

# ŠKODA MOTORSPORT PRESS RELEASE

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## ŠKODA Motorsport cooperates with Oliver Solberg in WRC3 category of FIA World Rally Championship

- › Starting with Rally Sweden and driving a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, Oliver Solberg and his co-driver Aaron Johnston will compete in the WRC3 category of the FIA World Rally Championship 2020
- › ŠKODA Motorsport always boosted the careers of many young drivers which won World Rally Championship and European Rally Championship titles
- › So far, ŠKODA sold 330 rally versions of the FABIA and will continue to provide the best possible services to their customers worldwide
- › The ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo will be from now on called ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, due to a renaming of its' class by the International Automobile Federation FIA

Mladá Boleslav, 27 January 2020 – After completing 2019 as the most successful year in its history, ŠKODA Motorsport will focus even more on customer teams and strengthen the cooperation by offering the best possible services. Like in the past, the development of young drivers also plays an important role. In 2020, ŠKODA Motorsport will cooperate with the team of 18 years old Oliver Solberg (SWE). Driving a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo (new name due to a renaming of its' class by the International Automobile Federation FIA) together with co-driver Aaron Johnston (IRL), he will compete in the WRC3 category of the FIA World Rally Championship. Their first event in this category will be Rally Sweden (13/02–16/02/2020).

Beginning with Rally Sweden, 18 years old Oliver Solberg and co-driver Aaron Johnston will share a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo in selected European rounds of the WRC3 category of the FIA World Rally Championship 2020.

Oliver Solberg has rallying in his genes. Father Petter became FIA World Rally Champion in 2003, mother Pernilla was as well successfully competing in international and national rallies. Winning Rally Liepāja at the age of 17 in 2019, Solberg junior became the youngest driver ever to win a round of the FIA European Rally Championship. During the penultimate round of the FIA World Rally Championship 2019 in Wales, he again delivered impressive stage times in the very competitive field of R5 drivers. "For me, it is all about learning. I am really looking forward to my first rally with the ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo in Sweden," says Solberg, who already had the chance to test his new rally car.

ŠKODA Motorsport boss Michal Hrabánek is looking forward to the new season as well. "For 2020, we will focus more on customer teams and on the development of young and promising drivers. We are happy to cooperate with Oliver and his team for the WRC3 championship of 2020. He already proved his speed – now we are keen to see his progress throughout the season," he says.

ŠKODA was the choice of champions already in the past, boosting the careers of many young drivers. Driving a ŠKODA FABIA S2000, for example Andreas Mikkelsen conquered the Intercontinental Rally Championship (IRC) in 2011 and 2012. Juho Hänninen won the IRC already in 2010, the FIA SWRC (the WRC2 predecessor) in 2011 and European Rally Championship (ERC)



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in 2012 with a ŠKODA FABIA S2000. Stablemates Jan Kopecký and Esapekka Lappi became ERC Champions in 2013 and 2014 respectively.

The ŠKODA FABIA R5 also played a major role in the early careers of Esapekka Lappi and Pontus Tidemand, who both became WRC2 Champions driving for ŠKODA. And last but not least, Jan Kopecký not only played a key role in developing the Czech rally car into the most successful model of its category. He also became WRC2 Champion himself in 2018. The following year, Kalle Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen took the WRC2 Pro title of the FIA World Rally Championship with the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo.

## The calendar of the 2020 FIA World Rally Championship

Event	Date
Monte-Carlo	23/01–26/01/2020
Sweden	13/02–16/02/2020
Mexico	12/03–15/03/2020
Argentina	23/04–26/04/2020
Portugal	21/05–24/05/2020
Italy	04/06–07/06/2020
Kenya	16/07–19/07/2020
Finland	06/08–09/08/2020
New Zealand	03/09–06/09/2020
Turkey	24/09–27/09/2020
Germany	15/10–18/10/2020
Great Britain	29/10–01/11/2020
Japan	19/11–22/11/2020

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## Media images:



### ŠKODA Motorsport cooperates with Oliver Solberg in the WRC3 category of the World Rally Championship

Driving a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, Oliver Solberg (SWE) and Aaron Johnston (IRL) will compete in the WRC3 category of the FIA World Rally Championship.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



### ŠKODA Motorsport cooperates with Oliver Solberg in the WRC3 category of the World Rally Championship

New kids on the block: Oliver Solberg (left) and Aaron Johnston will drive a ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo in the WRC3 category of the FIA World Rally Championship.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

## ŠKODA Motorsport Overview

2019 was the most successful year in the history of ŠKODA Motorsport so far. In 2019, the Czech brand introduced the new ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo. Factory crew Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen won both WRC2 Pro drivers' and co-drivers' championship of the FIA World Rally Championship while ŠKODA Motorsport took the WRC2 Pro manufacturers' title. ŠKODA customer crew Pierre-Louis Loubet/Vincent Landais won the WRC2 championship for private teams.

The success story of the Czech brand took place worldwide. The FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) was won by Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock (GBR/GBR), Filip Mareš/Jan Hloušek (CZE/CZE) conquered the FIA European Rally Championship/ERC1 Junior title. Manvir Singh Baryan/Drew Sturrock (KEN/GBR) became FIA African Rally Champions (ARC), Ricardo Triviño/Marc Martí (MEX/ESP) won the FIA North American and Central American Rally Championship (NACAM). On top of that, ŠKODA crews won numerous national championships. The ŠKODA FABIA R5 evo, a high-tech 4x4, was homologated by the International Automobile Federation (FIA) on 1 April 2019. The Czech rally car is successfully continuing the long tradition of ŠKODA Motorsport.

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 (WRC2) 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.

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## ŠKODA AUTO

- › is this year celebrating 125 years since the company was founded during the pioneering era of the automobile in 1895, making it one of the longest-established car manufacturers 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 1.24 million vehicles to customers around the world in 2019.
- › 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 42,000 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.