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ŠKODA wins all titles in WRC 2 Pro and WRC 2 in the FIA World Rally Championship 2019

- › ŠKODA takes WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019
- › ŠKODA works crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen from Finland become WRC 2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' champions
- › WRC 2 championship for private teams goes to the ŠKODA customer crew Pierre-Louis Loubet and co-driver Vincent Landais from France
- › ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek: "Winning all titles of the WRC 2 Pro category and in the WRC 2 championship for private teams is the well-deserved reward for the whole team."

Mladá Boleslav, December 2019 – A long season came to a successful end for ŠKODA Motorsport. After Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen prematurely won the drivers' titles of the new WRC 2 Pro category at Rally Wales GB, ŠKODA Motorsport rounded up the season by also taking the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019. ŠKODA customer crew Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais won the WRC 2 championship for private teams.

"Finally, I can say: mission accomplished. We achieved every target we set ourselves for 2019. We successfully brought the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo to the market, Kalle and Jonne took the WRC 2 Pro drivers' titles and on top of that secured together with both Jans the necessary points to win the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' championship," ŠKODA Motorsport Director Michal Hrabánek emphasized and added: "This success only was possible due to the strong commitment and support from our board of management, our engineers, mechanics and all the ŠKODA employees, who supported us, making motorsport a successful part of the ŠKODA DNA. I am on top of that delighted to see how successful our customers are and that Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais could win the Title in the WRC 2 category for private teams with our rally car made in Mladá Boleslav."

The 2019 season at a glance:

Monte-Carlo Rally (24–27 January 2019)

It was a cold and icy night when the crews headed out from the city centre of Gap to the first special stage in the French Alps. Finnish youngster Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen got caught during the very first special stage. Driving a privately entered ŠKODA FABIA R5, they slid off the road into a ditch and even hit another car stranded in exactly the same place.

Giving up was never an option for Rovanperä and Halttunen. In the pitch-dark night they had to carry out emergency repairs including replacement of two broken wheels. Due to a time loss of more than twelve minutes, they temporarily dropped down to last position. Thanks to an impressive race to catch up, they finished 8th among the WRC 2 Pro and WRC 2 competitors in the end and collected valuable championship points for the second place in the then new WRC 2 Pro category.



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Final result Monte-Carlo Rally (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Greensmith/Edmondson (GBR/GBR), Ford Fiesta R5, 3:34:20.5 hours*
2. Bonnato/Boulloud (FRA/FRA), Citroën C3 R5, +51.9 sec.
3. Fourmaux/Jamoul (FRA/FRA), Ford Fiesta R5, +2:58.8 min.
8. Rovannerä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +13:27.8 min.*

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Rally Sweden (14 –17 February 2019)

On their first season appearance with the ŠKODA Motorsport factory team, Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen experienced mixed emotions during their very first participation at Rally Sweden. They lost all chances of a possible category victory as they had to pay greenhorns' tax for two time-consuming visits to snowbanks. Nevertheless, despite their lack of experience of the fast snow tracks in Swedish and Norwegian forests, they scored valuable points for second place in WRC 2 Pro.

Their Finnish compatriots Eerik Pietarinen/Juhana Raitanen, also nominated by ŠKODA Motorsport to score points of the WRC 2 Pro category, had even more of bad luck. They hit a stone during the last stage and had to retire from fourth position with a broken rim.

Final result Rally Sweden (WRC 2 Pro)

1. Østberg/Eriksen (NOR/NOR), Citroën C3 R5, 2:55:54.5 h
2. Rovannerä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +3:19.2 min.
3. Greensmith/Edmondson (GBR/GBR), Ford Fiesta R5, +4:48.9 min.
4. Pieniążek/Heller (POL/POL), Ford Fiesta R5, +57:02.2 min.

Rally Mexico (07–10 March 2019)

As planned, the ŠKODA factory team skipped Rally Mexico. Nevertheless, customer teams successfully represented the colours of the Czech brand in the WRC 2 category. After a thrilling fight, Benito Guerra and co-driver Jaime Ortega Zapata (MEX/MEX) won ahead of Marco Bulacia-Wilkinson/Fabian Cretu (BOL/ARG).

Final result Rally Mexico (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Guerra/Zapata (MEX/MEX), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 3:52:43.5 h
2. Bulacia-Wilkinson/Cretu (BOL/ARG), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +3:16.2 min.
3. Pieniążek/Heller (POL/POL), Ford Fiesta R5, +29:47.6 min.*

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Rally France/Tour de Corse (28–31 March 2019)

While ŠKODA works crew Kalle Rovannerä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen, this time driving a privately entered ŠKODA FABIA R5, had to retire from leading the WRC 2 Pro category after an accident, two private crews secured a double win for ŠKODA in the WRC 2 category. In the penultimate stage, Nikolay Gryazin/Yaroslav Fedorov (RUS/RUS) took the WRC 2 lead from Fabio Andolfi/Simone Scattolin (ITA/ITA). But during the final test, the Italian crew fought back and secured the well-deserved victory.



