

# ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE



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## RallyRACC Catalunya: Rovanperä and Kopecký targeting WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title for ŠKODA

- › At the one but last round of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019 in Spain, ŠKODA Motorsport can prematurely win the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title
- › ŠKODA factory crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen (ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo) prematurely won the drivers' and co-drivers' titles of the WRC 2 Pro Championship\*
- › ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo works crew Jan Kopecký/Jan Hloušek aiming for championship points on the gravel and tarmac stages of Catalonia

Mladá Boleslav, 22 October 2019 – ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen (FIN/FIN) prematurely celebrated the WRC 2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' titles\* at the recent Wales Rally GB. Together with their teammates Jan Kopecký (CZE) and co-driver Jan Hloušek (CZE), also driving a ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo at the upcoming RallyRACC Catalunya-Rally de España (24/10–27/10/2019), the two Finns want to secure the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019 as well.

Surrounded by the team of ŠKODA Motorsport on the podium of the recent Wales Rally GB, newly crowned WRC 2 Pro World Champion\* Kalle Rovanperä expressed a clear goal: "Let's bring the manufacturers' title to Mladá Boleslav as well." The signs are bright and clear. Last year in Spain, Rovanperä together with co-driver Jonne Halttunen scored WRC 2 victory, while teammate Jan Kopecký secured a category double win for ŠKODA Motorsport, at the same time becoming WRC 2 Drivers' Champion.

This year, the task is crystal clear for both works crews. They want to secure prematurely the WRC 2 Pro manufacturers' title of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019. ŠKODA Motorsport is leading before Rally Spain the overall championship standings with 53 points from M-Sport Ford. In the WRC 2 category for private teams, a fierce battle is expected between three ŠKODA crews: championship leaders Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais (FRA/FRA) and their pursuers Benito Guerra/Daniel Cué (MEX/ESP) and Nikolay Gryazin/Yaroslav Fedorov (RUS/RUS). 12 ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo and ŠKODA FABIA R5 among the 28 R5 cars on the entry list make ŠKODA again the strongest brand of the category.

The RallyRACC Catalunya-Rally de España, so the full name of the thirteenth round of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019, offers a special challenge for the crews. The Spanish WRC round is the championship's only mixed surface rally. The first leg on Friday (25 October) is held on gravel roads with some tarmac sections. On Saturday and Sunday (25/26 October), all stages are entirely run on asphalt. The teams have to face 17 special stages totalling 325.56 kilometres of racing against the clock. The winner will reach the podium at the rally's host town Salou in the south of Catalonia's capital Barcelona at 14h00 local time on Sunday (27 October).

*\*subject to the publication of the official results by the FIA*



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## Did you know...

...that on Friday evening the service time is 1:15 hours and thus 30 minutes longer than usual, allowing the teams to convert the cars from gravel into tarmac spec?

...that RallyRACC Catalunya-Rally de España was first run in 1957, became a round of the European Rally Championship (ERC) in 1975 and in 1991 for the first time was part of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)?

## 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
<b>Spain</b>	<b>24/10/-27/10/2019</b>
Australia	14/11/-17/11/2019

## Further information:

Zbyněk Straškraba, Communications Motorsport

P +420 605 293 168

[zbynek.straskraba@skoda-auto.cz](mailto:zbynek.straskraba@skoda-auto.cz)

<http://skoda-motorsport.com>

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## ŠKODA at RallyRACC Catalunya 2019

Already before RallyRACC Catalunya, ŠKODA works crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen (ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo) won the WRC 2 Pro drivers' titles.

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ŠKODA Media Services

[media@skoda-auto.cz](mailto:media@skoda-auto.cz)



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## ŠKODA at RallyRACC Catalunya 2019

Together with their teammates, Jan Kopecký and co-driver Jan Hloušek (ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo) want to secure the manufacturers' title of the WRC 2 Pro category for ŠKODA Motorsport.

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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.

ŠKODA Media Services

[media@skoda-auto.cz](mailto:media@skoda-auto.cz)



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