

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

Page 1 of 3



Wales Rally GB: ŠKODA junior Rovannerä in full control of WRC 2 – Tidemand defends second place

- › Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen, driving a ŠKODA FABIA R5, continue to dominate the WRC 2 category at the eleventh round of the 2018 FIA World Rally Championship
- › After third day of Wales Rally GB reigning WRC 2 champions Pontus Tidemand and co-driver Jonas Andersson defend second position in the interim category standings
- › ŠKODA Motorsport on course to a season's third double victory in WRC 2 category of the FIA World Rally Championship 2018

Deeside, 6 October 2018 – ŠKODA junior Kalle Rovannerä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) continue to control the lead of the WRC 2 category after day 3 of Wales Rally GB, the eleventh round of the 2018 FIA World Rally Championship. Their teammates Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (SWE/SWE) managed to defend second position with their ŠKODA FABIA R5. With one day to go, ŠKODA Motorsport could achieve the season's third double victory in the WRC 2 category.

The Saturday leg of Wales Rally GB was the longest and most challenging day of the rally with nine stages totalling 150.24 kilometres and no service in between. Only a tyre change zone after five stages allowed to put some new tyres on the rally cars. Necessary repairs or maintenance of the cars could only be made by the crews with the tools and spare parts they carried on board.

The nine stages of the day were classic Welsh forest roads, already in the past often used during Wales Rally GB. While Kalle Rovannerä is competing in Wales only for the second time, his competitors had much more knowledge of the stages. The day started as a wake up with the 20 kilometres of Myherin which were partially running over open fields spotted with wind turbines.

Kalle Rovannerä was fully awake on the opening stage of the day, setting the second quickest time ahead of teammate Pontus Tidemand and increased his WRC 2 lead to more than a minute. "It was neither a bad stage, nor a good one for me. We will see. I think it is going to be a nice fight today," was his comment, which turned out to be a forecast for an interesting rally day. And the 18 years old Finn set the fastest time on the next stage ahead of Tidemand, who in turn managed to keep Ford driver Gus Greensmith behind. Setting a fastest time during the next test, the Swedish WRC 2 champion consolidated his second position. At the midday rest halt in Newtown, the ŠKODA works drivers Rovannerä and Tidemand held a double lead in the WRC 2 category.

During the afternoon leg, the sun came out and Kalle Rovannerä enjoyed the ride on the gravel roads. "Now it's getting drier and we have much more grip than in the morning. But nevertheless, there are some slippery places where we have to be careful," described the young Finn, who scored another two fastest times in WRC 2. In total he won 13 out of the 18 special stages until the end of day 3 of Wales Rally GB. After the Saturday marathon leg, he was 1.03 minutes in the category lead ahead of teammate Pontus Tidemand.

The final leg on Sunday (7 October) features five more stages covering 55.64 kilometres. The winner will reach the podium at the village of Llandudno at around 13h15 (local).

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE



Page 2 of 3

Standings Wales Rally GB after Day 3 (WRC 2)

1. Rovanperä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 2:38:53.3 h
2. Tidemand/Andersson (SWE/SWE), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +1:03.1 min.
3. Greensmith/Gelsomino (GBR/ITA), Ford Fiesta R5, +1:48.6 min.
4. Huttunen/Linnaketo (FIN/FIN), Hyundai i20 R5, +2:49.8 min.
5. Lefebvre/Moreau (FRA/FRA), Citroën C3 R5, +3:44.8 min.
6. Loubet/Landais (FRA/FRA), Hyundai i20 R5, +4:43.6 min.

Number of the day: 13

In the WRC 2 category, ŠKODA youngster Kalle Rovanperä set 13 fastest times on the 18 stages of Rally Wales GB so far.

The calendar of the 2018 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Monte-Carlo	24/01–28/01/2018
Sweden	15/02–18/02/2018
Mexico	08/03–11/03/2018
France	05/04–08/04/2018
Argentina	26/04–29/04/2018
Portugal	17/05–20/05/2018
Italy	07/06–10/06/2018
Finland	26/07–29/07/2018
Germany	16/08–19/08/2018
Turkey	13/09–16/09/2018
Great Britain	04/10–07/10/2018
Spain	25/10–28/10/2018
Australia	15/11–18/11/2018

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ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

Page 3 of 3

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ŠKODA at Wales Rally GB 2018

After day 3 of Wales Rally GB Finnish ŠKODA youngsters Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen are in full control of the WRC 2 category with their ŠKODA FABIA R5

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at Wales Rally GB 2018

Last year's WRC 2 winners Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (ŠKODA FABIA R5) from Sweden are defending the second position of the category

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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.

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 the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2) 2016, Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (FIN/FIN) won the title for the Czech car maker. 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. 2017 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport. Works duo Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (S/S) became WRC 2 Champions, ŠKODA Motorsport won the Team Championship. Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) won the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) for the third time in a row and are the spearhead of in total 14 crews winning their country's national titles. Furthermore the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC), the FIA South American Rally Championship (CODASUR) and the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC) have been won by teams competing in a ŠKODA FABIA R5. In 2018 Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZ/CZ) managed to win the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) for the fourth consecutive time.

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, KAROQ, KODIAQ and SUPERB.
- › in 2017 delivered more than 1.2 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, Algeria and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- › employs over 35,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.