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Final result Rally France/Tour de Corse (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Andolfi/Scattolin (ITA/ITA), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 3:34:08.6 h
2. Gryazin/Fedorov (RUS/RUS), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +3.9 sec.
3. Kajetanowicz/Szczepaniak (POL/POL), VW Polo GTI R5, +2:53.3 min.
4. Katsuta/Barrit (JPN/GBR), Ford Fiesta R5, +3:51.9 min.
5. Yates/Morgan (GBR/GBR), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +3:58.5 min.
10. Pieniążek/Heller (POL/POL), Ford Fiesta R5, +18:11.1 min.*

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Rally Argentina (25–28 April 2019)

As planned the ŠKODA factory team did not enter Rally Argentina. ŠKODA privateers Benito Guerra and co-driver Jaime Ortega Zapata (MEX/MEX) finished third in their class ahead of their Brazilian stablemates Paulo Nobre/Gabriel Morales.

Final result Rally Argentina (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Østberg/Eriksen (NOR/NOR), Citroën C3 R5, 3:52:23.1 h*
2. P. Heller/Marti (CHL/ESP), Ford Fiesta R5, +5:46.0 min.
3. Guerra/Zapata (MEX/MEX), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 15:20.8 min.
4. Nobre/Morales (BRA/BRA), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 16:57.0 min.

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Rally Chile (09–12 May 2019)

For the first time, Rally Chile was part of the FIA World Rally Championship. Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen, again driving a private ŠKODA FABIA R5, chose a smart and careful approach, learning as much as possible on the new and challenging gravel stages of the South American country. After some mishaps and setbacks during the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship so far, the Finnish pairing conquered their first season win in the WRC 2 Pro category after a clever performance.

Rain made the tracks muddy and tricky. 18 years old Marco Bulacia-Wilkinson, who was driving a privately entered ŠKODA FABIA R5 but was registered to score points for ŠKODA Motorsport in the WRC 2 Pro category, handled the tough conditions well. He finished fourth, securing his maiden category points.

Final result Rally Chile (WRC 2 Pro)

1. Rovanperä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 3:23:46.3 h
2. Østberg/Eriksen (NOR/NOR), Citroën C3 R5, +23.6 sec.
3. Greensmith/Edmondson (GBR/GBR), Ford Fiesta R5, +3:49.0 min.
4. Bulacia-Wilkinson/Cretu (BOL/ARG), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +5:42.3 min.

Rally Portugal (30 May–02 June 2019)

The new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo trouble-free won its WRC 2 Pro debut at Rally Portugal. While Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen took first position of the category, teammates Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) secured a double win for ŠKODA.



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Therefore history repeated itself at Rally Portugal. In 2015, the first generation ŠKODA FABIA R5 celebrated a successful debut at the Portuguese WRC round. Exactly four years later at the same event, the successor ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo was unbeatable.

Thanks to French privateers Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais, ŠKODA teams conquered the top three positions among the initially 32 entries strong field of R5 cars.

Final result Rally Portugal (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Rovannerä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, 3:30:57.0 h*
2. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +1:07.7 min.*
3. Loubet/Landais (FRA/FRA), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +2:12.1 min.
4. Bergkvist/Barth (SWE/SWE), Ford Fiesta R5, +3:54.2 min.
5. H.Solberg/Minor (NOR/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +4:20.3 min.

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Rally Italia Sardinia (13–16 June 2019)

It was time to celebrate on the podium in the beautiful harbour of Alghero: Driving two ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen and teammates Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler scored a one-two in the WRC 2 Pro category. Both works crews delivered a faultless performance and gave ŠKODA Motorsport the second double victory of the 2019 WRC 2 Pro season. Rovannerä even achieved a hat trick on Sardinia after his recent wins in Chile and Portugal.

Although the landscape at the Sardinian coastline was simply breath-taking, both ŠKODA works crews wasted no time with any sightseeing. As Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen and Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler were heading the WRC 2 Pro category and also heading the field of the 37 entered R5 cars with a comfortable margin, it was all about finding the right speed in order to be on the safe side and not to lose concentration. And so both crews did.

In the WRC 2 category for private teams, French ŠKODA privateers Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais had lost the category lead on the last stage of Saturday when they suffered a puncture. But they fought back to the lead and like in Portugal won the category from Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak, who drove their first rally with a ŠKODA FABIA R5. At the end, the top four positions among the initially 37 R5 cars were conquered by ŠKODA crews.

Final result Rally Italia Sardegna (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Rovannerä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, 3:40:51.8 h*
2. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +24.6 sec.*
3. Loubet/Landais (FRA/FRA), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +2:48.4 min.
4. Kajetanowicz/Szczepaniak (POL/POL), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +3:30.1 min.
5. Tempestini/Itu (ROM/ROM), Hyundai i20 R5, +3:43.0 min.

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*



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Neste Rally Finland (01–04 August 2019)

The ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo crew of Kalle Rovannerä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen led the WRC 2 Pro competition from start to finish and scored their fourth category victory in a row on a round of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship. On top of that, Russian crew Nicolay Gryazin/Yaroslav Fedorov won the WRC 2 category for private teams with the predecessor model ŠKODA FABIA R5, proving that both generations of the ŠKODA FABIA are the fastest cars of the R5 class.

Behind Rovannerä/Halttunen, the WRC 2 category for private crews saw a strong performance by French ŠKODA pairing Pierre-Louis Loubet and co-driver Vincent Landais. Rallying the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo for the first time, they initially were in control of their class. But they left the road during the last stage of Saturday and lost valuable time. As a consequence, Russian ŠKODA privateers Nicolay Gryazin/Yaroslav Fedorov took a well-deserved victory with the predecessor model ŠKODA FABIA R5.

