

ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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New generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 proves its strength on demanding gravel tracks

- › Newly developed Rally2 category car from ŠKODA Motorsport masters extremely rough Fontjoncouse test track in southern France
- › During the final phase of the car's successful development, the focus turned to reliability and toughness

Mladá Boleslav, 9 June 2022 – The new ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 has entered its final phase of development. To guarantee reliability and strength of the brand's future rally car, the ŠKODA Motorsport test team brought the car to its limits on the extremely rough gravel roads of Fontjoncouse in the South of France.

The new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 is getting closer to its homologation date. According to the regulations, from that day on the basic technical characteristics of the car are frozen. Further development will only be possible in certain areas. As a last step, ŠKODA Motorsport concentrated on the reliability of the future Rally2 category car. "Durability is one of the key factors for the success of the current ŠKODA FABIA Rally2. Especially this element is very much appreciated by our customer teams," states Michal Hrabánek, Head of ŠKODA Motorsport.

The newly developed ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 got its finishing touch exactly, where already past rally cars from Mladá Boleslav proved their strength: on the legendary gravel tracks of Fontjoncouse in southern France. Some of the roads on this vast area are so rough, that teams even come here to prepare for the Dakar Rally. "We have used this track since the days of the ŠKODA FABIA WRC," reveals Hrabánek.

Aleš Rada, Head of Racing Car Development at ŠKODA Motorsport, explains, why reliability and strength are important for a rally car: "It's a golden rule: To finish first, you first have to finish. A reliable rally car gives drivers the confidence to push to the limit. Reliability also is an important factor for customer teams. If you can run components of the car over a longer period, it saves money on spare parts. Also, if a team's cars finish almost each rally, it raises the reputation of the team. The reliability of the cars is part of our DNA. With each new model, we put a lot of energy in securing a high level of reliability." During the development of the new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2, valuable input came from the customer teams.

One of the drivers, who took his share of the more than 600 test kilometres at Fontjoncouse, is Andreas Mikkelsen. "The ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 is known to be reliable. That counts also for the new generation model. We had no issues at all," the reigning WRC2 Drivers' Champion and FIA European Rally Champion says. "The tracks of Fontjoncouse are very, very rough. You have some big compressions, jumps, lots of stones on the road – it's the best environment to test the reliability of a rally car. If a car survives Fontjoncouse, it can stand every proper rally."

Mikkelsen drove to both of his 2021 titles at the wheel of the current ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo. Thus, he has the competence to compare it to the new generation car. "I have a great feeling," the Norwegian boasts. "The speed of the new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 is better. And the reliability is at least on the same level."

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On the [ŠKODA Storyboard](#), Aleš Rada and Andreas Mikkelsen talk about the test days at Fontjoncouse and their expectations from the new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2.

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Video: New generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 proves its strength on demanding gravel tracks

Aleš Rada and Andreas Mikkelsen talk about the test days at Fontjoncouse with the new generation ŠKODA FABIA Rally2.

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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 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.

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- › 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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