

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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Rally Poland: ŠKODA dominating WRC 2 with Ole Christian Veiby leading Pontus Tidemand

- › ŠKODA factory team Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson, lying second after leg 2 of Rally Poland, aiming for valuable championship points
- › Asia Pacific Rally Championship leaders Ole Christian Veiby/Stig Rune Skjaermoen (ŠKODA FABIA R5) still fastest on demanding gravel tracks
- › ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek: "I am delighted to see ŠKODA FABIA R5 teams holding all top four positions in WRC 2."

Mikolajki/Poland, 1 July 2017 – Two ŠKODA FABIA R5 teams are clearly dominating the WRC 2 category at the eighth round of the World Rally Championship in Poland. Asia Pacific Rally Championship leaders Ole Christian Veiby/Stig Rune Skjaermoen (NOR/NOR), driving a Printsport entered ŠKODA FABIA R5, delivered a faultless and fast ride through the demanding gravel stages of the Masurian Lake District. ŠKODA Motorsport's Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) are chasing their stablemates from second, concentrating mainly on avoiding unnecessary risks in order to gain valuable points in their bid for the World Rally Championship title (WRC 2). Both ŠKODA teams suffered punctures but were never in danger to lose the double lead in WRC 2.

The weather conditions on Saturday morning were much nicer than the day before. Instead of heavy rain the sun was shining when the teams were leaving Mikolajki for the longest leg of the rally. Norwegian youngster Ole Christian Veiby set the first two fastest times with his Printsport ŠKODA FABIA R5 ahead of works driver Pontus Tidemand. The current WRC 2 championship leader fought back on the next stage with an advantage of just 0.6 seconds and confessed: "We just need to keep going. The speed is fast now – flat everywhere possible. The key is avoiding mistakes. I am not pushing at 100 per cent." After 14 stages both ŠKODA Teams were separated by 13.6 seconds with Veiby in the lead.

ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek was happy at the midday service: "I am delighted to see ŠKODA FABIA R5 teams holding all top four positions in WRC 2. Ole Christian is delivering a really stunning performance while Pontus needs to keep his focus on championship points."

On Saturday afternoon Veiby continued to control the lead. Tidemand consolidated second position with a safe drive. But on stage number 17 both ŠKODA teams run into trouble: Veiby got a right rear puncture and lost time, Tidemand had to drive more than ten kilometres with a flat front left tyre and lost more than one minute. Therefore the gap between him and Veiby was growing at the end to 1.03 minutes. "The tyre exploded in a corner, maybe I hit something before, that's life," was Tidemand's comment.

On the final leg of Rally Poland on Sunday, the teams have to face four stages totalling 59 kilometres. Unfortunately it looks like that the rain will return to the Masurian Lake District.



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Standings Rally Poland after leg 2 (WRC 2)

1. Veiby/Skjaermoen (NOR/NOR), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 2:20.16,4 h
2. Tidemand/Andersson (SWE/SWE) ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 1:03,3 min.
3. Gilbert/Jamoul (FRA/BEL), ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 3:40.8 min.
4. Guerra/Cué (MEX/ESP), ŠKODA FABIA R5, + 6:15.2 min.
5. Bonato/Boulloud (FRA/FRA), Citroën DS3 R5, +6:17.2 min.
6. Chuchala/Rozwadowski (POL/POL), Ford Fiesta R5, + 7:38.7 min.

Number of the day: 0.3

After 15.55 kilometres of stage 15, Pontus Tidemand was just a blink of an eye faster than WRC 2 leader Ole Christian Veiby – exactly 0.3 seconds

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 Sardinia	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 Poland

Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson (ŠKODA FABIA R5) are currently second at Rally Poland behind ŠKODA stablemates Ole-Christian Veiby/Stig Rune Skjaermøen

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ŠKODA at Rally Poland

Pontus Tidemand (ŠKODA FABIA R5) could extend his championship lead in WRC 2 category at Rally Poland

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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.

