

## Guanajuato Rally México: Škoda newcomer Gus Greensmith leads Fabia 1-2-3 in WRC2

- › On its first gravel event in the FIA World Rally Championship, new Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 wins WRC2
- › Sharing a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Toksport WRT, Briton Gus Greensmith and co-driver Jonas Andersson from Sweden start WRC2 campaign with convincing category victory
- › Defending WRC2 Champions Emil Lindholm/Reeta Hämäläinen (Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo) finish second of the category at Mexican debut
- › After losing nearly two minutes due to a puncture, Oliver Solberg and co-driver Elliott Edmondson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) fight back to third position in WRC2

**Léon (MEX), 20 March 2023 – Five weeks after its maiden WRC2 victory at Rally Sweden, the new Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 also won the category at the first gravel event of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC). Briton Gus Greensmith and co-driver Jonas Andersson from Sweden celebrated from the top spot of the Guanajuato Rally México podium. Especially remarkable: The third round of the 2023 season was the first ever WRC event for Gus Greensmith both at the wheel of a Škoda and also with Swedish co-driver Jonas Andersson.**

Guanajuato Rally México was the third WRC round for the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2. Reaching altitudes of 2,700 metres and consisting of stages covered with rough gravel and even rocks, the event presented again a new challenge for the latest Rally2 car from the Czech manufacturer. Team Toksport WRT brought two Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 for Gus Greensmith/Jonas Andersson (GBR/SWE) and Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson (SWE/GBR) to Léon. Of the 19 stages actually contested by the WRC2 competitors, these two crews were fastest on 13 of them. The six remaining stage wins – including the power stage rewarded with three extra points – went to defending WRC2 champions Emil Lindholm/Reeta Hämäläinen. Due to the complex logistics of shipping the rally cars to North America, the two Finns relied on a predecessor model Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo also run by team Toksport WRT.

Not only was the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 relatively new to Gus Greensmith. He knew the car only from a test session and a local rally in Portugal. The 26-year-old Londoner, who last year drove one of the much more powerful Rally1 cars, also had to get accustomed to Swedish co-driver Jonas Andersson. It didn't take too long for newly formed crew. Greensmith/Andersson took the lead after stage 6 and stayed there for the rest of the 23 speed tests. "The whole rally was under control for me. When we needed to go faster, we could gap everyone. After that it was just about controlling it and not making any mistakes. It's the perfect way to start the year," Greensmith commented, who voluntarily had skipped the first two WRC rounds. The British-Swedish duo even finished sixth overall – another remarkable achievement for a WRC2 competitor.

Despite being new to the Mexican WRC event, Emil Lindholm and co-driver Reeta Hämäläinen took the early lead. On Thursday, they won both the spectacular flood-lid asphalt stages through – and in parts under – the historic city centre of Guanajuato. Lindholm managed to defend the lead during the first gravel stages on Friday morning. But after the service break, he somehow lost his momentum while team mate Gus Greensmith seemed to shift up a gear.

At this point, Oliver Solberg fought with Ford driver Adrien Fourmaux for second place in WRC2. In stage 8, Solberg damaged a tyre of his Toksport WRT run Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 and lost nearly two minutes. With a string of fastest stage times of the category, Solberg and British co-driver Elliott Edmondson climbed back to fourth position during the Saturday leg. Meanwhile, Lindholm/Hämäläinen were comfortably third.

But the duel for second and third spot on the podium was not yet settled. When Adrien Fourmaux, running in second for most of the rally, was delayed by a technical issue in stage 21, the full Škoda podium was perfect.

Lindholm/Hämäläinen reached the finish 32.9 seconds shy of Greensmith/Andersson. "We did what we wanted. But we have to be honest: It was more or less because the other drivers had problems. At least good points for the championship and many lessons learnt," Lindholm said. In the end, the danger of being overtaken by Solberg faded away. "Unfortunately, we encountered an engine issue after running over a big rock in the middle of the road. Thus, we couldn't fight for second position anymore," Solberg explained at the finish of the penultimate stage. "But P3 is great for the championship anyway," he added at the finish. And right he was: Third position was enough for the 21-year-old son of former FIA World Rally Champion Petter Solberg to advance to the overall lead in the WRC2 Drivers' championship.

Actually, the final WRC2 results even displayed a Škoda 1-2-3-4. Fourth place went to Kajetan Kajetanowicz and co-driver Maciej Szczepaniak from Poland in ORLEN Rally Team's Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo.

