

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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Rally Argentina: ŠKODA's Pontus Tidemand wins and takes lead in WRC 2 championship

- › Powering the ŠKODA FABIA R5 to their second WRC 2 victory of the season reigning champions Pontus Tidemand and Jonas Andersson take top spot in the overall standings
- › 17 years old ŠKODA junior Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen went off the road while leading the WRC 2 category and had to retire
- › ŠKODA crews continue to dominate WRC 2 category by winning the fourth out of the season's five rallies, Tidemand and Jan Kopecký now holding top two positions overall
- › ŠKODA juniors Ole Christian Veiby and co-driver Stig Rune Skjaermoen, in Argentina not nominated to score WRC 2 points, achieve second position in RC 2 class

Villa Carlos Paz, 29 April 2018 – Reigning WRC 2 Champions Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) repeated their last year's victory at Rally Argentina, fifth round of the 2018 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC). The Swedish pairing takes the lead in the WRC 2 championship standings from ŠKODA teammate Jan Kopecký, who did not compete in Argentina. ŠKODA factory crews Tidemand/Andersson and Rovanperä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN) were leading the WRC 2 category going into the event's last day. But in the penultimate stage, Rovanperä went off the road close to the finish. Thanks to the safety package of the ŠKODA FABIA R5, the crew was unhurt, but had to retire. Norwegians Ole Christian Veiby and Stig Rune Skjaermoen, another duo of ŠKODA juniors, thanks to a great performance finished second in RC 2 class, which includes the WRC 2 category.

On the final day of Rally Argentina three more stages, covering 55.27 kilometres, had to be driven. Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson tried everything to catch their young Finnish teammates. With a tremendous effort on the opening "El Condor" stage, they were 13.3 seconds quicker than Rovanperä/Halttunen, reducing the gap to only 9.9 seconds. On the penultimate stage, the Finnish youngsters went off the road close to the end of the stage. Thanks to the safety package of their ŠKODA FABIA R5, they escaped without injury, however.

With the WRC 2 lead back in his hands, Pontus Tidemand drove cautiously in the last stage and won the category with the huge margin. The Swedish crew moved as well into the lead of the WRC 2 championship standings. "Sorry for Kalle. We had a tense fight and I always followed our Team instructions. I believed in my speed myself and obviously did not want to win this way," Tidemand said.

After two punctures on the Saturday stages ŠKODA junior O.C. Veiby managed to regain the third position in RC 2 class after a fast time on the opening Sunday stage. In the end, the Norwegian finished in second place.

ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek commented: "Accidents are a part of the game. Luckily, the safety standards of modern rally cars like our ŠKODA FABIA R5 are extremely high. So Kalle and Jonne escaped from that accident without being injured. Nevertheless, I want to thank both crews for the tremendous performance they delivered, the whole ŠKODA Motorsport Team did an excellent job."



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Final Result Rally Argentina (WRC 2)

1. Tidemand/Andersson (SWE/SWE), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 3:55:44.7 h
2. Greensmith/Parry (GBR/GBR), Ford Fiesta R5, +7:39.1 min.
3. Heller/Olmos (CHL/ARG), Ford Fiesta R5, +9:02.9 min.
4. Dominguez/Galindo (MEX/MEX), Hyundai i20 R5, + 15:49.6 min.
5. Solans/Ibanez (ESP/ESP), Ford Fiesta R5, +37:43.9 min.

Current standings WRC 2 (after 5 of 13 rounds)

1. Tidemand (SWE), ŠKODA, 68 points
2. Kopecký (CZR) ŠKODA, 50 points
3. Greensmith (GBR), Ford, 36 points
4. Heller (CHL), Ford, 30 points
5. Katsuta (JPN), Ford, 29 points

Number of the day: 18

All of the 18 stages of Rally Argentina were won by teams competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5.

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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ŠKODA at Rally Argentina 2018

Reigning WRC 2 Champions Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE), competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5, repeated their last year's victory at Rally Argentina and moved into the WRC 2 Championship lead

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at Rally Argentina 2018

Finnish ŠKODA juniors Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen retired with an accident while they were leading the WRC 2 category at Rally Argentina

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO





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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.

