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Rally Portugal: Andreas Mikkelsen aims for another WRC2 top result with the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo

- › Overall leader and reigning WRC2 champion from Norway chases third class victory at the wheel of the Toksport WRT entered ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo
- › Teammate Marco Bulacia (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) from Bolivia wants to score his first points of the season at the Porto based rally
- › FIA World Rally Championship celebrates it's 50th season with title winning drivers and co-drivers from the past as special guests

Mladá Boleslav, 19 May 2022 – With two WRC2 victories at Rally Monte Carlo and Rally Sweden under his belt, Andreas Mikkelsen (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) travels to Rally Portugal (19-22 May 2022) as WRC2 overall leader. At the fourth round of the FIA World Rally Championship, ŠKODA Motorsport backed outfit Toksport WRT also wants to defend top spot in the WRC2 teams' classification. The event hosts a gala celebrating the championship's 50th season with big names from its history as special guests.

After they voluntarily skipped the recent Rally Croatia, Andreas Mikkelsen and co-driver Torstein Eriksen are back in action. The two Norwegians are looking forward to take the gravel roads in the vicinity of Porto under the wheels of their ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo. "The victories in Monte Carlo and Sweden are not the only things which give me lots of confidence for the Portuguese WRC round. I also know, how well our ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo performs on the gravel stages," emphasizes Mikkelsen, the reigning WRC2 drivers' champion.

The situation is completely different for Toksport WRT's junior Marco Bulacia from Bolivia, who will be navigated as usual by Argentinean Marcelo Der Ohannessian. "After scoring zero points at the first two rallies of the year, things can only get better for me. The championship starts anew for me in Portugal. But I'm confident and looking forward to the beautiful special stages of this WRC classic," 21 years old Bulacia looks ahead, who also didn't attend the Croatian WRC round.

With the recommendation of second place in the WRC2 category in Croatia, the fast Polish ŠKODA pairing of Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak is among the favourites for a WRC2 podium position in Portugal. Their British brand colleagues Chris Ingram/Craig Drew as well as the local heroes Armindo Araújo/Luís Ramalho (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) are also crews to be watched.

The rally version of the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 is very popular with the competitors at Rally Portugal. 22 of the 52 crews entered in Rally2 vehicles rely on the successful Czech car.

Back in 1973, Rally Portugal was one of the founding events of the then new World Rally Championship. To celebrate it's 50th season, the series hosts a gala at Matosinhos with former title winning drivers and co-drivers as special guests. Legendary names like Ari Vatanen, Walter Röhrl, Miki Biasion, Carlos Sainz and Marcus Grönholm as well as Michèle Mouton are on the invitation list.

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The sportive part of the Rally Portugal begins on Thursday (19 May) with the start and a short show stage in the picturesque city centre of Coimbra. On Friday (20 May), the rally heads to the Arganil region, where eight special stages over 122 kilometres are waiting for the competitors. Saturday (21 May) is the longest day of the event with seven stages covering more than 156 kilometres, all characterized by a mix of sandy tracks and rough passages with deep ruts. On Sunday (22 May), the focus will be on the legendary "Fafe" stages with their fast and smooth gravel tracks including the famous jump. In total, the teams have to master 22 stages covering 330.16 kilometres. The winner reaches the finish in Matosinhos near Porto at around 3:20 pm CEST on Sunday.

Did you know...

...that the ŠKODA FABIA R5/Rally2 made his FIA World Rally Championship debut at Rally Portugal in 2015?

...that from 2007 to 2014 the rally was held in the Algarve region before moving back to the north?

...that in 2012 world champion to be Sébastien Ogier won his class with a ŠKODA FABIA S2000 and finished an impressive 7th overall?

Top-3 overall WRC2/Drivers (before Rally Portugal)

1. **Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, 51 points**
2. Yohan Rossel (FRA), Citroën C3 Rally2, 36 points
3. **Nikolay Gryazin (ANA), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, 27 points**

Top-3 overall WRC2/Teams (before Rally Portugal)

1. **Toksport WRT (ŠKODA), 62 points**
2. **Toksport WRT2 (ŠKODA), 58 points**
3. Yacco Accr Team (Citroën), 50 points

The FIA World Rally Championship 2022

Rallye Monte Carlo	20 - 23 January
Rally Sweden	24 - 27 February
Rally Croatia	21 - 24 April
Rally Portugal	19 - 22 May
Rally Italy Sardinia	2 - 5 June
Safari Rally Kenya	23 - 26 June
Rally Estonia	14 - 17 July
Rally Finland	4 - 7 August
Ypres Rally Belgium	19 - 21 August
Acropolis Rally Greece	8 - 11 September
Rally New Zealand	29 September - 2 October
RallyRACC Rally de España	20 - 23 October
Rally Japan	10 - 13 November

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Further information:

Zbyněk Straškraba, Communications Motorsport

P +420 605 293 168

zbynek.straskraba@skoda-auto.cz

<http://skoda-motorsport.com>

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Media images:



ŠKODA Motorsport at Rally Portugal

Norwegians Andreas Mikkelsen/Torstein Eriksen are among the top favorites in the WRC2 category with their ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo of team Toksport WRT.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA Motorsport at Rally Portugal

Marco Bulacia/Marcelo Der Ohannesian (BOL/ARG) are looking to score their first WRC2 points of the season with their ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 entered by team Toksport WRT.

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ŠKODA Motorsport at Rally Portugal

The Polish ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo crew of Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak comes to Matosinhos with the recommendation of second place in WRC2 category at the recent Rally Croatia.

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ŠKODA Motorsport

- › ŠKODA has been active in motorsport since 1901, garnering success in rallies as well as circuit racing.
- › Highlights include winning the 1981 European Touring Car Championship (ETCC) with the ŠKODA 130 RS.
- › In recent years, the ŠKODA FABIA celebrated numerous successes for the Czech manufacturer on rally stages worldwide. From 2009 to 2014, the ŠKODA FABIA S2000 (2.0 naturally aspirated engine, four-wheel drive) secured 50 international titles and national rally championships. The ŠKODA FABIA S2000 also helped to win the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) and the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC) three times each.
- › The ŠKODA FABIA R5 (1.6 turbo engine, four-wheel drive) continued the S2000's success story in 2015. In the following years, ŠKODA Motorsport factory drivers took multiple titles in the FIA World Rally Championship's support category WRC2/WRC2 Pro with the models ŠKODA FABIA R5 (Rally2) and ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo. Titles went to Jan Kopecký (CZE), Esapekka Lappi (FIN), Pontus Tidemand (SWE), Kalle Rovanperä (FIN) and Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR). Supported by ŠKODA Motorsport, Toksport WRT became Team Champion of the WRC2 category in 2020.
- › ŠKODA Motorsport customer teams have also won titles in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC), FIA European Rally Championship (ERC), 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).
- › In 2021, Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR, Toksport WRT) took the WRC2 Drivers' Championship and the FIA European Rally Championship overall at the wheel of a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo.
- › By the end of the 2021 season, the ŠKODA FABIA R5 (Rally2) and ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo had secured over 1,500 victories and more than 3,700 podium positions in 65 countries.

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 important growth markets such as India or North Africa.
- › currently offers its customers twelve passenger-car series: the FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA and SUPERB as well as the KAMIQ, KAROQ, KODIAQ, ENYAQ iV, ENYAQ COUPÉ iV, SLAVIA and KUSHAQ.
- › delivered over 870,000 vehicles to customers around the world in 2021.
- › 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; has additional production capacity in China, Russia, Slovakia and India primarily through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine with a local partner.
- › employs 45,000 people globally and is active in over 100 markets.

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