Final result Neste Rally Finland (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Rovannerä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, 2:38:34.4 h*
2. Gryazin/Fedorov (RUS/RUS), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +2:34.6 min.
3. Huttunen/Lukka (FIN/FIN), Hyundai i20 R5, +2:48.6 min.
4. Kristoffersson/Skjaermoen (SWE/NOR), VW Polo GTI R5, +4:38.4 min.
5. Camilli/Veillas (FRA/FRA), Ford Fiesta R5 MKII, +4:47.0 min.*

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

ADAC Rallye Deutschland (22–25 August 2019)

Scoring their best result of the 2019 season, Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler powered their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo to WRC2 Pro victory at ADAC Rallye Deutschland. Teammates Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen recovered from a setback on Saturday, when they slipped off the road, to third place of the category.

Again, the Czech rally car also was dominant in the WRC 2 category for private teams. German champions Fabian Kreim (2016 and 2017) and Marijan Griebel (2018), both being supported by ŠKODA Auto Deutschland, secured a double victory on their first event with the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo.

Final result ADAC Rallye Deutschland (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, 3:27:24.1 h*
2. Kreim/Braun (GER/GER), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +52,6 sec.
3. Griebel/Winklhofer (GER/GER), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +1:11.1 min.
4. Kajetanovicz/Szczepaniak (POL/POL), VW Polo GTI R5, +1:14.1 min.
5. Camilli/Veillas (FRA/FRA), Ford Fiesta R5 MKII, +1:19.1 min.*
6. Rovannerä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +2:54.0 min*
7. Østberg/Eriksen (NOR/NOR), Citroën C3 R5, +3:36.5 min*

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*



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Rally Turkey Marmaris (12–15 September 2019)

Rally Turkey Marmaris again proved to be the toughest gravel rally of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019. 17 tests totalling 309.86 kilometres over gravel and stones – except the short show stage in the city on Marmaris, which was on tarmac – were a true test for man and machine.

Despite a tire mishap on Saturday, Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler brought their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo home second in the WRC 2 Pro category. Teammates Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen, after being forced to retire on Friday due to three punctures, re-started on Saturday. By eventually finishing third in the category, they collected valuable points for ŠKODA in the manufacturers' WRC 2 Pro championship, at the same time consolidating their own lead in the WRC 2 Pro drivers' championship.

Driving a ŠKODA FABIA R5, Kajetan Kajetanowicz (POL) and co-driver Maciej Szczepaniak (POL) won the WRC 2 category for private teams.

Final result Rally Turkey (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Greensmith/Edmondson (GBR/GBR), Ford Fiesta R5 MKII, 4:05:30.8 h*
2. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +29.4 sec.*
3. Kajetanowicz/Szczepaniak (POL/POL), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +29.6 sec.
4. Bulacia-Wilkinson/Cretu (BOL/ARG), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +2:09.5 min.
5. Andolfi/Inglesi (ITA/ITA), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +9:43.4 min.

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Wales Rally GB (03–06 October 2019)

ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen won the WRC 2 Pro category, thus securing the WRC 2 Pro drivers' titles already two rounds before the final of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019. They dominated the WRC 2 Pro competition right from the start. Only a puncture during the second but last stage on Friday made them drop to second position temporarily. They moved back into the category lead on Saturday morning, defending that position right to the finish line on Sunday. Despite a puncture and a roll, Jan Kopecký and co-driver Jan Hloušek ended Wales Rally GB in second place of the WRC 2 Pro category.

Finishing second in the WRC 2 category with their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, privateers Pierre-Louis Loubet and Vincent Landais also collected valuable championship points.

Final result Wales Rally GB (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Rovanperä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, 3:11:49.1 h*
2. P. Solberg/Mills (NOR/GBR), VW Polo GTI R5, +45.0 sec.
3. Loubet/Landais (FRA/FRA), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +1:03.8 min.
7. Kopecký/Hloušek (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +4:47.0 min.*

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*



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RallyRACC Catalunya-Rally de España (24–27 October 2019)

Mission accomplished: In Spain, Jan Kopecký/Jan Hloušek and their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo teammates Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen finished second and third respectively in WRC 2 Pro. With these results, they prematurely secured the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019 for ŠKODA already ahead of the season's final.

Inside the WRC 2 category for private teams, championship leaders Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais had a heart-breaking moment during the final day of the Spanish WRC round. Having led the category after the first day of the rally, they put their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo into a ditch on the second of the Sunday stages, lost valuable time and dropped to fourth category position. Luckily, they nevertheless defended the category lead.

Final result RallyRACC Catalunya (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Østberg/Eriksen (NOR/NOR), Citroën C3 R5, 3:16:04.2 h*
2. Camilli/Veillas (FRA/FRA), Citroën C3 R5, +22.6 sec.
3. Kopecký/Hloušek (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +54.7 sec.*
4. Rovannerä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +1:29.1 min.*
5. Lindholm/Korhonen (FIN/FIN), VW Polo GTI R5, +2:03.1 min.

