

# ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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## ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams secure more than 20 titles worldwide in 2021 rally season

- › Norwegian Andreas Mikkelsen takes 2021 WRC2 Drivers' Championship and FIA European Rally Championship at the wheel of ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo
- › Drivers of ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 and ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo celebrate national titles in Europe, America, Middle East and Australia
- › Technical upgrade, introduced early in 2021 season, keeps ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo ahead of the competition in its category

**Mladá Boleslav, 17 December 2021 – ŠKODA Motorsport looks back on a successful 2021 season. Customer teams and their drivers not only won titles in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) and the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC); they also took national championships in many different countries such as Argentina, Australia and Russia at the wheel of the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo and its predecessor, the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2.**

Andreas Mikkelsen took the drivers' title in the FIA World Rally Championship's WRC2 category and also became FIA European Rally Champion. In both series, the Norwegian drove a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo of ŠKODA Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT. Joined by various teammates during the season, Mikkelsen also helped Toksport WRT win the ERC Teams' Championship. Because Mikkelsen shared the cockpit with different co-drivers, the ERC's co-driver title went to Sara Fernández. Partnering with Efrén Llerena in a Rally Team Spain's ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, she became the first-ever woman to take the title.

At the national level, ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams won championships in Europe, South America, the Middle East, and Australia. The rally car from Mladá Boleslav proved its versatility by dominating pure asphalt series, such as the Swiss Championship, as well as winning championships on snow, ice and smooth gravel, for instance, in Finland. They also won extremely tough special stages on gravel, for example in Argentina. ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 or ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo drivers delivered particularly strong performances in Italy this year, where they not only won the main title but also the two separate championships on asphalt and gravel. Another outstanding achievement was the eighth title in the Czech Republic for ŠKODA Motorsport test driver Jan Kopecký, competing for the dealer team Agrotec ŠKODA Rally Team.

ŠKODA Motorsport continued its tradition of supporting young drivers in the 2021 season. As Andreas Mikkelsen's teammate in Toksport WRT, 21-year-old Bolivian Marco Bulacia gained experience in the WRC and European Championship. He finished fourth overall in the WRC2 drivers' standings and was also named the best young driver of the 2021 season.

Dominik Stříteský, also 21, caused a stir in his first year at the wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, finishing fifth overall in the Czech championship. With the support of ŠKODA Motorsport, he also got the chance to gain his first WRC-level experience at Rally Spain in the Toksport WRT team.

The ŠKODA FABIA in its Rally2 and Rally2 evo variants is by far the most successful car in its category. With the four-wheel-drive, 1.6-litre-turbo-engine rally car from Mladá Boleslav, customer

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teams around the world have achieved more than 1,500 rally victories and over 3,700 podium positions since 2015. In the 2021 season alone, drivers of the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 and ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo won more than 20 titles. Since 2015, ŠKODA Motorsport had sold more than 440 units.

## **Interview with Michal Hrabánek, Head of ŠKODA Motorsport:**

**Mr Hrabánek, ŠKODA Motorsport rolled out a new strategy in the 2021 season. You directly supported the private team Toksport WRT. Are you happy with the result?**

Absolutely. With our new strategy, we decided to focus even more on our customer teams. We chose Toksport WRT because the team started with a good combination of an experienced driver, the Norwegian Andreas Mikkelsen, and a talented up-and-comer, Marco Bulacia from Bolivia. Mikkelsen won the WRC2 drivers' classification of the FIA World Rally Championship at the wheel of the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo. Bulacia made considerable progress and delivered some strong results. Even Movisport, who won the WRC2 Teams' Championship, put their faith in the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, especially during the second half of the season. So, we had a hand in two titles in the WRC2 category – another great season for ŠKODA Motorsport.

**What did your support of the Toksport WRT team involve exactly?**

ŠKODA Motorsport was present at each WRC2 round with two engineers and mechanics dedicated to Toksport WRT. And of course, we shared our data from previous years with the team's technicians.

**But you supported the other customer teams, as well?**

Of course. We sent a specially equipped ŠKODA Motorsport parts truck to selected rounds of the FIA World Rally Championship. So, our customer teams had the chance to get all the essential parts to keep the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo running, for example, after an accident. By the way, this truck was on duty during selected rounds of the FIA European Rally Championship, as well.

**That's a good keyword. ŠKODA Motorsport was also involved in European titles...**

Andreas Mikkelsen won the drivers' title of the FIA European Rally Championship, again at the wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA Rally 2 evo entered by Toksport WRT. In this series, Toksport WRT also managed to win the teams' title.

**Could you give us an overview of where ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams have won national championships?**

The season has come to a close all over the world, so the outcomes of the various championships have been decided. ŠKODA drivers won titles in countries as far afield as Argentina, Australia and Russia. In total, our customer teams won more than 20 titles.

