

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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Tidemand wins dramatic duel in Mexico to continue ŠKODA's winning run

- › ŠKODA works driver Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson win by 42.7 seconds after 295 kilometres of special stage to take the outright lead in the overall WRC 2 standings
- › ŠKODA FABIA R5 proves its credentials at the ultimate test in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)
- › 13 wins from the last 14 WRC rallies for the ŠKODA FABIA R5
- › Michal Hrabánek: "Proud of my drivers and the entire team"

León/Mexico, 12 March 2017 – Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) emerged triumphant from a dramatic duel to win the Rally Mexico and continue ŠKODA's winning run in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2). At the end of the 295 kilometres of special stage, the new world championship leader finished 42.7 seconds clear of rivals Eric Camilli/Benjamin Veillas (F/F). Starting last season, 13 of the last 14 rounds of the world championship have now been won by drivers in a ŠKODA FABIA R5.

"I am proud of my drivers and the entire team. This rally was not for the faint-hearted, but Pontus Tidemand and Jonas Andersson kept a cool head to clinch a hugely important win," said ŠKODA Motorsport Director Michal Hrabánek. The latest success was more proof of just how fast and reliable the ŠKODA FABIA R5 is: "The Rally Mexico was really the ultimate test of durability. From the asphalt roads in the capital, the route climbed on gravel routes to almost 2750 metres above sea level and the highest point in the World Rally Championship. Our rally car ran perfectly in all conditions."

26-year-old ŠKODA works driver Pontus Tidemand put on a great show for the Mexican rally fans. Over the course of the four days, he was embroiled in a thrilling battle for the win with Eric Camilli, with the lead changing hands on several occasions. After Tidemand had ended the opening two days at the top of the standings, Camilli briefly took the lead on Saturday. However, Sweden's Motorsport Athlete of the Year 2016, who had taken his foot off the gas a little on the tough gravel roads, bounced back in style. Three stage wins in a row in the "Autódromo de León" and on the roads around the service park in the city of León were enough to see him regain top spot in WRC 2.

Tidemand took a slender lead of 2.0 seconds into the final two stages, and pulled out all the stops. The Swede was 22.5 seconds quicker than Camilli on the 32.96-kilometre "La Calera", clocking an outstanding time to all but wrap up the win. Tidemand followed this up with another fastest time to bring home the win in style on the closing Power Stage, which was broadcast live on TV.

"That was a fantastic battle and a fantastic rally. We gained an incredible amount of experience at our first Rally Mexico. We are delighted with this success and are pleased with the great start we've made to the season," said Sweden's Motorsport Athlete of the Year. Victory in Mexico sees Tidemand succeed Finland's Teemu Suninen, who won last year – also at the wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA R5. Local favourite Benito Guerra rounded off an outstanding result for ŠKODA in Mexico with third place in his FABIA R5.



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This was Tidemand's second victory in a row, having previously won his home rally in Sweden. He now stands alone at the top of the WRC 2 standings. With a perfect score of 50 points from two starts, he leads Camilli (42) and Andreas Mikkelsen (25). The Norwegian won the opening race of 2017, the iconic Rally Monte Carlo, in a ŠKODA FABIA R5. As such, reigning WRC 2 champions ŠKODA Motorsport have won the first three world championship rallies of the year.

Final result of the Rally Mexico (WRC 2):

1. Tidemand/Andersson (S/S)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	3:32:56.5 hrs
2. Camilli/Veillas (F/F)	Ford Fiesta R5	+ 0:42.7 min
3. Guerra/Rozada (MEX/E)	ŠKODA FABIA R5	+ 7:46.1 min

The number for the Rally Mexico: 11:6

The dramatic duel for the lead in the WRC 2 class at the Rally Mexico was reflected in the battle for individual stage wins. Here too, ŠKODA driver Pontus Tidemand in his FABIA R5 came out on top 11:6 in the head-to-head with Eric Camilli. Two special stages originally scheduled for Friday had to be cancelled, as a traffic jam caused the rally cars to be late leaving the capital Mexico City on their way back to the service park in León.

The 2017 calendar for the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Rally Monte Carlo	19.01.–22.01.2017
Rally Sweden	09.02.–12.02.2017
Rally Mexico	09.03.–12.03.2017
Rally France	06.04.–09.04.2017
Rally Argentina	27.04.–30.04.2017
Rally Portugal	18.05.–21.05.2017
Rally Italy	08.06.–11.06.2017
Rally Poland	29.06.–02.07.2017
Rally Finland	27.07.–30.07.2017
Rally Germany	17.08.–20.08.2017
Rally Spain	05.10.–08.10.2017
Rally Great Britain	26.10.–29.10.2017
Rally Australia	16.11.–19.11.2017

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Media images:



ŠKODA Motorsport at the Rally Mexico

Works duo Pontus Tidemand and Jonas Andersson flew to victory on the gravel roads.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA Motorsport at the Rally Mexico

The ŠKODA FABIA R5 passed the tough test at round three of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) with flying colours.

[Download](#)

Source: ŠKODA AUTO

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 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.

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).

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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, YETI, KODIAQ and SUPERB.
- › in 2016 delivered more than 1 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 and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- › employs over 26,600 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

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