

# ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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## ŠKODA with three crews at Rally Argentina Tidemand wants to repeat his last year's victory

- › ŠKODA works crew Pontus Tidemand and Jonas Andersson want to regain the lead in the WRC 2 championship standings with a second victory at Rally Argentina
- › 17 years old Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen with their second WRC 2 outing for the factory team of ŠKODA Motorsport
- › ŠKODA dominates the WRC 2 standings of the FIA World Rally Championship with double lead for factory drivers Jan Kopecký and Pontus Tidemand
- › ŠKODA juniors Ole Christian Veiby and Stig Rune Skjaermoen take part in Argentina without being registered for WRC 2 championship points
- › ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek: "After this season's victories in Monte Carlo, Mexico and Corsica, we now want to win Rally Argentina like we did last year."

Mladá Boleslav, 24 April 2018 – The WRC 2 category of the FIA World Rally Championship 2018 so far is dominated by ŠKODA Motorsport. Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) won the category at Rallye Monte Carlo and Tour de Corse, securing the lead in the WRC 2 championship after four rounds. The WRC 2 Champions Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) were the winners in Mexico and finished second in Sweden, currently trailing only their teammates in the overall standings. With a repetition of their last year's win at the upcoming Rally Argentina (26 – 29 April 2018), they could move into the championship lead again. Kalle Rovanperä, the 17 years old ŠKODA junior from Finland, is the youngest driver in the Rally Argentina entry list and together with co-driver Jonne Halttunen (FIN) proved his speed on the gravel tracks of the recent Rally Mexico. Norwegians Ole Christian Veiby and Stig Rune Skjaermoen, another duo of ŠKODA juniors, will contest Rally Argentina without being registered for WRC 2 championship points.

Rally Argentina, fifth round of the FIA World Rally Championship, will see ŠKODA Motorsport competing with reigning WRC 2 Champions Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) and Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN). One year ago, Pontus Tidemand achieved a dominant win in Argentina for the Czech brand in the WRC 2 category. On the other hand, ŠKODA youngsters Kalle Rovanperä and O.C. Veiby are newcomers to Rally Argentina. Veiby finished fourth at the recent Rally France/Tour de Corse. In Argentina he is not registered to score points for the WRC 2 championship, however.

ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek says: "So far, the 2018 Motorsport season is running very well for ŠKODA. After winning in Monte Carlo, Mexico and Corsica we have a double lead in the WRC 2 championship standings. And the development program for our young drivers runs perfect as well. Kalle and O.C. have shown great performances on World Championship level. Juuso Nordgren made a good impression finishing on the podium with an excellent third place at the last round of the Czech Championship, Rally Šumava Klatovy. We will see him during the 2018 season on selected events including some of WRC 2."

A strong pillar of the ŠKODA motorsport program are the activities with customer teams. The ŠKODA FABIA R5 is currently the most successful car in its category and will do its best to keep its position after getting a recent engine upgrade. "We're proud, that with no fewer than seven ŠKODA





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FABIA R5 in Argentina, we're the strongest brand in WRC 2 and RC 2 category there. It absolutely proves that our strategy is working. With the presence of our works team we demonstrate the attractiveness and competitiveness of our rally car," says ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek.

In Argentina, around 360 kilometres over 18 special stages – ranging from the Argentine prairie to altitudes of more than 2,000 metres, sandy tracks across flatlands and rutted mule trails high in the mountains – are waiting for the crews. Demanding tracks in the foothills of the Andes near Cordoba are quite similar to those of Rally Mexico. The two ŠKODA FABIA R5, the one that carried Pontus Tidemand to victory in Mexico and Kalle Rovanperä's car, were transported directly from Mexico to Cordoba. To a certain extent, they are already "acclimatised" to the Argentine environment.

The Rally Argentina starts on the evening of Thursday, 26 April, with a spectacular show stage close to the service park in Villa Carlos Paz. The winner is expected on the podium at the shores of Lake San Roque around 15h00 on Sunday, 29 April.

Did you know that...

... the first Rally Argentina as a round of the World Championship took place in 1980 and was won by Walter Röhrl?

... Argentine Juan Manuel Fangio is a legendary Formula 1 driver with five World Champion titles?

... Carlos Reutemann from Argentina not only finished second in the Formula 1 championship of 1981, but also conquered a third place at Rally Argentina in 1980 and 1985?

... Jorge Recalde with his overall victory on home soil in 1988 is the only Argentine so far to win a round of the World Rally Championship?

... crews commonly describe the iconic "El Condor" stage with its unique landscape of black rocks and small rutted sandy tracks on more than 2,100 metres altitude like "driving on the moon"?

## The 2018 calendar of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Monte-Carlo	24/01–28/01/2018
Sweden	15/02–18/02/2018
Mexico	08/03–11/03/2018
France/Tour de Corse	05/04–08/04/2018
<b>Argentina</b>	<b>26/04–29/04/2018</b>
Portugal	17/05–20/05/2018
Italy	07/06–10/06/2018
Finland	26/07–29/07/2018
Germany	16/08–19/08/2018
Turkey	13/09–16/09/2018
Great Britain	04/10–07/10/2018
Spain	25/10–28/10/2018
Australia	15/11–18/11/2018





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### ŠKODA at Rally Argentina 2018

Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE), competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5, want to repeat their last year's victory at Rally Argentina.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### ŠKODA at Rally Argentina 2018

At the fifth round of 2018 FIA World Rally Championship, Finnish youngsters Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen make their second appearance for the factory team of ŠKODA Motorsport.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

## ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

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.

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. In the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) 2016, Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) won the title for the Czech car maker. In total, ten of the 2016 season's races in the World Rally Championship were won by a ŠKODA FABIA R5. ŠKODA drivers Gustavo Saba (PRY) and Gaurav Gill (IND) also won the continental championships in South America and the Asia-Pacific region at the wheel of the successful ŠKODA FABIA R5. Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) was unbeatable in the Middle East Rally Championship (MERC), while a further ten national titles also went the way of ŠKODA drivers.

2017 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport. Works duo Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) became WRC 2 Champions, ŠKODA Motorsport won the Team Championship. Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) won the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) for the third time in a row and are the spearhead of in total 14 crews winning their 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) have been won by teams competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5.



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- › is one of the longest-established vehicle manufacturers in the world. The company was founded in 1895 – during the pioneering days of the automobile. Today, the company's headquarters remain in Mladá Boleslav.
- › currently offers the following models in the range: CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, OCTAVIA, KAROQ, KODIAQ and SUPERB.
- › in 2017 delivered more than 1,2 million vehicles to customers worldwide.
- › has belonged to Volkswagen Group since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world. ŠKODA, in association with the Group, independently manufactures and develops vehicles, as well as components, engines and gear transmissions.
- › operates at three locations in the Czech Republic, produces in China, Russia, Slovakia, Algeria and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- › employs over 35,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