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## **ŠKODA Motorsport's support for the development of a fully electric variant of the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo is an entirely new project. What is the strategy behind it?**

Various levels of electrification play an increasing role not only in road cars but also in motorsport, as well. At ŠKODA Motorsport, we have to prepare for these changes. When we were offered the chance to develop a fully electric rally car in partnership with Kreisel Electric and Baumschlager Rallye Racing, we jumped at it. We adapted the body, chassis and suspension of a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo to the requirements of the electric drive system. The prototype, called ŠKODA RE-X1 Kreisel, can be configured for both rallies and rallycross competitions with an output of 260 to over 500 kW. The car was very impressive in its first races.

## **What are your plans for the 2022 season?**

We have another very busy year ahead. In the FIA World Rally Championship, we will continue to support Toksport WRT directly and all customer teams with the dedicated spare parts service on location. We will also be sending our support truck to selected rounds of the FIA European Rally Championship.

## **2021 was the seventh season for the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2. How is business with this car evolving?**

To date, we have sold more than 440 units of the various ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 versions. The car is by far the bestseller in its category.

## **Videos of the new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 are all over the internet. Can you reveal some details about the new car?**

Obviously, the new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 is based on the new generation production model. So, we are in the process of designing a completely new rally car, which is always a big challenge. For example, the new generation of the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 features a completely new chassis and drivetrain.

## **When will the new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 be ready for action?**

We haven't fixed a date yet. But we are aiming for summer 2022.

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## Championships won by ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 and ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo drivers in 2021

### FIA World Rally Championship

WRC2 Drivers:           Andreas Mikkelsen (Norway)

### FIA European Rally Championship

Drivers:               Andreas Mikkelsen (Norway)

Co-Drivers:           Sara Fernández (Spain)

Teams:                Toksport WRT (Germany)

### National Championships:

Argentina:	Alejandro Cancio
Australia:	John O'Dowd
Austria:	Simon Wagner
Belgium:	Adrian Fernémont
Bolivia:	Roberto Saba
Bulgaria:	Miroslav Angelov
Czech Republic:	Jan Kopecký
Finland:	Emil Lindholm
Italy:	Giandomenico Basso
Lebanon:	Roger Feghali
Luxembourg:	Steve Fernandes
Poland:	Mikolaj Marczyk
Portugal:	Riccardo Teodósio
Romania:	Simone Tempestini
Russia:	Igor Bulantsev
Slovakia:	Grzegorz Grzyb
Spain:	José Antonio Suárez
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## Video and media images:



### **Video: Interview with Michal Hrabánek, Head of ŠKODA Motorsport**

Michael Michal Hrabánek, Head of ŠKODA Motorsport, talks about the 2021 season, the success of customer teams and a fully electric rally car based on the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### **ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams in 2021**

Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR) won the WRC2 Drivers' Championship (pictured: Monte Carlo rally) and was also crowned FIA European Rally Champion at the wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### **ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams in 2021**

With support from ŠKODA Motorsport, 21-year-old Czech up-and-comer Dominik Střítecký and co-driver Jiří Hovorka competed in their first ever WRC round in Rally Spain.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### **ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams in 2021**

First-ever female Co-Drivers' Champion in the history of the FIA European Rally Championship: Sara Fernández, co-driver to Efrén Llarena in Rally Team Spain's ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo.

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Source: FIA ERC



### **ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams in 2021**

Jan Kopecký, competing for the Agrotec ŠKODA Rally Team alongside co-driver Jan Hloušek, became Czech Rally Champion for a record eighth time.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO





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## ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

ŠKODA has been successful in motorsport since 1901 - both on the circuit and 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 have also won numerous national championships as well as titles in the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC), the 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 Monte Carlo rally, 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-litre naturally 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-litre turbo engine, was homologated in its original form by the International Automobile Federation FIA on 1 April 2015. Further developed into the ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo (homologated on 1 April 2019), the high-tech car successfully continues ŠKODA Motorsport's long tradition. 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 crowned WRC 2 drivers' champion. In 2019, Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) won the WRC2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' title as well as supporting ŠKODA Motorsport in winning the WRC2 Pro manufacturers' title. In 2020 ŠKODA customer team Toksport WRT became Team Champion of the WRC2 category.

## ŠKODA AUTO

- › is successfully steering through the new decade with the NEXT LEVEL – ŠKODA STRATEGY 2030.
- › aims to be one of the five best-selling brands in Europe by 2030 with an attractive line-up in the entry-level segments and additional e-models.
- › is emerging as the leading European brand in India, Russia and North Africa.
- › currently offers its customers ten passenger-car series: the FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA and SUPERB as well as the KAMIQ, KAROQ, KODIAQ, ENYAQ iV and KUSHAQ.
- › delivered over one million vehicles to customers around the world in 2020.
- › has been a member of the Volkswagen Group for 30 years. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world.
- › independently manufactures and develops not only vehicles but also components such as engines and transmissions in association with the Group.
- › operates at three sites in the Czech Republic; manufactures in China, Russia, Slovakia and India primarily through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine with a local partner.
- › employs more than 43,000 people globally and is active in over 100 markets.