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ŠKODA victory at the Barum Rally: Kopecký defends title in the Czech Rally Championship

- › **Flawless season record: Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler secure fifth of five possible season wins in the MČR national championship and claim the title crown before the end of the season**
- › **Fourth national championship title for Jan Kopecký after victory over the European elite at the Barum Czech Rally Zlín – red and black special paintwork delights fans**
- › **Michal Hrabánek: "Optimum reward for the entire team's hard work"**

Zlín, 28 August 2016 – ŠKODA works duo Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) won the Barum Czech Rally Zlín, thereby defending the title in the Czech rally championship (MČR) before the end of the season. Kopecký won the national championship for the fourth time after 2004, 2012 and 2015. The experienced driver remained unbeaten in his ŠKODA FABIA R5 with its spectacular red and black special paintwork in the fifth round of the MČR season and in doing so prevailed over the European elite. The successful ŠKODA team of Kopecký/Dresler staged a dramatic duel with Alexey Lukyanuk/Alexey Arnautov (RUS/RUS), who forfeited their chances of a win after an accident on the final special stage, over the three days of rally action.

"The Barum Czech Rally Zlín is a classic and was a real highlight of the season once again this year. Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler did a fantastic job, keeping their cool in a dramatic duel and bringing home victory. This sees us defend our national championship title from last year with the ŠKODA FABIA R5. Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler have also kept their clean slate in the fifth round of the year – that speaks for itself. Successfully defending the title is the optimum reward for the entire team's hard work," said ŠKODA Motorsport Director Michal Hrabánek.

This year's Barum Czech Rally Zlín consisted of 15 special stages over a total of 229.94 classified kilometres, of which Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler won a total of ten stages. The classic rally was characterised by a close battle between ŠKODA works duo Kopecký/Dresler and Russian duo Alexey Lukyanuk/Alexey Arnautov. Throughout the entire rally, the two teams were separated by just a few seconds. The Russian duo retired on the final special stage due to an accident; they were in second place at the time. Thousands of enthusiastic fans experienced the drama of the rally up close and personal – and cheered as Kopecký/Dresler in the FABIA R5 with a red and black special paintwork crossed the finish line. Kopecký burst into tears at the finish.

"I can hardly put my joy into words. We not only got our fifth of five possible wins of the season here at the Barum Rally, but we also clinched the Czech rally championship. It is always difficult to win a title, and even more difficult to defend a title," said Jan Kopecký. "The FABIA R5, the magnificent ŠKODA Motorsport team and my family as my moral



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support enabled me to achieve this milestone in my career. At this high level here in Zlín we saw how strong our car is. Kudos to Alexey Lukyanuk and Alexey Arnautov, who made things really difficult for us this weekend."

A total of eleven ŠKODA FABIA R5 contested the rally around Zlín, and the top five spots ended up going to the high-tech racers. Tomáš Kostka (CZ) finished in second place ahead of Jan Černý (CZ). Despite suffering a puncture, Fabian Kreim/Frank Christian (D/D) who competed with support from ŠKODA Motorsport, finished in fifth place. "I am pleased with our performance at the Barum Czech Rally Zlín. There is enormous enthusiasm among the Czech fans and it was great to be able to gain experience here in the Czech Republic once again," said Kreim.

Final standings of the Barum Czech Rally Zlín:

1. Kopecký/Dresler (CZ/CZ)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	2:07.34.7 hrs.
2. Kostka/Kučera (CZ/CZ)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 2:34.0 min.
3. Černý/Černohorský (CZ/CZ)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 2:41.9 min.
4. Valoušek/Havelková (CZ/CZ)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 3:47.7 min.
5. Kreim/Christian (D/D)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 5:16.1 min.

The number of the day: 4

At the Barum Czech Rally Zlín, ŠKODA works driver Jan Kopecký won his fourth title in the Czech championship for the fourth time after 2004, 2012 and 2015. And deservedly so: With co-driver Pavel Dresler he has triumphed in all five of the rallies held in the current season of the Czech rally championship (MČR). Their advantage of 2:34.0 minutes over the second-placed duo at the Barum Czech Rally Zlín, Tomáš Kostka/Ladislav Kučera is evidence that the duo are in a league of their own.

Czech Rally Championship (MČR)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Rally Šumava Klatovy	29.04.-30.04.2016
Rally Český Krumlov	27.05.-28.05.2016
Rally Hustopeče	17.06.-18.06.2016
Rally Bohemia	02.07.-03.07.2016
Barum Czech Rally Zlín	26.08.-28.08.2016
Rally Příbram	30.09.-01.10.2016



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ŠKODA at the Barum Czech Rally Zlín

Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler clinched their fifth win of the season in the FABIA R5 with a red and black special paintwork and won their fourth title in the Czech rally championship (MČR).

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at the Barum Czech Rally Zlín

Kopecký won the national championship for the fourth time after 2004, 2012 and 2015. The experienced driver remained unbeaten in his ŠKODA FABIA R5 with its spectacular red and black special paintwork in the fifth round of the MČR season and in doing so prevailed over the European elite.

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ŠKODA Motorsport Overview:

ŠKODA has been 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 numerous title wins in the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) and the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC), 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.

In 2015, ŠKODA celebrated four victories in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) with their new ŠKODA Fabia R5 rally car. The high-tech 4x4 was homologated by the International Automobile Federation FIA on 1 April 2015. In the ŠKODA Fabia R5's very first season, factory duo Pontus Tidemand/Emil Axelsson (S/S) secured the fourth APRC title in a row for ŠKODA. In addition, the brand claimed five national titles with their new winning model.

ŠKODA's new Fabia R5 proudly continues the brand's long tradition in motorsport. Its predecessor, the Fabia Super 2000, was the most successful model in ŠKODA's 115-year motorsport history. With the 4x4 from Mladá Boleslav, factory duo Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) achieved the historic feat of becoming the first duo in history to win the drivers' title in the ERC and the APRC in consecutive years. Between 2009 and 2014, ŠKODA Fabia Super 2000 drivers won a total of 50 national and international titles around the world.

In 2016, the factory teams Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S), Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler and Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (F/F) are competing with the ŠKODA Fabia R5 in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2).

ŠKODA AUTO

- › is one of the longest-established vehicle production companies in the world. In 1895, the Czech headquarters in Mladá Boleslav began producing bicycles, followed by the production of motorbikes and cars.
- › currently offers the following models in the range: Citigo, Fabia, Rapid, Octavia, Yeti and Superb.
- › delivered more than 1 million vehicles to customers worldwide in 2015.
- › has belonged to Volkswagen since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful automotive groups in the world. ŠKODA, in association with the Group, independently manufactures and develops vehicles, as well as components such as engines and gear transmissions.
- › operates at three locations in the Czech Republic. It also produces in China, Russia, Slovakia and India, mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- › employs about 25,900 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.