

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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Winning Rally Argentina Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson take outright lead in WRC 2 with their ŠKODA FABIA R5

- › Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (ŠKODA FABIA R5) scored a dominant WRC 2 win at Rally Argentina with a “Simply Clever” drive
- › ŠKODA FABIA R5 proved again unbeatable and rock solid on tough roads
- › Swedish pairing marked 12 fastest times in WRC 2 on 18 special stages
- › ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek: “Pontus did a clever and smart drive and was never in danger.”
- › WRC 2 category: ŠKODA achieved eighth victory in a row since Rally of Spain 2016

Villa Carlos Paz/Argentina, 30 April 2017 – Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) not only celebrated their third WRC 2 win in 2017 with their ŠKODA FABIA R5, they also took over the outright lead in World Rally Championship category WRC 2. On the last two legs of the event nobody was able to follow the speed of the Swedish pairing. At the finish line in Villa Carlos Paz in the west of Cordoba, Tidemand/Andersson celebrated the win with a huge margin of more than ten minutes ahead of private ŠKODA team Juan Carlos Alonso/Matias Alejandro Mercadal. Since Rally of Spain in 2016 the ŠKODA factory teams is now unbeaten for the eighth time in a row.

On Saturday morning, Pontus Tidemand and Jonas Andersson had a “big moment”. In a huge watersplash a hidden stone bent the protection plate of the rear differential. From there on Tidemand had to finish the stage in a very careful style. He also had to proceed through two more stages before the car could be attended to by mechanics in the service area. The ŠKODA FABIA R5 proved itself rock solid and Tidemand reached the service without notable time loss.

From then on Tidemand drove with a controlled speed, while his competitors struggled with all kind of problems. The Swedish pairing finished with more than nine minutes in front of their closest rivals Alonso/Mercadal (ARG/ARG) after the Saturday leg of the Rally.

On a sunny Sunday morning, three more stages in the south west of Cordoba were waiting for the competitors, including the famous El Condor-Copina stage. One driver characterized this particular stage “like driving on the moon”. Nearly no vegetation, a small and winding gravel path between rocks as big as houses and hundred thousands of enthusiastic spectators along the road make up for an unique background in the world of rallying.

“A smooth morning, no drama or mistakes. We are here and I am so happy about this. Now we must keep focussed to avoid any stupid mistakes”, Tidemand said after the first El Condor run. He followed his plan and brought the car to an outstanding victory back to Villa Carlos Paz. The Argentinian duo Juan Carlos Alonso/Matias Alejandro Mercadal, running a private entered ŠKODA FABIA R5, finished on second place in the WRC 2 category.



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"Pontus and Jonas impressed me a lot at Rally Argentina – they made a very strong performance and drove 'Simply Clever' to an outstanding victory", concluded a very delighted ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek on the podium in Villa Carlos Paz.

Final Result Rally Argentina (WRC 2)

1. Tidemand/Andersson (SWE/SWE) ŠKODA FABIA R5, 3:55.42,7 h
2. Alonso/Mercadal (ARG/ARG), ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 10.11,3 min.
3. Guerra/Cué (MEX/ESP), ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 43.05,5 min.
4. Saba Rodriguez/Mussano (PRY/ARG), ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 50:14,6 min.
5. Ptaszek/Szepaniak (POL/POL), ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 52.14,6 min.

Current championship standings WRC 2 after five rounds

1. Pontus Tidemand (SWE), ŠKODA, 75
2. Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR), ŠKODA, 50
3. Eric Camilli (FRA), Ford, 46
4. Teemu Suninen (FIN), Ford, 36
5. Benito Guerra (MEX), ŠKODA, 30

Number of the day: 15

From the last 16 World Championship rallies ŠKODA won 15. Since Rallye of Spain last year, the factory team is unbeaten and scored eight wins in a row.



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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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ŠKODA at Rally Argentina 2017

Impressive win in WRC 2 at Rally Argentina: Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson (ŠKODA FABIA R5)

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at Rally Argentina 2017

Now outright leaders in WRC 2 championship: Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson with their ŠKODA FABIA R5

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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.

2016 was one of the most successful years in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport. In the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2), Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) won the title for the Czech car maker for the first time. 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.

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 2017, works duos Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) and Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) will contest selected races in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2). Kopecký/Dresler will also compete in the Czech Rally Championship (MČR), where they will be looking to claim a third title in a row.

ŠKODA AUTO

- › 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 30,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