Next stop for the WRC2 competitors is the first pure asphalt event of the season, Rally Croatia (20-24 April 2023) taking place on the roads close to the country's capital Zagreb.

### **Guanajuato Rally México, 16-19 March 2023, Result WRC2**

- 1 Gus Greensmith/Jonas Andersson (GBR/SWE), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, 3:28:40.9 hours**
- 2 Emil Lindholm/Reeta Hämäläinen (FIN/FIN), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +32.9 seconds**
- 3 Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson (SWE/GBR), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +1:06.2 minutes**
- 4 Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (POL/POL), Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo, +3:25.1 minutes**
- 5 Martin Prokop/Michal Ernst (CZE/CZE), Ford Fiesta MkII Rally2, +6:24.4 minutes**
- 6 Jorge Fontena Martinez/Alberto Alvarez Nicholson (CHL/ARG), Škoda Fabia Rally2, +15:35.4 minutes**

### **Number of the rally: 19**

Three Škoda crews dominated WRC2: Gus Greensmith/Jonas Andersson, Emil Lindholm/Reeta Hämäläinen and Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson won all of the 19 stages actually competed by the WRC2 field.

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#### **Škoda Motorsport at Guanajuato Rally México**

First world championship rally together with a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2: Gus Greensmith (GBR) and co-driver Jonas Andersson (SWE) convincingly won WRC2 for team Toksport WRT.

Source: Škoda Auto



#### **Škoda Motorsport at Guanajuato Rally México**

British-Swedish duo Gus Greensmith/ Jonas Andersson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) mastered the extremely rough gravel roads without any problems. They took the WRC2 lead after stage 6 and kept it until the finish.

Source: Škoda Auto



#### **Škoda Motorsport at Guanajuato Rally México**

After years in much more powerful cars, Gus Greensmith (GBR) gave a comeback in WRC2. The 26 years old Londoner plans to compete all remaining FIA World Championship rounds of 2023 at the wheel of a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2.

Source: Škoda Auto



### Škoda Motorsport at Guanajuato Rally México

Defending WRC2 champions Emil Lindholm/Reeta Hämäläinen from Finland (Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo of team Toksport WRT) initially led the category and eventually finished second in WRC2.

Source: Škoda Auto



### Škoda Motorsport at Guanajuato Rally México

Oliver Solberg (SWE) and co-driver Elliott Edmondson (GBR), WRC2 winners at Rally Sweden, drove the Toksport WRT run Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 to third position. After three rallies, Solberg leads the WRC2 Drivers' overall standings.

Source: Škoda Auto



### Škoda Motorsport at Guanajuato Rally México

The opening stages ran in part through mural-decorated, former silver mining tunnels underneath Guanajuato. Pictured: Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (POL/POL), Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo of ORLEN Rally Team.

Source: Škoda Auto



### Škoda Motorsport at Guanajuato Rally México

The ceremonial start brought thousands of spectators to the historic city centre of Guanajuato, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Pictured: Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson (SWE/GBR), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Toksport WRT.

Source: Škoda Auto

### Škoda Motorsport

- › Škoda has been active in motorsport since 1901, garnering success in rallies as well as in circuit racing.
- › Highlights include winning the 1981 European Touring Car Championship (ETCC) with the Škoda 130 RS.
- › Since 2009, the Škoda Fabia celebrated numerous successes for the Czech manufacturer on rally stages worldwide.
- › Until 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 successor model Škoda Fabia R5 (1.6 turbo engine, four-wheel drive) entered the scene in 2015. Later renamed to Škoda Fabia Rally2 and followed by the further developed Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo, the model collected nearly 2,000 victories in 68 countries until the end of the 2022 season.
- › During this period, Škoda Motorsport factory drivers Jan Kopecký (CZE), Esapekka Lappi (FIN), Pontus Tidemand (SWE) and Kalle Rovanperä (FIN) won the FIA World Rally Championship's support category WRC2/WRC2 Pro. Škoda Motorsport also took the WRC2/WRC2 Pro Manufacturers' title five times in a row from 2015 to 2019.
- › Beginning with the 2020 season, Škoda Motorsport changed its strategy to supporting private teams. The success story continued: Driving a Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo run by Toksport WRT, Andreas Mikkelsen (NOR) und Emil Lindholm (FIN) became WRC2 Champions in 2021 and 2022. The Škoda Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT also won the WRC2 Teams' title three times in a row from 2020 to 2022.
- › 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).

### 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 731,000 vehicles to customers around the world in 2022.
- › 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.