

# ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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## ŠKODA Motorsport launches eSports series offering virtual competition between fans and rally aces

- › ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge kicks off with “Rally Argentina” running for five days (22/04–26/04/2020)
- › Open to anyone, the online game gives players the chance to challenge each other as well as professional rally drivers behind the virtual wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo
- › DiRT Rally 2.0™ from Codemasters®, sold already around a million times, used as platform
- › ŠKODA Motorsport is present on all international major gaming platforms

**Mladá Boleslav, 20 April 2020 – Fancy competing on equal terms against professional rally drivers and even becoming a rally champion? The new ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge offers exactly this. The virtual competition, where fans can compete behind the virtual wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo against rally aces, starts with the five days online version of “Rally Argentina” (22/04–26/04/2020).**

DiRT Rally 2.0 is a video game developed and published by Codemasters for all major gaming consoles like PlayStation®4 and Xbox One® and also runs with Microsoft Windows® on a personal computer. The DiRT Rally 2.0 edition is the 13<sup>th</sup> title of the initially called “Colin McRae Rally” series. The legendary and unforgotten Scottish FIA World Rally Champion from 1995 impressed as well behind the wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA WRC.

ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge kicks off on 22 April 2020 with virtual “Rally Argentina”, the real FIA World Rally Championship round being postponed due to the corona crisis. The online event will be open for five days to all registered DiRT game players around the world (direct link: <https://dirtrally2.com/clubs/club/295041>, club name: SKODA ECHALLENGE). The users will compete behind the wheel of a virtual ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo against each other as well as against professional drivers. The individual results of each participant will be registered in a ranking system.

### **International champions and rally aces are facing the challenge of the online series**

Real rally aces, which are usually competing with a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 on rally tracks worldwide, will join the competition. Among them are the FIA WRC2 Champion from 2017, Pontus Tidemand (SWE), European Rally Champion (ERC1) Chris Ingram (GBR), Slovakian Rally Champion Martin Kočí (SVK) and rising star Oliver Solberg (SWE), who competes supported by ŠKODA Motorsport in selected rounds of the FIA World Rally Championship. ŠKODA's e-game ambassador Petr Semerád, one of the most experienced Czech competitors in the virtual world of DiRT Rally 2.0, will be one of their toughest opponents. The ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge winners will receive attractive prizes.

The ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge will be covered regularly under the communication hashtag #BEATSKODAAACES by ŠKODA Motorsport's social network channels. Also, a video covering the course of the virtual rally and telling ŠKODA Motorsport ambassador's impression will be produced and published after each event.



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## Online game DIRT Rally 2.0 excites rally fans around the world

Computer games went public around 1980, since 2000 they are played online as well. Since 2018, the gaming community increased from 395 million to approximately 495 million users. Live events are becoming more and more popular. Some gamers even use semi-professional simulators with steering wheel, pedals for throttle and brakes plus bucket seat. Others are surprisingly competitive by using console peripherals only.

One of the most successful racing games is DIRT Rally 2.0, which was sold around a million times and runs on all major platforms. ŠKODA crews and their cars are part of DIRT Rally 2.0, several ŠKODA rally cars appear in photo realistic shape with different designs.

## 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
(Argentina)	23/04–26/04/2020*
(Portugal)	21/05–24/05/2020*
(Italy)	04/06–07/06/2020*
Kenya	16/07–19/07/2020
Finland	06/08–09/08/2020
New Zealand	03/09–06/09/2020
Turkey	24/09–27/09/2020
Germany	15/10–18/10/2020
Great Britain	29/10–01/11/2020
Japan	19/11–22/11/2020

*\*Events postponed due to the fight against the spread of the Coronavirus*

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## Media images:



### ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge

Virtual ŠKODA crews and their cars are present in the DiRT Rally 2.0 online video game, ŠKODA rally cars appear in a photo realistic shape with different designs

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge

Taking part in the ŠKODA Motorsport eChallenge, users compete with the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo against each other and professional rally drivers as well

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

## ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

2019 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport so far. In 2019, the Czech brand introduced the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo. Factory crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen won both WRC2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' championship of the FIA World Rally Championship while ŠKODA Motorsport took the WRC2 Pro manufacturers' title. ŠKODA customer crew Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais won the WRC2 championship for private teams.

The success story of the Czech brand took place worldwide. The FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) was won by Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock (GBR/GBR), Filip Mareš/Jan Hloušek (CZE/CZE) conquered the FIA European Rally Championship/ERC1 Junior title. Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR) became FIA African Rally Champions (ARC), Ricardo Triviño/Marc Martí (MEX/ESP) won the FIA North American and Central American Rally Championship (NACAM). On top of that, ŠKODA crews won numerous national championships. The ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, a high-tech 4x4, was homologated by the International Automobile Federation (FIA) on 1 April 2019. The Czech rally car is successfully continuing the long tradition of ŠKODA Motorsport.

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 (WRC2) 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

- › 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 nine passenger-car series: the CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA, KAROQ, KODIAQ, as well as the KAMIQ and the SUPERB.
- › delivered more than 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 over 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.