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Rally Australia / cancelled

Due to heavy bushfires Rally Australia had to be cancelled. Thus, ŠKODA privateers Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais were finally crowned WRC2 Champions. With this result, ŠKODA Motorsport and ŠKODA teams had won every title in the WRC 2 Pro and WRC 2 category.

Championship result WRC 2 Pro/Drivers

1. Kalle Rovannerä (FIN), ŠKODA, 176 points
2. Mads Østberg (NOR), Citroën, 145 points
3. Gus Greensmith (GBR), Ford, 137 points
4. Jan Kopecký (CZE), ŠKODA, 115 points

Championship result WRC 2 Pro/Manufacturers

1. ŠKODA, 333 points
2. Ford, 259 points
3. Citroën, 145 points

Championship result WRC 2/Drivers (private teams)

1. Pierre-Louis Loubet (FRA), ŠKODA, 91 points
2. Kajetan Kajetanowicz (POL), ŠKODA/VW, 88 points
3. Benito Guerra (MEX), ŠKODA, 75 points

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FIA European Rally Championship 2019: ŠKODA privateer Chris Ingram wins title – Filip Mareš ERC1 Junior Champion in another ŠKODA

- › Double victory for ŠKODA crews winning overall and junior title of the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC)
- › Last minute championship for Chris Ingram and Ross Whittock after thrilling showdown at season closing Rally Hungary becoming the first Britons since 1967 to win European title
- › Filip Mareš and Jan Hloušek from Czech Republic secure ERC1 Junior title by a mere 0.3 seconds at Barum Rally Zlín

ŠKODA crews played a leading role in the FIA European Rally Championship 2019 (ERC). Four of the eight rounds were won by crews using ŠKODA FABIA R5 and ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo. Chris Ingram and co-driver Ross Whittock (GBR/GBR) became champions after a Hungarian thriller, Filip Mareš/Jan Hloušek (CZE/CZE) won the ERC1 Junior Championship and Lukasz Habaj/Daniel Dymurski (POL/POL) finished third in the overall standings.

The opening ERC round, the Azores Rally, was won by Lukasz Habaj/Daniel Dymurski (POL/POL), leading a pure ŠKODA podium with Ricardo Moura/António Costa and Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock taking second and third. Next ŠKODA winners of the season were Giandomenico Basso/Lorenzo Granai (ITA/ITA) on their home round, Rally di Roma Capitale.

At Barum Rally Zlín, young Czech driver Filip Mareš and co-driver Jan Hloušek had a tense fight for the junior title (ERC1) with the British pairing Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock, both driving ŠKODA FABIA R5. While ŠKODA factory driver Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) won the event overall, Filip Mareš and co-driver Jan Hloušek came second, beating their closest rivals Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock at the end by just 0.3 seconds. Thus, Mareš/Hloušek claimed the European Junior Championship (ERC1). The Czech crew, which is strongly supported by Czech rally ace Roman Kresta and the ACCR Czech Rally Team, received 100,000 Euros as a reward.

Despite being defeated in the junior category, Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock were still leading the ERC overall classification – but had no budget left to compete in the two final ERC rounds. That is, until Ingram's mother initiated the crowd founding "Back the Brits" to cover the shortfall. With the money raised from sponsors, family, friends, fans and supporters as well as the strong support of their TOK Sport WRT Team, they could make it to the Cyprus Rally. On the island they came second after a smart drive, which gave the Britons a comfortable overall lead. The title decision between Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock, second placed ŠKODA stablemates Lukasz Habaj/Daniel Dymurski and Citroën crew Alexey Lukyanuk/Alexey Arnautov (RUS/RUS) was postponed to the season's final in Hungary.

Even the master of suspense, Alfred Hitchcock, could not have done better concerning the dramaturgy of Rally Hungary. Going into the very last stage of the season, championship leaders Chris Ingram and Ross Whittock were third. That could have been enough to secure the title, even if long time rally leaders Alexey Lukyanuk/Alexey Arnautov had taken the victory. But Ingram's championship hopes seemed to be gone, when he collected a puncture with the finish in sight and

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dropped to fourth. Incredibly, Lukyanuk punctured as well during the last meters of the rally, as a consequence dropping to second overall. In the end, Chris Ingram and Ross Whittock were confirmed as overall champions. The last Briton to win the European Rally Championship was Vic Eford back in 1967 – he was one of the first to congratulate Ingram via short message.

At Rally Hungary, ŠKODA crew Frigyes Turán/Lázló Bagaméri, who had driven into the last stage of the rally ahead of Lukyanuk and Ingram and didn't know about the incidents, only found out they had claimed their maiden ERC victory, when they got a phone call from their team on the road section to the podium.

Another ŠKODA crew delivered a stunning performance throughout the 2019 ERC season as well: Lukasz Habaj/Daniel Dymurski (Sports Racing Technologies) from Poland finished third overall.

