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ŠKODA works driver Lappi wins the Rally Great Britain and remains in the running for the WRC 2 title

- › ŠKODA works duo Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm celebrate an overall win in Wales in their ŠKODA FABIA R5 – the WRC 2 title will be decided in Australia
- › Works driver Pontus Tidemand takes second place on the podium – Teemu Suninen and Jan Kopecký give ŠKODA a quadruple win
- › ŠKODA Motorsport Director Michal Hrabánek: “The result in Wales is excellent – now the focus is on the championship final in Australia”

Deeside, 30 October 2016 – Victory for ŠKODA works driver Esapekka Lappi and his co-driver Janne Ferm at the Rally Great Britain. The “flying Finns” claimed their third season win in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) in their ŠKODA FABIA R5, giving ŠKODA its second triumph in the space of a few hours. Earlier, Gaurav Gill (IND) won the drivers’ title in the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) 11,000 kilometres away in Malaysia, also behind the wheel of a FABIA R5, giving ŠKODA its fifth consecutive manufacturers’ trophy. Back in Wales, the second ŠKODA factory team consisting of Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) were rewarded for their catch-up tactics with second place ahead of Teemu Suninen/Mikko Markkula (FIN/FIN) in a privateer team’s ŠKODA. Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) finished fourth, giving ŠKODA a quadruple win at the Rally Great Britain. This means the WRC 2 title will be decided at the season finale in Australia.

“Congratulations to Esapekka and Janne on their win at the Rally Great Britain. It’s an outstanding result. They both drove very cleverly at this important rally,” said ŠKODA Motorsport Director Michal Hrabánek. “Going easy on the car because there were no midday services and nevertheless setting the pace paid off for us. Now the focus is on the season finale in Australia, where we have the chance to clinch the title.”

Thanks to the result of the Welsh leg, suspense is guaranteed at the season finale at the Rally Australia (17–20 November). The rules mean that ŠKODA works driver Lappi – currently third in the season standings with 107 points – is the only contender among the current top 3 who can score additional points in Australia. His rivals at the top of the season standings, Elfyn Evans (Ford) and Suninen, have already completed the maximum number of seven qualifying events and cannot rack up any extra points as a result. Lappi needs to finish at least second Down Under to move up to the top of the WRC 2 standings.

“The Rally Great Britain went perfectly for us. Conditions on the courses in Wales weren’t quite as difficult as in previous years and the set-up of our ŠKODA FABIA R5 was perfect. The whole team did an outstanding job,” said Lappi at the finishing line. “We’re delighted



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to have won, but we also know that we need to start preparing for Australia straight away, where it's down to us to achieve our big goal for the season."

The outcome in Wales means that a driver in the high-tech four-wheel-drive FABIA R5 has won nine out of the last ten WRC 2 legs. GB winner Lappi also triumphed at the event in his native Finland and won the German rally. The ŠKODA works pairing Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) won the Rally Spain, and their team-mates Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) bagged a season win at the Rally Portugal. Suninen took first place in Mexico, Sardinia and Poland, while Nicolás Fuchs (PE) won the Rally Argentina for ŠKODA.

Tidemand also has every reason to be pleased with the outcome of the Rally Great Britain. In a furious bid to catch up with Suninen, he scored six best stage times to ease past the Finn on the last trial of the rally and claim second place. Meanwhile, Kopecký took fourth place overall in the third works ŠKODA, giving the car maker a quadruple win in Wales.

Final standings Rally Great Britain (WRC 2):

1. Lappi/Ferm (FIN/FIN)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	3:24:00.3 hrs
2. Tidemand/Andersson (S/S)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 0:29.1 min.
3. Suninen/ Markkula (FIN/FIN)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 0:30.2 min.
4. Kopecký/Dresler (CZ/CZ)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 2:18.8 min.
5. Aasen/Engan (N/N)	Ford Fiesta R5	+ 4:25.3 min.

The number of the rally: 19

With 19 out of 22 possible stage wins at the Rally Great Britain going to the ŠKODA FABIA R5, the four-wheel-drive from Mladá Bodeslav has once again proved its mettle in this international competition. Works driver Esapekka Lappi won no fewer than eight of the time trials in Wales, followed by his team-mate Pontus Tidemand (6) and Suninen (5) at the wheel of a privateer team's ŠKODA FABIA R5. The remaining three stage wins went to Kevin Abbring (NL, Hyundai).



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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

For more information:

Zbyněk Straškraba, Communications Motorsport

T +420 605 293 168

zbynek.straskraba@skoda-auto.cz

<http://skoda-motorsport.com>

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ŠKODA at the World Championship rally in Great Britain

After winning the Rally Great Britain, Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) could clinch the WRC 2 title in Australia. They need to finish at least second to lift the trophy.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



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ŠKODA at the World Championship rally in Great Britain

Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) were rewarded for their furious bid to move up the standings. The ŠKODA works duo secured second place at the Rally Great Britain on the very last stage.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at the World Championship rally in Great Britain

Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) finished the Rally Great Britain fourth. With this result, the Czech works pairing gave ŠKODA a quadruple win at the penultimate event of the season in Wales.

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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 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.