

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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Rally Italia Sardegna: Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler return to the World Rally Championship

- › Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler (ŠKODA FABIA R5) spearhead of ŠKODA Motorsport at the seventh round of the World Rally Championship (WRC 2) in Italy
- › In 2017 ŠKODA won every round of the WRC 2 championship, aiming for 10th win in a row since October 2016
- › ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek: "After the good performance of Jan and Pavel at Monte Carlo Rally and the Tour de Corse I am looking forward to another top result"

Mladá Boleslav, 7 June 2017 – Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler (ŠKODA FABIA R5) are the spearhead of ŠKODA Motorsport at Rally Italia Sardegna coming weekend (8 – 11 June). After dominating all three rounds of the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) are returning to World Rally Championship. The Czech pairing currently lies eighth in the WRC 2 category standings.

Kopecký/Dresler already competed at the WRC Rally Monte Carlo (2nd in WRC 2 and 8th overall) and the Tour de Corse, where bad luck prevented a possible podium position. In 2015 and 2016 they finished second in WRC 2 on Sardegna and are now aiming for the win. "Rally Italia Sardegna is my first event on gravel this year. I had a very good pre-event test and cannot wait to drive the ŠKODA FABIA R5 on this nice gravel stages," Jan Kopecký said.

"Jan and Pavel in the last two years delivered a strong performance in Sardegna, they are really poised to win this year," ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek confesses. The factory team is facing strong competition from Norwegian junior team Ole Christian Veiby/Stig Rune Skjaermoen in their privately entered ŠKODA FABIA R5. Veiby proved his talent by winning the second round of FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) in Canberra/Australia and is well prepared for the gravel roads of Sardegna.

Rally Italia Sardegna offers 19 special stages totalling 312 kilometres on rugged and sun-baked gravel roads. After the super special stage on Thursday close to the harbour of Alghero the rally heads to an overnight halt in Olbia. Friday features four stages in the north each being run twice. Saturday is the longest day of the rally with six special stages covering 144 kilometres. Sunday will bring the final decision with four stages close to the coast north of the host town of Alghero.

Until today ŠKODA won nine consecutive WRC 2 rallies in a row. This winning sequence started at the Rally RACC Catalunya in October 2016. Out of the last 17 WRC 2 events, the Czech manufacturer won 16.



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Did you know...

... that the Italian round of the World Rally Championship until 2003 was held on the mainland of Italy and was based in Sanremo before it moved to Sardegna?

... Michèle Mouton became the first – and until today only – woman to win a WRC round when she came first at Rally Sanremo in 1981?

... that Rally Italia Sardegna features a famous jump, comparable to the Fafe jump in Portugal, which is called “Micky’s jump”?

... Rally Italia was part of the World Rally Championship ever since its inauguration in 1973?

The 2017 calendar of 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 Sardegna	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 at Rally Italia Sardegna

Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler for the first time in 2017 driving a ŠKODA FABIA R5 in a gravel event.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at Rally Italia Sardegna

So far dominating the Czech Rally Championship, now aiming for victory in WRC 2 at Rally Italia Sardegna: Jan Kopecký (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.