Championship result ERC Overall/Drivers

1. Chris Ingram (GBR), ŠKODA, 141 points
2. Alexey Lukyanuk (RUS), Citroën, 132 points
3. Lukasz Habaj (POL), ŠKODA, 116 points

Championship result ERC1 Junior/Drivers

1. Filip Mareš (CZE), ŠKODA, 133 points
2. Chris Ingram (GBR), ŠKODA, 131 points
3. Mattias Adielsson (SWE), Ford/Citroën, 71 points



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ŠKODA Motorsport Crews

Driver:	Jan Kopecký (Czech Republic)
Born:	28 January 1982 in Opočno/today Czech Republic
First rally:	2001 Rally Šumava/Czech Republic (ŠKODA OCTAVIA Grp.A)
First WRC rally:	2002 Rally Deutschland/Germany (Toyota Corolla WRC)
Co-drivers:	Pavel Dresler and Jan Hloušek (Czech Republic)

To follow the footsteps of his father Josef, who was an avid rally driver, Jan Kopecký started karting at the age of 13. As soon as possible the young Czech changed to circuit racing, working up his ranks on national level. Soon he started winning, among others the 2001 ŠKODA OCTAVIA Cup on the race track. Using the rally version of the ŠKODA OCTAVIA S2000 Kopecký gave his rallying debut the same year and never looked back to circuits.

Competing a ŠKODA OCTAVIA WRC in the Czech Championship (ČMR), he impressed the right people at ŠKODA Motorsport. Promoted to factory driver he won his first of today six Czech titles in 2004, driving a ŠKODA FABIA WRC.

When after a break ŠKODA Motorsport returned to rallying in 2009 with the ŠKODA FABIA S2000, Jan Kopecký again was one of the factory drivers. He finished the season second overall in the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC) and third overall in the Czech Championship. He backed up these results by finishing second overall in the IRC the three following years in a row, always driving a ŠKODA FABIA S2000. In 2012 Kopecký, since then partnered with co-driver Pavel Dresler, again became Czech Champion, taking the European Rally Championship (ERC) a year later with a record six wins.

Up to that point Kopecký had made his name mainly as a tarmac specialist. But in 2014 the former racing driver surprised some people. On demanding gravel stages on the other side of the globe the ŠKODA FABIA S2000 driver won the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC).

When the ŠKODA FABIA R5 arrived in early 2015, Kopecký started a remarkable series of victories in the Czech Championship. Up to the end of 2019 he was never beaten on home soil again, taking the Czech title from 2015 to 2019 five times in a row.

Also in 2015, Kopecký celebrated his debut win on WRC 2 level of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) during Rally Deutschland. In 2017 for the first time he won a gravel rally on world championship level, taking the win on the gruelling Sardinian roads during Rally Italy. Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler ended the 2017 WRC 2 season fourth overall. In 2018, they had a fantastic season, winning five WRC 2 events, finishing second once and Jan Kopecký conquering the 2018 WRC 2 drivers' championship. In 2019, he won the WRC 2 Pro category at Rally Deutschland and with additional top results collected valuable championship points, so that ŠKODA won the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' championship of the FIA World Rally Championship.

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Co-Driver: Jan Hloušek (Czech Republic)

Born: 15 December 1992 in Jablonec nad Nisou/today Czech Republic

First rally: Rally Liberec 2012/ Czech Republic

First WRC rally: Wales Rally GB 2019

Co-driver to: Jan Kopecký (Czech Republic)

Like many other co-drivers, Jan Hloušek collected some experience as a rally driver in his early years. He took part in his home Rally Liberec 2012 when he drove a ŠKODA FELICIA to eighth position in class A1. But from then on, he focussed on competing as a co-driver.

First event together with Filip Mareš was Rally Orlické hory 2014, where they surprised in a Mitsubishi Lancer EVO VI prepared by Sportgarage Praha. Unfortunately, they had to retire close to the finish because of low fuel pressure. Since then Jan remained the regular co-driver of young Czech rally star Mareš.

Together with him, Hloušek became Czech Junior Champion and FIA ERT3 Champion in 2016. In 2017, he won the Czech Junior and 2WD Championship and became FIA ERC3 co-driver champion. In 2018, Mareš/Hloušek switched to a ŠKODA FABIA R5 prepared by Roman Kresta Racing. Competing under the banner of and strongly supported by ACCR Czech Rally Team, they finished fourth in the Czech Rally Championship. Alongside Filip Mareš, Jan also collected experience on international events as well and won the FIA European Rally Junior Championship (ERC1) in 2019.

Together with Jan Kopecký, Hloušek finished second in the WRC 2 Pro category at the world championship's rounds Wales Rally GB and Rally Spain. Thus, they supported ŠKODA to win the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' championship of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019.



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Driver: Kalle Rovannerä (Finland)
Born: 1 October 2000 in Jyväskylä/Finland
First rally: 2013 Rallijsprints Gulbis/Latvia (Citroën C2 R2)
First WRC rally: 2017 Wales Rally GB/UK (Ford Fiesta R5)
Co-driver: Jonne Halttunen (Finland)

Kalle Rovannerä has rallying virtually in his blood. His father Harri in his prime was factory driver for several teams. He even scored one victory in the FIA World Rally Championship (Sweden 2001).

When he was eight years old, Kalle was filmed drifting a small Toyota rally car through snowy forests like an expert. Years later, the video went viral on YouTube with today more than one million views.

Because Finnish law doesn't allow participation in rallies before the age of 18 – until Kalle got an exemption from that rule – he went to Latvia, starting with rally sprints at the age of twelve. For the next couple of years, co-driver Risto Pietiläinen, not by chance father Harri's former navigator, had to drive the road sections. That didn't stop little Kalle from winning the Latvian Junior Championship in 2015, following it up with the main championship in 2016 and 2017, on both occasions driving a ŠKODA FABIA R5.

