

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE



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Rally Italia Sardegna: ŠKODA's Kalle Rovannerä and Jan Kopecký with double lead in WRC 2 Pro

- › Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen are leading the WRC 2 Pro category at Rally Italia Sardegna, eighth round of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship
- › After day two on the Mediterranean island, reigning WRC 2 Champions Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler are second in the WRC 2 Pro category
- › ŠKODA crews hold top four positions among the initially entered 37 R5 cars

Alghero, 14 June 2019 – On their first Rally Italia Sardegna, Kalle Rovannerä/Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) impressed with a fast and clever drive, leading the WRC 2 Pro category after the second day of the eighth round of the FIA World Rally Championship. Last year's class winners Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) secure a double lead for ŠKODA Motorsport on the Mediterranean island just 0.6 seconds behind their teammates.

After Friday morning's re-start, Kalle Rovannerä had problems to judge his speed. "It is really difficult. I don't have any experience with these conditions. So it's hard for me to know, if I am going fast or slow," confessed the young Finn. He got the answer some minutes later when he realized, that he had set the fastest time among the R5 competitors.

On the next three stages, Rovannerä had to fight with heavy oversteering behaviour of his ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo. Nevertheless, he managed to reach the midday halt at the harbour of Alghero without any mistake. The ŠKODA engineers and mechanics modified the setup of his car for the afternoon stages. At this point, his teammates and last year's class winners Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler were in the category lead. The Czech Champion confessed: "It's like driving in a sauna. In the morning, we had outside temperatures exceeding 39 degrees – in the car it was even hotter!" ŠKODA Motorsport was in a solid double lead in the WRC 2 Pro category while the main rivals, Citroën driver Mads Østberg (technical issues) and Ford's Gus Greensmith (accident), dropped down the leader board.

The afternoon saw the repetition of the morning stages, covered with deep ruts and loose stones during the second passage. Having his car fixed, Kalle Rovannerä set a stunning fastest time during the sixth stage and stormed into the lead among the R5 competitors. "It has been better this afternoon. Now the car feels right and I enjoyed the driving," was his recap at the end of the Friday leg.

Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler also made it safely back to Friday's final service at the harbour of Alghero, securing a double lead for ŠKODA Motorsport in the WRC 2 category separated by just 0.6 seconds from teammates. Among the initially entered 37 R5 cars, ŠKODA crews are currently holding the top four positions.

After an early wakeup at 5h20, the longest leg of the rally on Saturday starts with six special stages totalling more than 142 kilometres. Sunday will bring the final decision with four stages close to the coast north of the host town of Alghero.

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Standings Rally Italia Sardegna after Day 2 (WRC 2 Pro)

1. Rovanperä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, 1:39:02.8 h
2. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +0.6 sec.
3. Østberg/Eriksen (NOR/NOR), Citroën C3 R5, +10:35.1 min.

Number of the day: 39

On Friday morning at Rally Italia Sardegna, the outside temperature climbed to 39 degrees, turning the inside of the rally cars into moving saunas.

The calendar of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC 2 Pro)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Monte-Carlo	24/01–27/01/2019
Sweden	14/02–17/02/2019
Mexico	07/03–10/03/2019
France	28/03–31/03/2019
Argentina	25/04–28/04/2019
Chile	09/05–12/05/2019
Portugal	30/05–02/06/2019
Italy	13/06–16/06/2019
Finland	01/08–04/08/2019
Germany	22/08–25/08/2019
Turkey	12/09–15/09/2019
Great Britain	03/10–06/10/2019
Spain	24/10–27/10/2019
Australia	14/11–17/11/2019

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Media images:



ŠKODA at Rally Italia Sardegna

ŠKODA works crew Kalle Rovander/Jonne Halttunen (ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo) took the lead in the WRC 2 Pro category after day two of Rally Italia Sardegna

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA at Rally Italia Sardegna

ŠKODA's Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler are currently second in the WRC 2 Pro category at Rally Italia Sardegna, eighth round of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



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ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

2018 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport so far. Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) became WRC 2 champions and managed to win the Czech Rally Championship (MČR) for the fourth consecutive time. 2017 WRC 2 winners Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson finished second overall, and youngsters Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) completed a pure ŠKODA podium in the final standings of the 2018 FIA World Rally Championship's WRC 2 category. For the fourth time in a row ŠKODA Motorsport won the WRC 2 Championship for Teams.

The success story of the Czech brand took place worldwide. The private ŠKODA driver Yuya Sumiyama and navigator Takahiro Yasui from Japan won the 2018 FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC), Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR) took the title win in the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC). After winning the FIA South American Rally Championship (CODASUR) in 2013, 2016 and 2017, ŠKODA crew Gustavo Saba/Fernando Mussano (PRY/ARG) again were successful. On top of that, ŠKODA crews won 17 national championships.

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.

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.

ŠKODA AUTO

- › was founded during the pioneering days of the automobile in 1895, making it one of the longest-established automobile companies in the world.
- › currently offers its customers nine passenger-car series: the CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA, KAROQ, KODIAQ, as well as the KAMIQ and the SUPERB.
- › delivered more than 1.25 million vehicles to customers around the world in 2018.
- › has belonged to Volkswagen Group since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world. In association with the Group, ŠKODA AUTO independently develops and manufactures vehicles, as well as components such as engines and transmissions.
- › operates at three locations in the Czech Republic; manufactures in China, Russia, Slovakia, Algeria and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan with local partners.
- › employs over 39,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.
- › is pressing ahead with the transformation from a traditional car manufacturer to the 'Simply Clever company for the best mobility solutions' as part of the ŠKODA 2025 Strategy.