

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

Page 1 of 4



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Rally Sweden: ŠKODA privateer Emil Lindholm leads WRC3 – Oliver Solberg with good ŠKODA debut

- › ŠKODA privateer Emil Lindholm and co-driver Mikael Korhonen head WRC3 category after the first competitive day of Rally Sweden, they are also quickest among the Rally2 cars
- › 18 years old Oliver Solberg and co-driver Aaron Johnston delivering a good performance on their debut with the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo
- › At the second round of the FIA World Rally Championship 2020 in Sweden the road conditions with a mix of ice, gravel and snow are a real challenge for the crews

Torsby, 14 February 2020 – This year's Rally Sweden (13/02–16/02/2020) provides the most challenging road conditions since decades. Due to unseasonal warm weather and a lack of snow in the Värmland region of Sweden and across the border in Norway, the itinerary of the second round of the FIA World Rally Championship had to be shortened. The stages are providing a mix of gravel, ice and a thin layer of snow. After the Friday leg, Finnish ŠKODA privateers Emil Lindholm/Mikael Korhonen lead the WRC3 category and are the quickest among the teams in Rally2 cars. Oliver Solberg (SWE) and co-driver Aaron Johnston (IRL), debuting at Rally Sweden in a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo which is run in a cooperation between Solberg's own team and ŠKODA Motorsport, are showing a good performance.

This time, no snow banks line the tracks, which normally allow the drivers a special cornering style, leaning the car on them in order to achieve higher speeds. Instead of that a mix of ice with a thin layer of snow, interrupted by gravel passages, on which the racing tyres easily lose their studs – the road conditions of Rally Sweden 2020 are the most challenging since years. "I don't want to go faster, in some places, there is really no grip at all. I simply want to stay on the road," described 18 years old Oliver Solberg, who kicked off his WRC3 program in cooperation with ŠKODA Motorsport. Nevertheless, he and co-driver Aaron Johnston (IRL) brought their ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo to Friday's finish in fourth position of the WRC3 category.

The Finnish ŠKODA privateers Emil Lindholm/Mikael Korhonen delivered a stunning performance and lead the WRC 3 category, which is dedicated to private crews. On top of that, after the Friday leg of Rally Sweden they are quickest among the 17 entries strong field of Rally2 cars. ŠKODA's 2017 WRC2 Champion Pontus Tidemand (SWE) and co-driver Patrick Barth (SWE) have privately entered a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo of Toksport WRT Team and are third in the WRC2 category.

On Saturday, Rally Sweden will feature the repetition of the Friday stages, two passes over the Likenas stage will complete the event on Sunday. The second run through Likenas will form the live TV Wolf Power Stage, before the winning crew will be celebrated at the service park in Torsby.

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

Page 2 of 4



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Standings Rally Sweden after Day 2 (WRC2 and WRC3)

1. Lindholm/Korhonen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, 32:29.4 min.*
2. Østberg/Eriksen (NOR/NOR), Citroën C3 Rally2, +4.7 sec.
3. Huttunen/Lukka (FIN/FIN), Hyundai i20 Rally2, +7.7 sec.*
4. Veiby/Andersson (NOR/SWE), Hyundai i20 Rally2, +13.1 sec.
5. Tidemand/Barth (SWE/SWE), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, +23.0 sec.
6. Kristoffersson/Skjærmoen (SWE/NOR), Volkswagen Polo GTI R5, +28.6 sec.*
7. Solberg/Johnston (SWE/IRL), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, +34.4 sec.*
8. Pietarinen/Anttila (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, +38.1 sec.*

**Crews eligible to score points in the WRC3 category*

Number of the day: 9

Among the 17 entries strong field of the Rally2 cars, ŠKODA is with 9 FABIA the most popular brand.

The calendar of the 2020 FIA World Rally Championship

Event	Date
Monte-Carlo	23/01–26/01/2020
Sweden	13/02–16/02/2020
Mexico	12/03–15/03/2020
Argentina	23/04–26/04/2020
Portugal	21/05–24/05/2020
Italy	04/06–07/06/2020
Kenya	16/07–19/07/2020
Finland	06/08–09/08/2020
New Zealand	03/09–06/09/2020
Turkey	24/09–27/09/2020
Germany	15/10–18/10/2020
Great Britain	29/10–01/11/2020
Japan	19/11–22/11/2020

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE



ŠKODA
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Page 3 of 4

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Oliver Solberg with ŠKODA at Rally Sweden

Driving a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo at Rally Sweden, Oliver Solberg (SWE) and co-driver Aaron Johnston (IRL) have the podium of the WRC3 category in sight after the Friday leg

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



Emil Lindholm leads WRC3 category with a private ŠKODA at Rally Sweden

During Friday at Rally Sweden, privateers Emil Lindholm/Mikael Korhonen powered their ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo into the WRC3 category lead

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



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Page 4 of 4

ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

2019 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport so far. In 2019, the Czech brand introduced the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo. Factory crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen won both WRC2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' championship of the FIA World Rally Championship while ŠKODA Motorsport took the WRC2 Pro manufacturers' title. ŠKODA customer crew Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais won the WRC2 championship for private teams.

The success story of the Czech brand took place worldwide. The FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) was won by Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock (GBR/GBR), Filip Mareš/Jan Hloušek (CZE/CZE) conquered the FIA European Rally Championship/ERC1 Junior title. Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR) became FIA African Rally Champions (ARC), Ricardo Triviño/Marc Martí (MEX/ESP) won the FIA North American and Central American Rally Championship (NACAM). On top of that, ŠKODA crews won numerous national championships. The ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, a high-tech 4x4, was homologated by the International Automobile Federation (FIA) on 1 April 2019. The Czech rally car is successfully continuing the long tradition of ŠKODA Motorsport.

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 (WRC2) 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.

ŠKODA AUTO

- › is this year celebrating 125 years since the company was founded during the pioneering era of the automobile in 1895, making it one of the longest-established car manufacturers in the world.
- › currently offers its customers nine passenger-car series: the CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA, KAROQ, KODIAQ, as well as the KAMIQ and the SUPERB.
- › delivered more than 1.24 million vehicles to customers around the world in 2019.
- › has belonged to Volkswagen Group since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world. In association with the group, ŠKODA AUTO independently develops and manufactures vehicles as well as components such as engines and transmissions.
- › operates at three locations in the Czech Republic; manufactures in China, Russia, Slovakia, Algeria and India mainly through group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan with local partners.
- › employs over 42,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.
- › is pressing ahead with the transformation from a traditional car manufacturer to the 'Simply Clever company for the best mobility solutions' as part of the ŠKODA 2025 Strategy.