Meanwhile Finnish manager legend Timo Jouhki had taken over, in 2016 sending the teenager from Finland's rally capital Jyväskylä to the Italian Rally Championship to get some experience on tarmac. During the Memorial Bettega, a rally show in Bologna, Rovannerä drove a World Rally Car (WRC), beating some factory drivers on his way to the final.

On October 2nd 2017, he passed his driving test, one day after his 17th birthday, courtesy to a waiver by the Finnish government. With this important paper in the pocket, Rovannerä was finally cleared to compete in international events. Jonne Halttunen became the new co-driver instead of veteran Risto Pietiläinen (then 50).

Rovannerä celebrated his debut in the FIA World Rally Championship with Wales Rally GB 2017, only three weeks after his 17th birthday. During the 2017 season's final in Australia, he became the youngest driver ever to win a round of the WRC 2 category. In 2018, he won the WRC 2 rounds in Wales – only days after his 18th birthday – and Spain, finishing his first season at ŠKODA Motorsport in third overall of the WRC 2 Championship for Drivers. At Wales Rally GB 2019, Kalle Rovannerä again won the WRC 2 Pro category, thus securing the WRC 2 Pro drivers' championship already two rounds before the season's final.

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Co-driver: Jonne Halttunen (Finland)

Born: 13 December 1985 in Jyväskylä/Finland

First rally: 2007 Jari-Pekka Rally (Finland)

First WRC rally: 2011 Rally Finland

Co-driver to: Kalle Rovannerä (Finland)

Jonne Halttunen came into Kalle Rovannerä's car with two titles as Finnish Champion under his belt, both won co-driving Teemu Asunmaa in a privately entered ŠKODA FABIA R5 in 2015 and 2016. Asunmaa/Halttunen repeated this success in 2017. Obviously not a full-time job, because during the same season Halttunen navigated Kalle Rovannerä to first overall in the Latvian Championship as well. The Finnish duo also won the WRC 2 category at the 2017 season closing Rally Australia.

In 2018, Halttunen together with Kalle Rovannerä won the FIA World Rally Championship's WRC 2 rounds in Great Britain/Wales and Spain, ending the season on third spot in the WRC 2 overall standings. At Wales Rally GB 2019, Jonne Halttunen won alongside of Kalle Rovannerä the WRC 2 Pro category, thus securing the WRC 2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' titles already two rounds before the season's final.

Halttunen has a heart not only for the latest generation of rally cars. In 2016, he became runner-up in the Historic European Rally Championship, co-driving fellow Finn Ville Silvasti in a Porsche 911 Carrera.

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ŠKODA champions 2019

FIA World Rally Championship/WRC 2 Pro/Championship for Manufacturers:
ŠKODA Motorsport

FIA World Rally Championship WRC 2 Pro/Championship for Drivers and Co-Drivers:
Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN)

FIA World Rally Championship/WRC 2 Championship for Drivers and Co-Drivers:
Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais (FRA/FRA)

FIA European Rally Championship (ERC):
Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock (GBR/GBR)

FIA European Rally Championship/ERC1 Junior:
Filip Mareš/Jan Hloušek (CZE/CZE)

FIA African Rally Championship (ARC):
Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR)

FIA North American and Central American Rally Championship (NACAM):
Ricardo Triviño/Marc Martí (MEX/ESP)

Belgium: Adrian Fernémont/Samuel Maillen (BEL/BEL)

Bulgaria: Miroslav Angelov/Georgi Gadzhev (BGR/BGR)

Chile: Jorge Martínez/Alberto Álvarez (CHL/ARG)

Croatia: Krisztián Hideg/István Kerék (HUN/HUN)

Czech Republic: Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE)

Denmark: Ib Kragh/Ditte Kammersgaard (DEN/DEN)

Finland: Teemu Asunmaa/Jani Salo (FIN/FIN)

Germany: Fabian Kreim/Tobias Braun (GER/GER)

Hungary: Ferenc Vincze jun./Igor Bacigál (HUN/SVK)

Italy: Giandomenico Basso/Lorenzo Granai (ITA/ITA)

Italy (Gravel): Stéphane Consani/Thibault de la Haye (FRA/FRA)

Kenya: Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR)

Lithuania: Vaidotas Žala/Andris Mālnieks (LTU/LVA)

Mexico: Ricardo Triviño/Marc Martí (MEX/ESP)

Poland: Mikolaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk (POL/POL)

Portugal: Ricardo Teodósio/José Teixeira (PRT/PRT)

Réunion: Thierry Law-Long/Noor Mohammad Balbolia (FRA/FRA)

Slovakia: Martin Kočí/Radovan Mozner jun. (SVK/SVK)

Spain (Gravel): Xevi Pons/Rodrigo Sanjuan (ESP/ESP)

Sweden: Patrik Flodin/Göran Bergsten (SWE/SWE)

Switzerland: Ivan Ballinari/Giusva Pagani (CHE/CHE)

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ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo already a class of its own, continues predecessor's story of success

- › ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo takes WRC 2 Pro category of FIA World Rally Championship 2019
- › New Czech rally scores more titles and victories for the Czech brand
- › ŠKODA FABIA R5 and ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo are with more than 320 cars sold the bestsellers in the segment

Since its homologation on 1 April 2019 by the international motorsport federation FIA, the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo had a very successful competitive year. The new Czech rally car followed successfully the footpaths of his predecessor. Around 40 new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo were delivered to customers so far. In total, both generations of the Czech rally car have been sold more than 320 times world wide.

The ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo adopts key design elements of the 2019 ŠKODA FABIA road car, at the same time getting important technical improvements. The optimization has touched technical key components, which are appreciated by the clients. The new rally car features improved engine performance in comparison with the predecessor version. The 1.6-litre turbo charged engine was upgraded improving power output and driveability.

The engine is equipped with an electric water pump and a new, more effective cooling system. The waste gate of the turbo is now electrically operated. Engine lubrication is ensured by an oil pump with an improved hydraulic regulation. New engine electronics, including a Magneti Marelli control system and a new display, are on board as well. The gear ratio has been adapted to the new engine characteristics and the transmission offers on top of that an increased lifetime. The bodysell has been strengthened; a new roll cage according to the FIA 2019 regulation has been fitted. The new steering has a more direct ratio, longer wheel travel offers better traction.

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ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo

Engine

- Electric water pump and a new, more effective cooling system
- New oil pump with an improved hydraulic regulation
- Waste gate of the turbo electrically operated
- Improved engine performance in terms of power output and drivability

Body shell

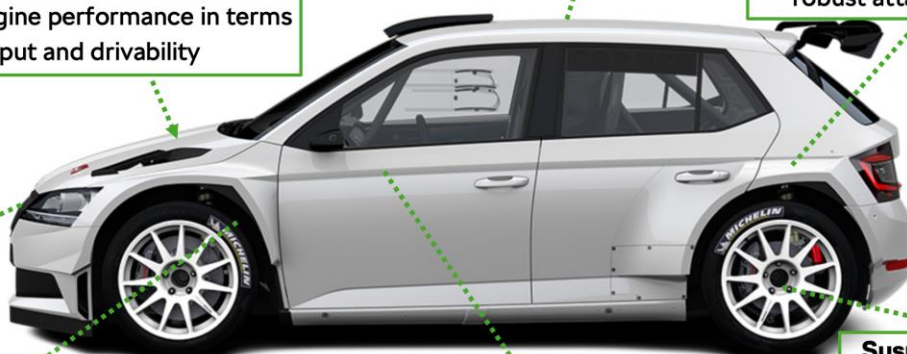
- Improved safety for the crew
- Bodyshell has been strengthened; new roll cage according to the FIA 2019 regulation

Fuel system

- Fuel tank with more robust attachment

Design

- New key design elements of the road car
- LED front lights



Gearbox

- Gear ratio adapted to the new engine characteristics
- Increased lifetime

Electronics

- New engine electronics including a Magneti Marelli control system and a new display

Suspension

- Longer wheel travel offers better traction
- Steering with a more direct ratio



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ŠKODA Motorsport: A tradition of success – from motorcycling to FIA World Rally Championship

- › ŠKODA is since 1901 an established brand in motorsport on two and for wheels and has been winning on race circuits and rally tracks around the globe
- › The motorsport roots of the Czech brand lie in the famous motorcycle races of the early 20th century
- › In the 1970s and '80s, the ultralight rear-engine racer ŠKODA 130 RS drove to a series of victories on race tracks
- › ŠKODA FABIA R5 and ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo continue the success story of the milestones in ŠKODA Motorsport's history

Mladá Boleslav – ŠKODA's motorsport roots reach back more than 118 years. On June 1901, Narcis Podsedníček entered the long-distance race from Paris to Berlin for the first time, riding a L&K motorcycle built by ŠKODA's founding fathers Laurin and Klement. What had begun in 1901 on two wheels, continued in the 1970s and '80s with a worldwide series of victories on race circuits and rally tracks. In 2019, the ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo continued the success story of ŠKODA Motorsport with more victories.

Early years and first victories

The love of motorsport goes all the way back to the company's founding fathers Václav Laurin and Václav Klement (L&K). Just two years after the start of motorcycle production at L&K, they trusted racer Narcis Podsedníček with their new L&K single-cylinder motorcycle and, in 1901, sent him to the long-distance race from Paris to Berlin. Podsedníček was one of ten drivers who competed in the category of motorcycles and three-wheelers. On his L&K bike he reached the finish line first. He arrived in Berlin on 30 June 1901 at three o'clock in the morning – before the official timing had even been set up. A policeman testified his arrival time, but nevertheless he was disqualified. At the end, only four French drivers with three-wheelers from De Dion-Bouton were classified, but the moral winner was Podsedníček.

However, Laurin and Klement saw their economic future on four wheels. From 1905 onwards their cars continued the success story. Besides victories at hill climbs and endurance races, the Laurin & Klement FCS, powered by a four-cylinder engine delivering 95 bhp, set a speed record of 118.72 kilometres per hour at Brooklands race circuit in the UK.

