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Jan Kopecký and ŠKODA continue to dominate WRC 2 category at Rally France/Tour de Corse

- › After leg two Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler with their ŠKODA FABIA R5 clearly lead the WRC 2 category at the fourth round of the FIA World Rally Championship 2018
- › ŠKODA teammates Ole Christian Veiby/Stig Rune Skjaermoen after gearbox issues third in the provisional category standings
- › ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek: “Again a great drive of Jan. Sorry for O.C., that bad luck put him out of the fight for second place.”

Bastia, 7 April 2018 – ŠKODA factory team Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) continue to dominate the WRC 2 category at Rally France/Tour de Corse. Their young Norwegian teammates Ole Christian Veiby/Stig Rune Skjaermoen (NOR/NOR) after a tense fight were second in the provisional category standings going into the last stage of the Saturday leg. Albeit, when their gearbox got stuck in first gear they dropped to third place behind Italian ŠKODA privateer Fabio Andolfi.

The first special stage on early Saturday morning was a tough wake-up call for the crews. More than 35 kilometres had to be driven in the north of Corsica. ŠKODA youngster O.C. Veiby was fully awake and scored his first WRC 2 fastest time on the fifth stage of the rally while teammate Jan Kopecký consolidated his category lead. “This was a very good start for us, but the stage was very tricky. Maybe I was at the end too cautious. But going into the corners, you always have to keep an eye for surprising gravel on the road,” commented Jan Kopecký.

His Norwegian teammate was happy after his first WRC 2 stage win on an asphalt event of the FIA World Rally Championship. “I found a really nice rhythm and I just kept pushing,” smiled Veiby at the end of the first morning stage. And his rhythm also led him to the next fastest time in special stage number six, while his teammate and WRC 2 category leader Kopecký fought back with the fastest time on the following one.

After the regrouping in Bastia, the ŠKODA crews had to face the repetition of the morning stages and proved again their speed on the Mediterranean Island. On the second pass of the longest stage of the day, the 35 kilometres between Cagnano and Canari, Kopecký was quickest in front of Veiby who moved into second position after a tense fight in the WRC 2 category. On the next two stages, Czech Champion Kopecký was fastest again, while on the last stage of the day the gearbox of Veiby's ŠKODA FABIA R5 got stuck in first gear. The time loss cost him the possible second place in the WRC 2 category.

ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek emphasized: “Again a great drive of Jan, who had no issues with his ŠKODA FABIA R5 and drove fast and faultlessly. Sorry for O.C., that bad luck put him out of the fight for second place. We will fix his car at the final service. The rally is not over yet, on Sunday is still a long way to go.”

On the final day of the rally, the longest stage is waiting for the crews. More than 55 kilometres have to be driven on winding mountain roads, before the rally-ending Power Stage, covering



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around 16 kilometres, will bring the final decision. The winner is expected on the podium in Ajaccio around 15h00.

Standings Rally Corsica after Day 2 (WRC 2)

1. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 2:51:30.6 h
2. Andolfi/Scattolin (ITA/ITA), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +3:04.3 min.
3. Veiby/ Skjaermoen (NOR/NOR), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +3:49.9 min.
4. Bonato/Boulloud, (FRA/FRA), Citroën C3 R5, +7:05.9 sec.
5. Pieniazek/Mazur (POL/POL), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +12:08.9 min.

Number of the day: 6

All of the six stages of the second day of the rally were won – in WRC 2 category – by the ŠKODA works crews Kopecký/Dresler (4) and Veiby/ Skjaermoen (2).

The calendar of the 2018 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Monte-Carlo	24/01–28/01/2018
Sweden	15/02–18/02/2018
Mexico	08/03–11/03/2018
France	05/04–08/04/2018
Argentina	26/04–29/04/2018
Portugal	17/05–20/05/2018
Italy	07/06–10/06/2018
Finland	26/07–29/07/2018
Germany	16/08–19/08/2018
Turkey	13/09–16/09/2018
Great Britain	04/10–07/10/2018
Spain	25/10–28/10/2018
Australia	15/11–18/11/2018

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Media images:



ŠKODA at the Rally France/Tour de Corse 2018

Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE), competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5, are dominating the WRC 2 category at Rally France/Tour de Corse after day two

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at the Rally France/Tour de Corse 2018

After leg two of the Rally France/Tour de Corse 2018, Ole Christian Veiby and Stig Rune Skjærmoen (NOR/NOR) are third in the provisional standings of 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.

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 the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) 2016, Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) won the title for the Czech car maker. 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.

2017 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport. Works duo Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) became WRC 2 Champions, ŠKODA Motorsport won the Team Championship. Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) won the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) for the third time in a row and are the spearhead of in total 14 crews winning their country's national titles. Furthermore the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC), the FIA South American Rally Championship (CODASUR) and the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC) have been won by teams competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5.

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, KAROQ, KODIAQ and SUPERB.
- › in 2017 delivered more than 1.2 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, Algeria and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- › employs over 35,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

