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Rally Turkey: ŠKODA's Jan Kopecký leads WRC 2 Pro while Kalle Rovanperä had to stop, but will re-start on Saturday

- › ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo crew Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler head the WRC 2 Pro category after day 2 of Rally Turkey, eleventh round of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019
- › WRC 2 Pro championship leaders Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen (ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo) had to stop when they ran out of spare wheels after three punctures
- › The leader of the WRC 2 category for private teams, Kajetan Kajetanowicz, is first among the competitors in R5 cars, securing a double class lead for ŠKODA

Marmaris, 13 September 2019 – Jan Kopecký and Pavel Dresler (CZE/CZE) took the lead in the WRC 2 Pro category after day two of the eleventh round of the FIA World Rally Championship, Rally Turkey Marmaris (12/09/–15/09/2019). In contrast, teammates Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) had bad luck. After three punctures on their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo they ran out of spare wheels and had to retire. They will re-start on Saturday and try to collect valuable points for the WRC 2 Pro championship. The leader of the WRC 2 category for private teams on Friday evening, Kajetan Kajetanowicz (POL), is first among the competitors driving R5 cars, thus securing a double class lead for ŠKODA.

Rally Turkey Marmaris started like last year with a spectacular show stage in the streets of Marmaris on Thursday evening. Thousands of spectators witnessed Kalle Rovanperä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen setting the fastest time in the field of the R5 cars with their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, followed by the two private ŠKODA crews Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (POL/POL) and Fabio Andolfi/Emanuele Inglesi (ITA/ITA). Jan Kopecký and co-driver Pavel Dresler powered their factory entered ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo to fourth quickest time. The Czech Rally Champion expressed what everybody had in mind: "The real rally starts on Friday on the gravel stages. I think it will be a big challenge to even get to the finish." At the toughest gravel rally of the season, ŠKODA is with twelve entries by far the strongest brand in the field of the 17 R5 cars.

On Friday, the longest leg of the rally with six stages totalling 159.14 kilometres was waiting for the crews. The 24.85 kilometres of "Icmeler" opened the day, followed by the longest stage of the rally, the 38.15 kilometres of "Cetibeli". And on the first gravel stage all went wrong for Kalle Rovanperä. He explained: "We had a puncture and we were going to change it on the next straight, but then I lost concentration and rolled the car." Together with co-driver Jonne Halttunen, he managed to get the ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo back on its wheels again, changed the flat tyre and finished the stage with a time loss of around four minutes. Meanwhile, teammate Jan Kopecký set the fastest time of the category.

Friday 13th was definitely not the day of Kalle Rovanperä. On the longest stage of the Rally, he first had to change another flat tyre and then got another puncture. With no spare wheel left he was facing a difficult challenge. As due to the regulations a car is only allowed to be driven on public roads with four rotating wheels with rubber on it, he started the 16.57 kilometres fourth stage, which was the last one before the midday service, with three good and one flat tyre, saving a tyre with a slow puncture for the road section. Jan Kopecký had to drive more than half of the "Cetibeli" stage



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in the dust of Ford driver Gus Greensmith (GBR), who had to change a tire and re-started just in front of Kopecký. Unfortunately, Kalle Rovanperä could not make it back to the service park. The young Finn had to stop the car for the day on the road section. He will re-start on Saturday morning chasing valuable points for the WRC 2 Pro championship.

On the repetition of the morning loop, the stages turned from bad to worse, causing a real tire lottery. Jan Kopecký suffered another puncture and commented: "It can happen anywhere. I think that these stages should only be driven once." On the second run of the "Cetibeli" stage, it even started to rain making the surface slippery. With no spare wheel left, Kopecký drove safely and secured his category lead up to the evening service at Asparan in the hills above the city of Marmaris. The leaders of the WRC 2 category for private teams, Kajetan Kajetanowicz and Maciej Szczepaniak, are first among the R5 competitors securing a double class lead for ŠKODA.

Saturday (14 September) brings six more stages covering 110.10 kilometres. After 17 tests totalling 310.10 kilometres, the winner will reach the podium in Marmaris on Sunday (15 September) at around 14h15.

Standings Rally Turkey after Day 2 (WRC 2 Pro/WRC 2)

1. Kajetanowicz/Szczepaniak (POL/POL), ŠKODA FABIA R5, 2:08:16.1 h
2. Kopecký/Dresler (CZE/CZE), ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, +21.0 sec.*
3. Greensmith/Edmondson (GBR/GBR), Ford Fiesta R5 MKII, +1:43.8 min.*
4. Bulacia-Wilkinson/Cretu (BOL/ARG), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +3:04.0 sec.
5. Andolfi/Inglesi (ITA/ITA), ŠKODA FABIA R5, +4:23.5 min.

**Factory nominated crews eligible to score points in the WRC 2 Pro category*

Number of the day: 6

In the field of the R5 competitors, ŠKODA crews set in total six fastest times on the seven stages of the first two days of Rally Turkey.

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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ŠKODA at Rally Turkey Marmaris 2019

ŠKODA works crew Jan Kopecký/Pavel Dresler (ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo) are leading the WRC 2 Pro category after day 2 of the eleventh round of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship in Turkey

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ŠKODA at Rally Turkey Marmaris 2019

Kalle Rovannerä and co-driver Jonne Halttunen (ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo) had to retire from Rally Turkey after they collected three punctures on their ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo. They will restart on Saturday

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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.

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