

## Škoda 1100 OHC (1957): The beautiful dream of Le Mans

- › **The Škoda 1100 OHC racing car is considered a milestone in the 120-year motorsport history of the car manufacturer from Mladá Boleslav**
- › **Aerodynamic shape, lightweight construction, 92 hp and 200 km/h top speed testify to the expertise of Škoda AUTO's designers**
- › **One of the two surviving examples of the Škoda 1100 OHC with open bodywork is now part of the collection at the Škoda Museum**

**Mladá Boleslav, 14 May 2026 – The construction of the Škoda 1100 OHC racing car entered its final phase at the end of 1957. Designated within the company as 968, the vehicle was originally intended for long circuit races. Initially, two open-bodied vehicles were built, followed by two coupés in 1959. The open-top, red-painted racing car is now part of the collection at the Škoda Museum in Mladá Boleslav.**

Development of the two-seater sports car began in the spring of 1956 with one clear objective – the racer was to take up where the first and only Škoda works car had left off in the prestigious 24-hour race at Le Mans (1950). The model was based on a lattice frame made of thin-walled steel tubes welded together. This distinguished it from its predecessors, the Škoda Sport and Super Sport, which used a modified version of the robust chassis from the Škoda 1101 production model. To achieve the best possible handling, the load was optimally distributed over both axles. The clutch, five-speed gearbox and transfer case were installed in the rear, where they formed a cohesive assembly unit.

The drivetrain of the Škoda 1100 OHC was a longitudinally-mounted four-cylinder in-line engine with double ignition and two camshafts located in the cylinder head. From a displacement of 1,089 cm<sup>3</sup>, it generated an impressive output for the time of 68 kW (92 hp) at 7,700 rpm (maximum speed was at 8,500 rpm), which corresponded to a litre capacity of just under 63 kW (85 hp). Originally, the engine ran on high-octane aviation fuel, which was fed into two twin carburettors made by the Czechoslovakian brand Jikov and later by the Italian manufacturer WEBER.

The independent wheel suspension also played an important role; while a trapezoidal wishbone axle was fitted at the front, the rear wheels, spaced 2,200 mm apart, were mounted on a swing axle with trailing arms. The steering, which was as precise as it was direct, was controlled by a three-spoke steering wheel that could be removed to make it easier to get into the car. Another progressive element for the late 1950s was the torsion bar suspension of the 15-inch spoke wheels manufactured by Borrani.

Thanks to the use of glass fibre-reinforced plastic (GRP), the 3,880 mm long, 1,430 mm wide and 964 mm tall racing car weighed just 583 kilograms. This enabled the Škoda 1100 OHC to achieve competitive acceleration rates and a top speed of between 190 and 200 km/h, depending on the gear ratio. The low air resistance of the body created by designer Jaroslav Kindl was also a contributing factor.

The combination of practicality and elegance was reflected in the first model variant's two flip-up headlights, which soon had to be replaced by a more practical solution suitable for racing; the second model featured two fixed headlights mounted under aerodynamic glass covers.

The Škoda 1100 OHC clinched an immediate victory at its public premiere; on the municipal circuit in Mladá Boleslav, the experienced works driver Miroslav Fousek won the race at the end of June 1958. Racing drivers Václav Bobek Sen., Václav Čížkovský, Josef Vidner and Jaroslav Bobek also sat behind the wheel in subsequent years. In addition to motorsport events at home, Škoda drivers also chalked up successes abroad despite the Škoda 1100 OHC only being able to compete in Communist countries due to the difficult political situation at the end of the 1950s and 60s. The plans to take part in the 24 Hours of Le Mans did not come to fruition.

The two vehicles with open GRP bodies, which had been produced at the end of 1957 and the beginning of 1958, were followed in 1959 by two more spacious coupé variants with closed bodies made of sheet aluminium. Nevertheless, the engineers managed to keep the coupés' weight to only 555 kilograms while maintaining the same top speed.

The open-top versions of the racing car are still intact. The model from the Škoda Museum regularly takes part in classic car events at home and abroad. The second vehicle is owned by Škoda UK and is used for promotional purposes, primarily in the UK.

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### Škoda Motorsport

- › Škoda celebrates 125 years of Motorsport since the first efforts in 1901, garnering success in rallies as well as in circuit racing.
- › Highlights include winning the 1981 European Touring Car Championship (ETCC) with the Škoda 130 RS.
- › Since 2009, the Škoda Fabia celebrated numerous successes for the Czech manufacturer on rally stages worldwide.
- › Until 2014, the Škoda Fabia S2000 (2.0 naturally aspirated engine, four-wheel drive) secured 50 international titles and national rally championships. The Škoda Fabia S2000 also helped to win the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) and the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC) three times each.
- › The successor model Škoda Fabia R5 (1.6 turbo engine, four-wheel drive) entered the scene in 2015. Later renamed to Škoda Fabia Rally2 and followed by the further developed Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo, the model collected nearly 2,000 victories in 68 countries until the end of the 2022 season.
- › During this period, Škoda Motorsport factory drivers Jan Kopecký (CZE), Esapekka Lappi (FIN), Pontus Tidemand (SWE) and Kalle Rovanperä (FIN) won the FIA World Rally Championship's support category WRC2/WRC2 Pro. Škoda Motorsport also took the WRC2/WRC2 Pro Manufacturers' title five times in a row from 2015 to 2019.
- › Beginning with the 2020 season, Škoda Motorsport changed its strategy to supporting private teams. The success story continued: Driving a Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo run by Toksport WRT, Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR) and Emil Lindholm (FIN) became WRC2 Champions in 2021 and 2022. Mikkelsen became WRC2 Champion again in 2023 with team Toksport WRT, when the all-new Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 entered the scene. The Škoda Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT also won the WRC2 Teams' title three times in 2020, 2022 and 2023. In 2025 Toksport WRT took another WRC2 Teams' title and Nikolay Gryazin/Konstantin Aleksandrov of Toksport WRT become WRC2 Challenger drivers' and co-drivers' champions respectively.
- › Škoda Motorsport customer teams have also won titles in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC), FIA European Rally Championship (ERC), the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC), the FIA North American and Central American Rally Championship (NACAM), the FIA South American Rally Championship (CODASUR) and the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC).

### Škoda Auto

- › is successfully steering through the new decade with the Next Level Škoda Strategy;
- › aims to become one of the top three best-selling brands in Europe by the end of the decade by offering its customers the best of both worlds through a range of attractive BEV, hybrid & ICE products;
- › effectively exploits the potential in important growth markets such as India, Vietnam and the ASEAN region;
- › currently offers customers 12 passenger car model ranges: Fabia, Scala, Octavia, Superb, Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Elroq, Enyaq, Slavia, Kylaq and Kushaq;
- › delivered more than 1,040,000 vehicles to customers worldwide in 2025;
- › has been part of the Volkswagen Group, one of the world's most successful car manufacturers, for more than 30 years;
- › is part of Brand Group CORE, an organisational merger of the Volkswagen Group's volume brands, with the aim of achieving joint growth and significantly increasing the overall efficiency of all five volume brands;
- › independently develops and produces components such as MEB battery systems, engines and transmissions for other Volkswagen Group brands;
- › operates three production plants in the Czech Republic; has production capacities in Slovakia, Kazakhstan and India, mostly through group partnerships, as well as in Vietnam and Ukraine in cooperation with a local partner;
- › employs around 40,000 people worldwide and is active in almost 100 markets.