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WRC Spain: ŠKODA teams with trouble free run Kopecký second and Nordgren fourth in WRC 2

- › With seven stage wins Czech Champion Jan Kopecký fought back to second in WRC 2 at RallyRACC Catalunya, the Spanish round of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)
- › 2015 Finnish Junior Champion Juuso Nordgren conquered fourth position by steadily improving his speed competing for the first time in a factory entered ŠKODA FABIA R5
- › ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek: “Jan clearly demonstrated his pure speed on tarmac. At the same time Juuso impressed me with a steep learning curve.”

Salou, 7 October 2017 – Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) were in a class of their own during the Saturday leg of RallyRACC Catalunya – Rallye de España, the Spanish round of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC). Driving a ŠKODA FABIA R5 the reigning Czech Champions won all seven special stages of the all tarmac second leg. Deservedly they moved up to second in WRC 2 category. Competing in a factory run ŠKODA FABIA R5 for the very first time their young teammates Juuso Nordgren/Tapio Suominen (FIN/FIN) showed a steep learning curve, drove faultlessly and conquered fourth position in WRC 2.

While the first leg of RallyRACC Catalunya – Rallye de España on Friday was run mainly on gravel, the longest leg on Saturday featured fast and smooth tarmac roads in the northwest of Tarragona. Not only the cars had to be technically adapted to the new road conditions, also the drivers had to change their driving style for the seven stages to come.

After his mishap on the first day, when ŠKODA Motorsport's Jan Kopecký caught the car in front of him and had to complete the last part of the stage in his competitor's dust losing over one minute, the Czech Champion was unbeatable on the Saturday stages. He was still annoyed though. “We did not get any time back from yesterday. It is a shame and not fair – but that's life. We will try our best and will show how fast we can be,” commented Kopecký. At the end of the day, he and co-driver Pavel Dresler were clearly the fastest WRC 2 competitor on all seven stages of the day and consequently moved up to second place in the category standings. On the day ending show stage the ŠKODA FABIA R5 in the hands of Kopecký even scored an impressive second fastest time overall against competition from roughly 100 hp more powerful cars of the WRC category!

Their young teammates Juuso Nordgren/Tapio Suominen chose a smart approach to the fast tarmac stages of Catalunya. “It is the second time I am competing here and the very first time I drive a ŠKODA FABIA R5 on tarmac stages. On my first run on the Saturday stages, I was careful, maybe sometimes breaking too early. On the second run of these stages, I already knew better where the limits of the car are and could be more aggressive,” said the 2015 Finnish Junior Champion. Like the day before he was increasing his speed after the lunch break finally moving up to fourth place in the WRC 2 category standings.

“Jan clearly demonstrated his pure speed on tarmac. After the setback on Friday, he didn't give up and showed a strong determination. At the same time Juuso impressed me with a steep learning curve. He more than fulfilled the expectations of the team,” concluded ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek at the finish of the second leg.





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On Sunday, the final leg of the RallyRACC Catalunya – Rallye de España will feature six special stages totalling additionally 74 kilometres.

Standings RallyRACC Catalunya – Rallye de España after leg 2 (WRC 2)

1. Suninen/Markkula (FIN/FIN), Ford Fiesta R5, 2:22:39.7 h.
2. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +44.4 sec.
3. Guerra/Cué (MEX/ESP), ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 3:38.2 min.
4. Nordgren/Suominen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +4:25.9 min.
5. Tempestini/Bernacchini (ITA/ITA), Citroën DS3 R5, +4:27.3 min.
6. Pieniazek/Mazur (POL/POL), Peugeot 208 T16, +5:58.8 min.

Number of the day: 7

Jan Kopecký was fastest competitor in WRC 2 on all seven stages of the Saturday leg with his ŠKODA FABIA R5. On the day ending show stage he even managed to score the second fastest time overall!

The 2017 calendar of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Rallye Monte Carlo	19/01/–22/01/2017
Rally Sweden	09/02/–12/02/2017
Rally Guanajuato México	09/03/–12/03/2017
Tour de Corse – Rally France	06/04/–09/04/2017
Rally Argentina	27/04/–30/04/2017
Rally de Portugal	18/05/–21/05/2017
Rally Italia Sardegna	08/06/–11/06/2017
Rally Poland	29/06/–02/07/2017
Rally Finland	27/07/–30/07/2017
ADAC Rallye Deutschland	17/08/–20/08/2017
RallyRACC Catalunya – Rallye de España	05/10/–08/10/2017
Wales Rally GB	26/10/–29/10/2017
Rally Australia	16/11/–19/11/2017

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Media images:



ŠKODA at RallyRACC Catalunya – Rallye de España

In WRC 2 Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (ŠKODA FABIA R5) won all seven stages of the day moving into second in the category at RallyRACC Catalunya – Rallye de España

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at Rally RACC Catalunya – Rallye de España

2015 Finnish Junior Champion Juuso Nordgren successfully continues his learning process on his second rally outside Finland, for the first time driving a factory run ŠKODA FABIA R5 of ŠKODA Motorsport

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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 maker 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 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 the way of 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) will contest selected races in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2). Kopecký/Dresler will also compete in the Czech Rally Championship (MČR), where they will be looking to claim a third title in a row.

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- › 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 2016 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 30,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

