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Rallye Monte-Carlo: ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo driver Mikkelsen starts as WRC2 leader into last leg

- › With four stages to go, Andreas Mikkelsen and co-driver Ola Fløene have an advantage of more than two minutes over their closest rival
- › Safety crew information vital for impressive speed of Toksport WRT's Norwegians
- › Team mates Marco Bulacia/Marcelo Der Ohannesian hold fourth in WRC2 category
- › Second leg of the 2021 FIA World Rally Championship season opener brought lots of snow and ice on the stages between Gap and Monaco

Gap/Monte-Carlo, 23 January 2021 – With studded snow tyres on their ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo for the whole day, Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR) and co-driver Ola Fløene (NOR) were unstoppable during the second leg of Rallye Monte-Carlo (21-24 January 2021). With four stages to go on Sunday, the Norwegians of ŠKODA Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT lead WRC2 category by more than two minutes. South American Monte-Carlo newcomers Marco Bulacia/Marcelo Der Ohannesian (BOL/ARG) hold fourth WRC2 position in Toksport's second ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo.

With two WRC2 stage wins and one third fastest time, Andreas Mikkelsen and co-driver Ola Fløene (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) extended their category lead significantly during the second leg of the 2021 season opener. The wintery roads asked for studded snow tyres for all of Saturday, perfect conditions for the experienced Norwegian crew. They arrived in Monaco harbour 2:13.8 minutes ahead of second placed Adrien Fourmaux/Renaud Jamoul (FRA/BEL).

Again, Mikkelsen was full of praise for his safety crew. Fellow Norwegians Bernt Kollevold and Cato Menkerud check each stage roughly 90 minutes before the actual start for changes compared to the pace notes, relaying them to co-driver Ola Fløene just in time. "Their information was really spot on. I have the best safety crew in the whole world," Mikkelsen acknowledged. Going into the final leg on Sunday, he is planning a relaxed strategy. „We have a big lead, so for the last stages it's quite easy – we don't need to push, we just have to get to the end.“

Tackling the legendary "Monte" for the first time and of top of that with very small experience on snow covered roads, Toksport WRT's second ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo driver Marco Bulacia mastered the difficult second leg without setting a foot wrong. In stage 10, the 20 years from Bolivia and Argentinian co-driver Marcelo Der Ohannesian even posted the second fastest time among the WRC2 competitors. "I'm very happy and fully motivated for tomorrow", Bulacia looked ahead to the final leg on Sunday.

29 competitors in Rally2 cars survived the difficult second leg of Rallye Monte-Carlo. As well as in WRC2, Mikkelsen/Fløene are by far fastest of this classification as well. Eleven more ŠKODA crews follow the two Norwegians, making the Czech brand the most popular in this class.

On Sunday, Rallye Monte-Carlo features another four stages in the mountains close to the Principality. The last 54.48 competitive kilometres will bring the decision during the season opener of the FIA World Rally Championship. The winner is expected on the finish ramp at 2:18 pm local.

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Standings Rallye Monte-Carlo after Leg 2 (WRC2)

1. Mikkelsen/Fløene (NOR/NOR), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, 2:21:54.6 hrs.
2. Fourmaux/Jamoul (FRA/BEL), Ford Fiesta Rally2, +2:13.8 min.
3. Camilli/Buresi (FRA/FRA), Citroën C3 Rally2, +2:31.4 min.
4. Bulacia/Der Ohannesian (BOL/ARG), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, +8:28.3 min.
5. Johnston/Kihurani (USA/USA), Citroën C3 Rally2, +11:29.3 min.
6. Brazzoli/Barone (ITA/ITA), ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo, +39:28.6 min.

Number of the day: 1:26.7

In only three stages, Andreas Mikkelsen and co-driver Ola Fløene (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) extended their WRC2 lead by a whopping 1:26.7 minutes.

2021 FIA World Rally Championship

Monte-Carlo	21 – 24 January
Arctic Lapland (Finland)	25 – 28 February
Croatia	22 – 25 April
Portugal	20 – 23 May
Italia Sardegna	3 – 6 June
Safari Kenya	24 – 27 June
Estonia	15 – 18 July
Finland	29 July – 1 August
Ypres (Belgium)	13 – 15 August
Chile	9 – 12 September
Spain	14 – 17 October
Japan	11 –14 November

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Media images:



ŠKODA Motorsport at Rallye Monte-Carlo 2021

Andreas Mikkelsen/Ola Fløene (NOR/NOR) in the Toksport WRT entered ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo made the most of the snowy conditions to increase their WRC2 category lead to more than two minutes

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



ŠKODA Motorsport at Rallye Monte-Carlo 2021

Andreas Mikkelsen and co-driver Ola Fløene (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) of ŠKODA Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT go as WRC2 leaders into the final leg of the FIA World Rally Championship season opener

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ŠKODA Motorsport at Rallye Monte-Carlo 2021

Tackling the legendary "Monte" for the first time, Marco Bulacia from Bolivia and co-driver Marcelo Der Ohannesian from Argentina (ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo) hold fourth in WRC2

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ŠKODA Motorsport at Rallye Monte-Carlo 2021

South American ŠKODA FABIA Rally2 evo crew Marco Bulacia/Marcelo Der Ohannesian (BOL/ARG) of ŠKODA Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT mastered the snowy and icy conditions of the rally's second leg

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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.



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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.

ŠKODA AUTO

- › is focusing on three priorities with the "NEXT LEVEL ŠKODA" program for the future: expanding the model portfolio in the direction of entry-level segments, opening up new markets for further growth in the volume segment, and making concrete progress in sustainability and diversity.
- › currently offers its customers ten passenger-car series: the CITIGO® iV, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA and SUPERB as well as the KAMIQ, KAROQ, KODIAQ and ENYAQ iV.
- › delivered more than one million vehicles to customers around the world in 2020.
- › is part of Volkswagen Group since 30 years. 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 and India mainly through Group partnerships as well as in Ukraine with a local partner.
- › employs approximately 42,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.