumphed in 2012 and 2015. "We want to challenge for the win again. That is going to require a top performance. Pontus Tidemand and Václav Pech are among those who will give as good as they get again," says the 34-year-old. Kopecký has won his last six MČR rallies in the ŠKODA FABIA R5, starting last season.

Pontus Tidemand and his co-driver Jonas Andersson are making their second guest appearance in the Czech championship at the Rally Český Krumlov. "Jonas and I are looking forward to our next rally in the home of the ŠKODA brand, as the fans are really special here," says 25-year-old Tidemand.



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As at the Rally Šumava Klatovy, Kopecký/Dresler and Tidemand/Andersson will face competition from ŠKODA customer teams in South Bohemia. Vojtěch Štajf/František Rajnoha (CZ/CZ) will compete in ŠKODA's globally successful high-tech four-wheel drive powerhouse, the FABIA R5. Štajf lines up for the Klokočka ŠKODA Czech National Team.

ŠKODA has once again come up with something new for motorsport fans at the Rally Český Krumlov. As well as a diverse and entertaining programme in the ŠKODA Park, the manufacturer is also staging a competition, in which entrants can win a ŠKODA OCTAVIA RS 230 for a year. "ŠKODA has made a perfect start to the season in the MČR – both on and off the rally routes," says Michal Pres, Head of Marketing at ŠKODA Czech Republic. "We want to continue that at the Rally Český Krumlov, and to offer fans in the ŠKODA Park another attractive programme."

The ŠKODA FABIA R5 and other rally cars in the Czech Rally Championship are not the only ones who will be competing in South Bohemia. One part of the diverse motorsport weekend will be the 5th New Energies Rally Český Krumlov for automobiles with alternative forms of propulsion. This forms part of the International Automobile Federation's (FIA) Alternative Energies Cup for the first time this year. The importance of the rally is underlined by the attendance of FIA President Jean Todt.

ŠKODA is also represented in this competition, including with the ŠKODA OCTAVIA Combi 1.4 TSI G-TEC. This sees the Czech car maker confirm its interest in the development of alternative forms of propulsion. The brand also boasts impressive technical expertise in the field of developing and manufacturing environmentally-sound vehicles. CNG technology is among the key pillars of ŠKODA's sustainability strategy. The OCTAVIA G-TEC, which runs on both fuel and compressed natural gas, is very popular with customers.

Czech Rally Championship (MČR)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Rally Šumava Klatovy	29.04.–30.04.2016
Rally Český Krumlov	27.05.–28.05.2016
Rally Hustopeče	17.06.–18.06.2016
Rally Bohemia	02.07.–03.07.2016
Barum Czech Rally Zlín	26.08.–28.08.2016
Rally Příbram	30.09.–01.10.2016



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Did you know ...

... ŠKODA is the dominant manufacturer in the starting field for the Rally Český Krumlov? Of 80 registered starters, 34 will be at the wheel of a ŠKODA.

... the city of Český Krumlov is a UNESCO World Heritage Site? The historic centre of the city on the Vltava river is regarded as a unique cultural monument.

... ŠKODA won the very first Rally Český Krumlov? At the inaugural event in 1971, a certain Mr Janouch (CZ), at the wheel of the iconic 1100 MB, claimed the first of many victories for ŠKODA.

... Czech rally legend Roman Krešta is the record winner at the Rally Český Krumlov? He triumphed seven times in total.

... some sections of the route at the Rally Český Krumlov take place on pistes used for skiing in the winter? The 13.76-kilometre "Lipno" stage, which is run twice on the Saturday, forms both the highest point of the rally and the final stage.

... the service park for the rally is once again located in České Budějovice? The largest city in South Bohemia, with 93,000 inhabitants, is known around the world for Budweiser Budvar beer.

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Media images:



ŠKODA at the Rally Český Krumlov

Czech ŠKODA stars Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler made a winning start to the season at the Rally Šumava Klatovy and are looking to repeat last year's success at the Rally Český Krumlov.

[Download](#)

Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at the Rally Český Krumlov

Swedish ŠKODA works duo Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson is making its second guest appearance in the Czech championship. They finished runner-up at the Rally Šumava Klatovy.

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

In 2016, the factory teams Pontus Tidemand/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).



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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 more than 26,600 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.