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ACI Rally Monza: Final round of the FIA World Rally Championship with strong presence of ŠKODA crews

- › At the Italian WRC newcomer, Swedish crew of Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Patrik Barth (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) fight for the WRC2 title
- › Jan Kopecký and Jan Hloušek (CZE/CZE) make a WRC return alongside their Swedish teammates in another ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo from Toksport WRT
- › Driving a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (POL/POL) aim for the WRC3 championship win
- › New ERC1 Junior Champion and ŠKODA Motorsport supported Oliver Solberg (SWE) and co-driver Aaron Johnston (IRL) are joined by Andreas Mikkelsen/Andreas Jæger (NOR/NOR), both teams competing with a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo in the WRC3 category

Mladá Boleslav, 1 December 2020 – Driving a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo from Toksport WRT, Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Patrik Barth (SWE/SWE) go into ACI Rally Monza (03/12–06/12/2020), final round of the FIA World Rally Championship 2020, with the clear aim to conquer the WRC2 title. Tidemand won the WRC2 title in 2017 already for ŠKODA Motorsport. His successor in 2018 was ŠKODA factory driver Jan Kopecký (CZE). The record Czech Rally Champion together with co-driver Jan Hloušek (CZE) will be Tidemand's teammate in a second Toksport ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo. In WRC3, all eyes will be on Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (POL/POL) fighting for the category title. They are joined by the new European Junior Rally Champions (ERC1) Oliver Solberg (SWE) and co-driver Aaron Johnston (IRL) as well as Andreas Mikkelsen/Anders Jæger (NOR/NOR), both crews competing with a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo as well.

The final round of the FIA World Rally Championship has a record number of 51 entries of RC2 cars. The strongest brand by far is again ŠKODA with 31 FABIA rally cars on the list. Record Czech Rally Champion Jan Kopecký is highly motivated for his return to the FIA World Rally Championship: "I got the offer from Toksport WRT to do the ACI Rally Monza, which runs entirely on tarmac – one of my most favourite surfaces. I am happy to be re-united with Pontus Tidemand, who is fighting for his second WRC2 title after 2017. In 2018, I managed to win the title ahead of him and this time we are both driving for Toksport with the engineering support from ŠKODA Motorsport." Thanks to strategically clever drives, Tidemand could secure already three WRC2 category wins in the 2020 season and travels to Monza as leader of the championship.

Andreas Mikkelsen recently made a stunning return behind the steering wheel of a ŠKODA in the FIA European Rally Championship, winning the penultimate round in Hungary. At ACI Rally Monza, he will compete with co-driver Anders Jæger in a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo from Eurosol Racing Team Hungary. The Norwegians will be joined by teammates Emil Lindholm/Mikael Korhonen from Finland. Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (POL/POL) are currently third on the WRC3 leader board. They are aiming for the title win in Italy, while ŠKODA Motorsport supported European Junior-Champions (ERC1) Oliver Solberg (SWE) and co-driver Aaron Johnston (IRL) want to finish their season in style with another good result. "I could improve my skills on tarmac with participations in FIA European Rally Championship rounds. Now I am really looking forward to the season finale in Italy," says Oliver Solberg who won the European Junior Championship Title (ERC1) on the weekend before ACI Rally Monza.



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Rallycross ace Niclas Grönholm, the son of two times FIA World Rally Champion Marcus Grönholm (FIN), will compete with co-driver Antti Linnaketo (FIN) in a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo as well DTM- and GT-Race driver Maro Engel. The German WRC novice will drive together with Ilka Minor from Austria a third FABIA from the Toksport WRT Team.

ACI Rally Monza features 16 special stages totalling 241.14 kilometres. The rally kicks off on Thursday (3 December) with a short stage at Autodromo Nazionale di Monza. On Friday (4 December), five additional stages will take place on the race track grounds, before on Saturday the rally heads north for another seven stages on country roads. On Sunday, the decision will take place on the remaining three stages in Monza. Due to the measures taken against the spread of the Coronavirus, ACI Rally Monza will take place behind closed doors.

Did you know,

...that Rally Monza was organized for the first time in 1978 and until 1984 was featuring stages on mixed surfaces on paved tracks and dirt roads in the circuit's inner areas?

...the name of the rally was changed in 2003 to "Monza Rally Show"?

...the ACI Rally Monza for the very first time is counting as a round towards the FIA World Rally Championship?

...that with Rally Italia Sardegna Italy for the first time is hosting two rounds of the FIA World Rally Championship?

The calendar of the 2020 FIA World Rally Championship

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Monte-Carlo	23/01/-26/01/2020
Sweden	13/02/-16/02/2020
Mexico	12/03/-15/03/2020
Estonia	04/09/-06/09/2020
Turkey	18/09/-20/09/2020
Italia Sardegna	08/10/-11/10/2020
Monza/Italy	03/12/-06/12/2020

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ŠKODA Motorsport at ACI Rally Monza

Swedish duo Pontus Tidemand/Patrik Barth (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) fights for the WRC2 Championship at ACI Rally Monza.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA Motorsport at ACI Rally Monza

ŠKODA Motorsport supported Oliver Solberg/Aaron Johnston (SWE/IRL) aim with their ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo for a top result in WRC3 category.

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ŠKODA Motorsport at ACI Rally Monza

Polish privateers Kajetan Kajetanowicz/ Maciej Szczepaniak (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) is among the favourites for the WRC3 title.

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ŠKODA Motorsport at ACI Rally Monza

Norwegian duo Andreas Mikkelsen/Anders Jæger is returning to the FIA World Rally Championship with a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo.

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ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

2019 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport so far. Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) won the WRC 2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' title of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019 as well as substantially supporting ŠKODA Motorsport to win the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title. Also in 2019, ŠKODA customer teams conquered five FIA championships and took additional 23 national titles around the world.

Driving a ŠKODA FABIA R5, Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock (GBR/GBR) won FIA European Rally Championship (ERC). Filip Mareš/Jan Hloušek (CZE/CZE) took the FIA European Rally Championship/ERC1 Junior title. Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR) powered a ŠKODA FABIA R5 to the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC), while Ricardo Triviño/Marc Martí (MEX/ESP) won the FIA North American and Central American Rally Championship (NACAM).

The ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, a high-tech 4x4, was homologated by the International Automobile Federation FIA on 1 April 2019 and is successfully continuing the long tradition of ŠKODA Motorsport. In total, both generations of the Czech rally car have been sold more than 320 times worldwide.

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.

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- › 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 ten passenger-car series: the CITIGO^e iV, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA and SUPERB as well as the KAMIQ, KAROQ, KODIAQ and ENYAQ iV.
- › delivered 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 and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan with local partners.
- › employs approximately 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.