1936 – 1986: ŠKODA established as force to be reckoned in motor racing

During the period between the two wars, ŠKODA cars impressed technically with their central tube frame. In January 1936, a ŠKODA POPULAR SPORT took second place in the category at the challenging Monte-Carlo Rally. The ŠKODA RAPID repeated this success one year later. After World War II, a two-seater sports car based on the ŠKODA 1101 production model impressed on the race track at Spa-Francorchamps, driven by Czech and other European drivers. The new car was as well successful at the Monte-Carlo Rally and the gruelling Tour d'Europe road rally. Later the ŠKODA OCTAVIA, presented in 1959, went from success to success.

The ŠKODA 1000 MB marked a new chapter for the brand in the 1960s. In 1964, the first ŠKODA with rear-wheel drive and rear-mounted engine again represented a new technological approach.



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With his successor ŠKODA 130 RS, Norwegian rally driver John Haugland achieved a lot of remarkable results. The car, because of his technical layout given the affectionate nickname 'Porsche of the East', won its class at the Monte-Carlo Rally and the Acropolis Rally (1977). The ŠKODA 130 RS also won the European Touring Car Championship 1981 and achieved class wins at the RAC Rally in 1985 and 1986. Again, John Haugland was the most successful driver behind the steering wheel of the ŠKODA 130 LR.

1990s: Further success in the World Rally Championship

ŠKODA's presence in modern motorsport started with the Monte-Carlo Rally of 1991. Pavel Sibera/Petr Gross, driving a ŠKODA FAVORIT, won F2 class that and the following three years (1991-1994). In 1991, the ŠKODA FAVORIT also won the World Rally Championship's Cup for vehicles featuring engines with less than two litre capacity and one driven axle. In 1996, the new ŠKODA FELICIA Kit-Car, with Swedish professional Stig Blomqvist at the wheel, achieved a remarkable third place overall at the RAC Rally.

With the ŠKODA OCTAVIA WRC, introduced in 1997, the works team entered the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) on top level for the first time. The all-wheel-drive vehicle with a 300 bhp turbo engine achieved an outstanding third place overall at the rough Safari Rally Kenya of 2001. From 2003 to 2007, the successor model, the ŠKODA FABIA WRC, also made a big impact.

ŠKODA FABIA SUPER 2000 and ŠKODA FABIA R5 writing motorsport history

In 2009 the ŠKODA FABIA SUPER 2000 took the rally scene by storm – until then, no rally car had been more successful in this category. Between 2009 and 2014 the car won 50 national and international titles worldwide. The Czech duo Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler won the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) in 2013. The FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) was won by teams driving a ŠKODA FABIA SUPER 2000 three years in a row (2012 – 2014).

The ŠKODA FABIA R5 – which had been officially approved (homologated) for motorsport by the International Automobile Federation (FIA) on 1 April 2015 – already drove to its first international success in its first season. Pontus Tidemand/Emil Axelsson won for ŠKODA again the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship. On top of that, ŠKODA teams took five national titles.

In 2017, ŠKODA Motorsport factory crew Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson became the FIA World Rally Championship's WRC 2 Drivers' and Co-Drivers' Champions, ŠKODA Motorsport also won the WRC 2 Team Championship. Czech Champions Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler were the spearhead of in total 14 crews winning their respective 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) were won by teams competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5.

And 2018 was even more successful for ŠKODA Motorsport. Now it was ŠKODA's factory crew Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler turn to win the WRC 2 category of the FIA World Rally Championship, ahead of teammates Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson. At the same time 18 years old ŠKODA youngster Kalle Rovanperä together with co-driver Jonne Halttunen conquered third place overall in the category. ŠKODA Motorsport for the fourth time in a row won the WRC 2 Team Championship as well. In 2019, the Czech brand introduced the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo. Factory crew Kalle

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Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen won both WRC 2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' championship of the FIA World Rally Championship while ŠKODA Motorsport took the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title.

The successful involvement of the factory team in international rallying also acts as a catalyst for customer interest which is becoming bigger and bigger. To date, more than 320 ŠKODA FABIA R5 rally cars have been sold to privateer teams and ŠKODA importers around the world.

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Photos, videos and further information on ŠKODA Motorsport:

<https://www.skoda-storyboard.com/en/press-kits/skoda-wins-all-2019-wrc-2-pro-and-wrc-2-titles/>

ŠKODA Motorsport:

 Facebook  YouTube  Twitter



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ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

2018 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport so far. Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) became WRC 2 champions and managed to win the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) for the fourth consecutive time. 2017 WRC 2 winners Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson finished second overall, and youngsters Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) completed a pure ŠKODA podium in the final standings of the 2018 FIA World Rally Championship's WRC 2 category. For the fourth time in a row ŠKODA Motorsport won the WRC 2 Championship for Teams.

The success story of the Czech brand took place worldwide. The private ŠKODA driver Yuya Sumiyama and navigator Takahiro Yasui from Japan won the 2018 FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC), Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR) took the title win in the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC). After winning the FIA South American Rally Championship (CODASUR) in 2013, 2016 and 2017, ŠKODA crew Gustavo Saba/Fernando Mussano (PRY/ARG) again were successful. On top of that, ŠKODA crews won 17 national championships.

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.

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.

ŠKODA AUTO

- › was founded during the pioneering days of the automobile in 1895, making it one of the longest-established automobile companies 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 1.25 million vehicles to customers around the world in 2018.
- › 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 39,000 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.