

Motorsport versions of the Škoda Favorit (1989): All different – and yet familiar

- › In 1987, after a quarter of a century dominated by vehicles with a rear-mounted engine and drivetrain, the Škoda Favorit was a revolutionary innovation
- › As a rally car, the Favorit regularly claimed victories in the under-1,300 cm³ class and held its own in the overall standings of the WRC
- › Highlight of the Favorit's motorsport career: Victory in the 'Formula 2' category for vehicles with one driven axle and a maximum engine capacity of two litres in 1994
- › Four-cylinder eight-valve engine with 1,299 cm³ displacement and OHV valve control delivered 105 hp and 117 Nm of torque

Mladá Boleslav, 14 May 2026 – The long era of Škoda vehicles with rear-engine and rear-wheel drive came to an end in 1988: the factory drivers from Mladá Boleslav drove their final rallies in the legendary 130 LR vehicles and began training in the new, front-wheel-drive Škoda Favorit practically overnight.

While the Škoda 130 LR was still racing on domestic rally tracks in September 1987, there was a considerable paradigm shift at the International Engineering Fair in Brno, where Škoda unveiled the Favorit to widespread interest. The modern hatchback with front-mounted engine and drivetrain was an entirely new development and the Czech carmaker believed it would also have strong sales prospects in the demanding Western European markets. In Mladá Boleslav, the team immediately began working on a rally version, the success of which would be key to promoting the new model internationally.

Works driver Vladimír Berger played an important role in developing the racing vehicle. For tuning purposes, he drove the Škoda Favorit, which had not yet been officially homologated, at selected rallies in the 1988 Czechoslovak championship. The homologation of the vehicle followed on 1 January 1989 under the registration number A-5373. The Favorit celebrated a successful debut with the driver teams Křeček/Motl, Sibera/Gross and Berger/Petera shortly afterwards at the traditional 'Valašská zima' rally. The Favorit celebrated its international premiere at the Finnish Hanki Rally, driving to class victory with Kalevi Aho at the wheel. The Favorit continued to dominate in the following years, winning almost every race in its class. It also asserted itself against the competition in demanding WRC rounds such as the Monte Carlo Rally, the RAC Rally, the Finnish 1000 Lakes Rally and the Acropolis Rally. The winning streak of the duo Pavel Sibera/Petr Gross, who won their class four times in a row at the Monte Carlo Rally between 1991 and 1994, was particularly impressive.

In 1993, new rules came into force with the announcement of the World Cup for vehicles with naturally aspirated engines, a maximum engine capacity of two litres and a driven axle – the so-called Formula 2. In the first season, the Škoda Motorsport works team finished

second, before leaving numerous well-known competitors behind in the following year and securing the world championship title in the Formula 2 class.

As a Class A rally car, the Škoda Favorit looked very similar to the series-production model at first glance, but it was a racing car through and through. The rigidity of the body, which was made of thinner sheet metal, was enhanced by a certified safety frame. In contrast to the standard version, the roof had a mechanical flap that improved ventilation in the interior. The windows and door panels, however, were from the series-production model. The upholstery and rear seat were removed, and several additional measures brought the kerb weight down to 750 kilograms.

The control panel was left unchanged, but the gauges and switches were adapted and positioned so that they could also be operated by the co-driver if required. The brake pressure was routed to the rear wheels via a brake power distributor, which could be adapted depending on the road conditions. A sports steering wheel, which drivers usually took with them from vehicle to vehicle, simplified the Favorit's handling.

The engine had OHV valve timing; compared to the standard engine, the displacement increased from 1,289.4 to 1,299.6 cm³. The connecting rods, cams and other parts were new. Initially, the engine delivered 76 kW at 6,500 rpm; later, thanks to a Pierburg twin carburettor, the power increased to 88 kW at 7,000 rpm. A five-speed gearbox was used at first, but this was later replaced by a six-speed gearbox with spur toothing. The Favorit's top speed was between 150 and 210 km/h, depending on the overall transmission ratio.

The white bodywork was originally finished with red and blue stripes, which later gave way to a chequered pattern in the same colours. This was replaced in 1993 by the green victory sign 'V' and red stripe – the emblem of RS cars today.

The Škoda Favorit 136 L/A, which had been modified for racing purposes, also held its own off the rally tracks on circuits and hill climbs. The Favorit 136 L/H, developed in 1989 for circuit racing, was particularly interesting from a technical perspective. The four-cylinder engine from the 790.16 OHC was a prototype with a larger displacement of 1,596 cm³. It had two Weber twin carburettors and generated 123 kW (167 hp) at 6,500 rpm; torque of 176 Nm was available at 5,500 rpm. The car reached a top speed of 240 km/h and accelerated from 0 to 100 km/h in just 6 seconds. The engine later benefited from direct injection and the power increased to 129 kW (175 hp). Among other events, this modified Škoda Favorit competed in the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring where the trio Kvaizar/Samohýl/Obermann clinched a class victory.

Although the more modern Škoda Felicia replaced the Škoda Favorit on the rally track in 1995, the Favorit remained on the starting lists of numerous races for many years as a sports vehicle that was both powerful and affordable.

Contact

Jan Hrbek

Motorsport Communications

+420 730 867 534

jan.hrbek@skoda-auto.cz

<https://skoda-motorsport.com>

Škoda Motorsport:



Media images:



Škoda Favorit 136 L/A

The Škoda Favorit 136 L/A rally car was powered by a transversely mounted front engine with a displacement of 1,299 cm³ and OHV valve control; the output was 105 hp and the torque 117 Nm. Its top speed was 170 km/h.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda Favorit 136 L/A

The duo Pavel Sibera/Petr Gross drove the Škoda Favorit 136 L to four consecutive class victories at the Monte Carlo Rally from 1991 to 1994.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda Favorit 136 L/A

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Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda Favorit 136 L/A

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Source: Škoda Auto

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) und 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.