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Simply clever: ŠKODA works driver Lappi defends his overall lead in Wales

- › Day two of the Rally Great Britain: ŠKODA works pairing of Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm take it steady over the eight special stages
- › Duel between the title contenders in ŠKODA FABIA R5: Suninen performs well in the morning – Lappi maintains his lead in the WRC 2 standings
- › ŠKODA works drivers Pontus Tidemand and Jan Kopecký in third and fourth places respectively

Deeside, 29 October 2016 – After a strong start to the Rally Great Britain 2016 on Friday, ŠKODA works driver Esapekka Lappi and his co-driver Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) continued to dominate the second day of this traditional event in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2). Knowing that they had to make it through almost 100 stage kilometres in Wales with no service and without damaging the tyres on board their ŠKODA FABIA R5 if possible, the winners of the WRC 2 rounds in Finland and Germany cleverly opted for a steady pace and avoided any risks. With this tactical tour de force, they succeeded in defending their position at the top of the overall standings against Teemu Suninen/Mikko Markkula (FIN/FIN) in their privateer team's ŠKODA FABIA R5. Behind them, the remaining two ŠKODA works teams – Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) and Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) – are lurking in third and fourth places.

As on the previous day, the duel between the WRC 2 title contenders, Lappi and Suninen, dominated the action during the eight special stages in Wales on Saturday. Suninen initially scored wins on two of the morning's three stages and thereby reducing Lappi's lead in the overall rally standings from 46.7 to 34.3 seconds. Lappi then countered by winning two stages and goes into the final day with a total lead of 55.6 seconds. There are just 52.08 kilometres on the programme for Sunday, split into six special stages.

"Saturday was an important day which we approached tactically," said Lappi at the end of the day. "We knew that we couldn't afford to make any major mistakes and had to get through the day with the tyres we had. We didn't have the usual midday service and there were no fresh tyres either. With that in mind, we tackled the stages steadily because any slip-up on Saturday could immediately have meant we were out of the running. These tactics paid off perfectly at the end of the day."

Meanwhile, works driver Jan Kopecký – who also started the Rally Great Britain with a chance of winning the title – continued to drive consistently in Wales on Saturday and is currently in fourth place overall. Ahead of him is his Swedish team-mate Pontus Tidemand, who also put in a strong, flawless performance on Saturday with best times



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on four stages and is justified in hoping for a podium finish on Sunday. "On Sunday, we'll try to put Teemu Suninen under pressure and maybe secure second place at the end," said Tidemand.

Interim standings Rally Great Britain (WRC 2):

1. Lappi/Ferm (FIN/FIN)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	2:51:43.3 hrs
2. Suninen/ Markkula (FIN/FIN)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 0:55.6 min.
3. Tidemand/Andersson (S/S)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 1:07.9 min.
4. Kopecký/Dresler (CZ/CZ)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 2:13.9 min.
5. Aasen/Engan (N/N)	Ford Fiesta R5	+ 4:15.7 min.

The number of the day: 16

The Rally Great Britain has primarily been held in Wales in recent years. This season, the classic rally – which was established in 1932 – returned to English soil for the first time since 1999. Special stage 16 at Cholmondeley Castle brought the action to a close on Saturday evening. "Welcome back," said Pontus Tidemand. The ŠKODA works driver put in the best time among the WRC 2 teams.

FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Rally Monte Carlo	21.01.–24.01.2016
Rally Sweden	11.02.–14.02.2016
Rally Mexico	03.03.–06.03.2016
Rally Argentina	21.04.–24.04.2016
Rally Portugal	19.05.–22.05.2016
Rally Italy	09.06.–12.06.2016
Rally Poland	30.06.–03.07.2016
Rally Finland	28.07.–31.07.2016
Rally Germany	18.08.–21.08.2016
Rally China	08.09.–11.09.2016 (cancelled)
Rally France	29.09.–02.10.2016
Rally Spain	13.10.–16.10.2016
Rally Great Britain	27.10.–30.10.2016
Rally Australia	17.11.–20.11.2016



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ŠKODA at the World Championship rally in Great Britain

At the end of a tactically clever Saturday, Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) are still at the top of the WRC 2 overall standings at the Rally Great Britain in their works team's ŠKODA FABIA R5.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at the World Championship rally in Great Britain

Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) are currently on course for a podium finish at the Rally Great Britain. The ŠKODA works pairing claimed the best time in four stages on Saturday and is currently third overall.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO





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ŠKODA at the World Championship rally in Great Britain

Despite being asphalt specialists, Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) are at home on the Welsh gravel. The Czech duo is in fourth place ahead of the final day of the Rally Great Britain.

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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).

ŠKODA AUTO

- > is one of the longest-established vehicle manufacturers in the world. The company was founded in 1895 – during the pioneering days of the automobile. Today, the company's headquarters remain in Mladá Boleslav.
- > currently offers the following models in the range: CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, OCTAVIA, YETI, KODIAQ and SUPERB.
- > in 2015 delivered more than 1 million vehicles to customers worldwide.
- > has belonged to Volkswagen Group since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers 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 26,600 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.