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Rally Poland: ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams ready for European season opener

- › 2021 FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) kicks off in the Masurian lake district
- › ERC Rally Poland (18 – 20 June 2021) sees 15 private ŠKODA FABIA crews in action
- › ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo drivers Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR, Toksport WRT), Nil Solans (ESP, Rally Team Spain) and local hero Mikołaj Marczyk (Orlen Team) among top seeds

Mladá Boleslav, 17 June 2021 – With the upcoming ORLEN Rally Poland (18 – 20 June 2021), the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) starts into the COVID-19 delayed season. In total 15 ŠKODA Motorsport customer crews prepare for the gravel roads in the northern part of the country, making up more than a third of the competitors in top class RC2. The 2021 edition of the world's second oldest rally features 14 stages covering 202.76 kilometres.

Celebrating its 100th birthday, Rally Poland offers some new features to the 72 teams on the ERC entry list. While the high-speed gravel roads around Mikołajki in the Masurian Lake District again host the main action, the finish will be held in Warsaw. The last of in total 14 stages, named "Rally Poland 100th Anniversary", is the event's only sealed-surface test and runs on asphalt or cobblestones through streets of the historic part of the country's capital.

One of the drivers, who have already won second oldest rally in the world still existing, is Andreas Mikkelsen. This year driving a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo run by Toksport WRT, the Norwegian triumphed, when Rally Poland was part of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) back in 2016. "It has always been one of my favourite rallies, the profile of the roads, the speed, a little bit of loose, but it's offering quite high grip. That gives a nice sensation on the fast stages," Mikkelsen looks ahead. "It's a fast rally and you have to be really committed. That means, it's good fun." Consequently, Mikkelsen and co-driver Ola Fløene are one of the top-seeded crews among the roughly 40 competitors entered in the top class of RC2 cars.

Also in this category fits Nils Solans, the FIA Junior World Rally Champion of 2017. He shares one of Rally Team Spain's ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo with WRC event winning co-driver Marc Martí. High hopes for overall victory as well share local heroes Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk in Team Orlen's ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo and multiple Hungarian champion Norbert Herczig/Ramón Ferencz of ŠKODA Rally Team Hungaria.

Emilio Fernández/Ruben Garcia (CHL/ARG, Toksport WRT), Efrén Llarena/Sara Fernández (ESP/ESP, Rally Team Spain), Grzegorz Grzyb/Michał Praodysz (POL/POL, RUFA Motor-Sport), Simone Tempestini/Sergiu Itu (ROM/ROM), Vladas Jurkevičius/Aisvydas Paliukėnas (LTU/LTU), Adrian Chwietczuk/Jaroslav Baran (POL/POL, Holowczyc Racing), Wojciech Chuchała/Sebastian Rozwadowski (POL/POL, Marten Sport), Gregor Jeets/Timo Taniel (EST/EST, Tehase Auto), Kacper Wróblewski/Jakub Wróbel (POL/POL), Aloisio Monteiro/Sancho Eiro (POR/POR) and Alberto Battistolli/Simone Scattolin (ITA/ITA) add up to a total of 15 private ŠKODA crews on the ERC entry list.



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Rally Poland kicks off on Friday evening (18 June) with the spectacular Mikołajki Arena Super Special Stage. Seven speed tests follow on Saturday (19 June), before the rally on Sunday (20 June) heads with another six stages towards the finish in Warsaw's national football stadium.

Did you know,...

...that run for the first time in 1921, Rally Poland is the second oldest rally in the world after Rallye Monte-Carlo?

...that a founding round of the world championship in 1973, when current FIA President Jean Todt co-drove Germany's Achim Warmbold to victory?

...that Rally Poland's links with the European championship date back to 1960?

...that Mikołajki has been Rally Poland's base since 2005, which marked the event's switch from asphalt to gravel stages?

...that Rally Poland after a break of 36 years was part of the FIA World Rally Championship in 2009 and again from 2014 to 2017?

2021 FIA European Rally Championship

Rally Poland	18 – 20 June
Rally Liepāja (Latvia)	1 – 3 July
Rally Roma di Capitale (Italy)	23 – 25 July
Barum Czech Rally Zlín	27 – 29 August
Azores Rallye (Portugal)	16 – 19 September
Rally Serras de Fafe e Felgueiras (Portugal)	1 – 3 October
Rally Hungary	22 – 24 October
Rally Islas Canarias (Spain)	18 – 20 November

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Media images:



ŠKODA Motorsport at Rally Poland

Norwegians Andreas Mikkelsen and co-driver Ola Fløene in a Toksport WRT entered ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo are among the favourites for Rally Poland victory

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA Motorsport at Rally Poland

Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR), this time at the wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA RALLY2 evo, won the rally back in 2016, when it was part of the FIA World Rally Championship

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA Motorsport at Rally Poland

Emilio Fernández/Ruben Garcia (CHL/ARG) are one of 15 crews tackling the FIA European Rally Championship's season opener in a ŠKODA FABIA

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

ŠKODA has been successful in motorsports since 1901. Be it on the circuit or in rallies, ŠKODA has celebrated victories and won titles all around the world. Historical highlights include victory in the European Touring Car Championship 1981 as well as multiple titles in the FIA World Rally Championship's WRC2 category. Over the years, ŠKODA customer teams also won numerous national championships as well as titles in the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC), the der Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC), the FIA North American and Central American Rally Championship (NACAM), the FIA South American Rally Championship (CODASUR) and the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC). ŠKODA teams have also triumphed in the world's oldest and most famous rally, taking several class victories in the legendary Rallye Monte-Carlo, which was first held in 1911.

In 2009, the ŠKODA FABIA SUPER 2000 took the rally scene by storm. The following seasons, the all-wheel-drive rally car with a 2.0 litres normally aspirated engine won 50 national and international titles worldwide. It then wrote the most successful chapter in ŠKODA's motorsport history – until its successor surpassed it. The ŠKODA FABIA R5, a production-based rally car with four-wheel drive and 1.6 litres turbo engine, was homologated in its original form by the International Automobile Federation FIA on 1 April 2015. Further developed to ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo (homologated on 1 April 2019), the high-tech car successfully continues the long tradition of ŠKODA Motorsport. Due to changes in regulations, the car was re-named ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo in 2020.

The success story of the ŠKODA FABIA R5 took off in 2016, when Esapekka Lappi (FIN) won the WRC2 drivers' title of the FIA World Rally Championship. The following year, Pontus Tidemand (SWE) won the WRC2 drivers' category, while ŠKODA Motorsport took the WRC2 manufacturers' title. In 2018, ŠKODA factory driver Jan Kopecký was

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crowned WRC 2 drivers' champion. 2019 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport. Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) won the WRC2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' title as well as substantially supporting ŠKODA Motorsport to win the WRC2 Pro manufacturers' title. In 2020 ŠKODA customer team Toksport WRT became Team Champion of the WRC2 category.

ŠKODA AUTO

- › is focusing on three priorities with the "NEXT LEVEL ŠKODA" program for the future: expanding the model portfolio in the direction of entry-level segments, opening up new markets for further growth in the volume segment, and making concrete progress in sustainability and diversity.
- › currently offers its customers ten passenger-car series: the CITIGO® iV, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA and SUPERB as well as the KAMIQ, KAROQ, KODIAQ and ENYAQ iV.
- › delivered more than one million vehicles to customers around the world in 2020.
- › is part of Volkswagen Group since 30 years. 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 and India mainly through Group partnerships as well as in Ukraine with a local partner.
- › employs approximately 42,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.