

# ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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## Rally Finland: 14 ŠKODA FABIA R5s entered into ninth round of the 2017 FIA World Rally Championship

- › More than 150 units already sold
- › Asia-Pacific Rally Championship leaders Ole Christian Veiby / Stig Rune Skjaermoen, driving a privateer ŠKODA FABIA R5, are top favourites in WRC 2 category
- › ŠKODA Motorsport factory team takes a break before returning at the Rallye Deutschland
- › Successful rally car from Mladá Boleslav is a hit with ŠKODA importers and privateers
- › Head of ŠKODA Motorsport Michal Hrabánek said, "We are very proud that our ŠKODA FABIA R5 is the most popular rally car in its category at the Rally Finland."

Mladá Boleslav, 27 July 2017 – While ŠKODA Motorsport takes a break from competing, an impressive line-up of privateer ŠKODA FABIA R5s is entered into the Rally Finland (27-30 July). At the ninth round of this year's World Rally Championship (WRC), a total of 14 teams in the WRC 2 group class are competing in a ŠKODA, including six teams fighting for victory in the WRC 2. The numbers speak for themselves – the Czech rally car is by far the most popular in this category. So far, ŠKODA Motorsport has delivered more than 150 ŠKODA FABIA R5s to customers worldwide.

The ŠKODA FABIA R5's success story began two years ago with a strong debut at the WRC Rally de Portugal 2015. At its maiden competition, the brand-new rally car proved right from the start that it would be the car to beat in the WRC 2. Since then, the Czech rally car has been successful in championships around the world, the pinnacle being the WRC 2 title at the 2016 FIA World Rally Championship. At the recent Rally Poland, a ŠKODA FABIA R5 won the WRC 2 category for the eighth time in a row at the 2017 FIA World Rally Championship. Ole Christian Veiby / Stig Rune Skjaermoen (NOR/NOR), driving a Printsport ŠKODA FABIA R5, scored their first win at WRC level. Trailing the Asia-Pacific Rally Championship leaders, ŠKODA Motorsport's Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson came second for once, after having already won four WRC 2 events this year. Even without lining up at the Rally Finland, the Swedish pairing is in the best position to win this year's WRC 2 title. They will return to WRC competition at the Rallye Deutschland in three weeks' time.

The 150<sup>th</sup> ŠKODA FABIA R5 was delivered to a customer only recently. Head of ŠKODA Motorsport Michal Hrabánek is proud of the tremendous demand for the rally car from Mladá Boleslav, saying, "The ŠKODA FABIA R5's success story absolutely proves that our strategy is working. With the presence of the ŠKODA Motorsport team in the World Rally Championship, we are continuously demonstrating the competitiveness of our rally car. The never-ending development work as a result of experience we gained from the competition has made our ŠKODA FABIA R5 the best car in its category."

The ŠKODA FABIA R5's statistics are also quite impressive: ten category victories in the 2016 FIA World Rally Championship and the WRC 2 title win, an impressive eight WRC 2 wins in a row in 2017. In the current WRC 2 standings, ŠKODA works driver Pontus Tidemand leads after eight rounds ahead of stablemate Ole Christian Veiby.





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The upcoming Rally Finland offers 25 special stages totalling 314.20 kilometres on very fast gravel tracks with huge jumps. It will begin in Jyväskylä on Thursday 27 July at 18:42. On Sunday 30 July at around 15:00, the winners will celebrate on the podium.

## Current WRC 2 standings after eight rounds

1. Pontus Tidemand (SWE), ŠKODA, 118 points
2. Ole Christian Veiby (NOR), ŠKODA, 63 points
3. Teemu Suninen (FIN), Ford, 54 points
4. Eric Camilli (FRA), Ford, 52 points
5. Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR), ŠKODA, 50 points
6. Jan Kopecký (CZE), ŠKODA, 49 points

## FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) 2017 calendar

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Rallye Monte Carlo	19/01-22/01/2017
Rally Sweden	09/02-12/02/2017
Rally Mexico	09/03-12/03/2017
Rally France	06/04-09/04/2017
Rally Argentina	27/04-30/04/2017
Rally de Portugal	18/05-21/05/2017
Rally Italia	08/06-11/06/2017
Rally Poland	29/06-02/07/2017
<b>Rally Finland</b>	<b>27/07-30/07/2017</b>
Rallye Deutschland	17/08-20/08/2017
Rally de España	05/10-08/10/2017
Rally Great Britain	26/10-29/10/2017
Rally Australia	16/11-19/11/2017

### Further information:

Zbyněk Straškraba, Motorsport Communications

T +420 605 293 168

[zbynek.straskraba@skoda-auto.cz](mailto:zbynek.straskraba@skoda-auto.cz)

<http://skoda-motorsport.com>

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## Media images:



### ŠKODA at World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson (ŠKODA FABIA R5) extended their lead in the WRC 2 category after finishing second at the Rally Poland behind ŠKODA stablemates Ole Christian Veiby / Stig Rune Skjaermøen.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### ŠKODA at Rally Finland

Among 14 privateer ŠKODA teams, Ole Christian Veiby / Stig Rune Skjaermøen (NOR/NOR) are top favourites for victory in the WRC 2 category.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

## ŠKODA Motorsport overview

ŠKODA has been successful 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 winning the title in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) for the first time in 2016, 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.

2016 was one of the most successful years in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport. In the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2), Esapekka Lappi / Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) won the title for the Czech car manufacturer for the first time. In total, ten of the 2016 season's races in the World Rally Championship were won by a ŠKODA FABIA R5. ŠKODA drivers Gustavo Saba (PRY) and Gaurav Gill (IND) also won the continental championships in South America and the Asia-Pacific region respectively at the wheel of the successful ŠKODA FABIA R5. Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) was unbeatable in the Middle East Rally Championship (MERC), while a further ten national titles also went to ŠKODA drivers.

The ŠKODA FABIA R5, a high-tech 4x4, was homologated by the International Automobile Federation FIA on 1 April 2015. ŠKODA's new FABIA R5 is successfully continuing the long tradition of ŠKODA Motorsport. Its predecessor, the FABIA SUPER 2000, won 50 national and international titles around the world. In 2017, works duos Pontus Tidemand / Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) and Jan Kopecký / Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) are contesting selected races in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2). Kopecký/Dresler are also competing in the Czech Rally Championship (MČR), where they are looking to claim a third title in a row.

## 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.
- › delivered more than 1 million vehicles to customers worldwide in 2016.
- › has been part of Volkswagen Group since 1991, 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 such as 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 with local partners.
- › employs over 30,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

