

Rally Sweden: Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 driver Oliver Solberg kicks off WRC2 title bid with victory

- › **Winning by more than one minute, Toksport WRT crew Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) dominates WRC2 during the second round of the FIA World Rally Championship**
- › **Finns Lauri Joona/Janni Hüssi (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) reach sixth position in WRC2**
- › **Polish Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew Michał Sołowow/Maciej Baran takes victory in WRC Masters Cup classification**

Umeå (SWE), 18 February 2024 – After competing Rallye Monte-Carlo without being registered for WRC2 points, Oliver Solberg won the category at Rally Sweden (15-18 February). Driving for Škoda Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT, the 22-year-old Swede and British co-driver Elliott Edmondson were fastest in WRC2 on eleven of the 18 stages on snow and ice covered roads in the Umeå region.

Oliver Solberg stormed into the WRC2 lead with fastest time in the opening show stage “Umeå Sprint” on Thursday evening and never looked back. After the first leg, the son of former FIA World Rally Champion Petter Solberg had already an advantage of roughly 30 seconds over the opposition. On Friday evening the Toksport WRT run Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 was even listed as third overall – a coup, no other WRC2 crew had pulled off in the history of the world championship after a proper day of rallying. “Third place in a Rally2 car is incredible and in my home rally it’s a bit of a dream,” Solberg commented.

During the seven stages of Saturday, Solberg/Edmondson extended their WRC2 lead to more than one minute. Although they couldn’t hold on to the impressive third place in the overall standings, the Swedish-British duo’s dominance in WRC2 was never threatened throughout the event’s longest day. „The lead is now so big, I just enjoy the driving,” Solberg revealed, who had already taken some risks out of his strategy.

With only three stages finishing off the second WRC round on Sunday, Oliver Solberg and Elliott Edmondson could have taken it even more easy. But just to make a point, the Toksport WRT crew started into the event’s final leg with another fastest WRC2 time and also won the very last test. At the finish, their margin over second placed Finns Sami Pajari/Enni Mätkönen was nearly 1:20 minutes. “Amazing. What a weekend,” Solberg beamed at the finish. “With so many people, so much atmosphere. Family and friends have been here. Winning like this is amazing.”

With the Sweden victory, Oliver Solberg takes over the joint overall WRC2 lead. He shares top position with Frenchman Yohan Rossel, who won the category at Rallye Monte-Carlo but didn’t compete in Sweden.

Sixth place in WRC2 went to Lauri Joona and Janni Hussi from Finland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2). Local heroes Isak Reiersen/Lucas Karlsson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) also made it into the WRC2 top 10 in eighth position. Victory in the WRC Masters Cup, reserved for drivers of 50 years and older, went to Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew Michał Sołowow/Maciej Baran from Poland.

After the tricky tarmac stages of Rallye Monte-Carlo and the frozen forest roads of Sweden the FIA World Rally Championship travels to the East African savannah. Safari Rally Kenya (28-31 March 2024) is next in the calendar.

Number of the rally: 129.1

For the WRC2 field special stage number 4 was the fastest. The surface consisted to nearly identical percentages of compact snow, ice and frozen gravel. Winners Oliver Solberg and co-driver Elliott Edmondson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) flew through the 28.25 kilometres "Floda" test with an average speed of 129.1 kph.

Rallye Sweden, 15-18 February 2024, Result WRC2

1 Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson (SWE/GBR), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, 2:38:09.1 hours

2 Sami Pajari/Enni Mälkönen (FIN/FIN), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +1:19.7 minutes

3 Georg Linnemäe/James Morgan (EST/GBR), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +1:22.2 minutes

4 Roope Korhonen/Anssi Viinikka (FIN/FIN), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +1:43.9 minutes

5 Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen (FIN/FIN), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +2:21.5 minutes

6 Lauri Joona/Janni Hussi (FIN/FIN), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +2:58.6 minutes

Standings WRC2/Drivers (after 2 of 13 rallies)

1 Yohan Rossel (FRA, Citroën), 25 points

Oliver Solberg (SWE, Škoda), 25 points

3 Pepe López (ESP, Škoda), 18 points

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Škoda crews at Rally Sweden

Oliver Solberg from Sweden and British co-driver Elliott Edmondson won WRC2 at Rally Sweden for Škoda Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT with a margin of more than one minute.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Sweden

Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Toksport WRT) were fastest WRC2 crew on eleven of the 18 stages of the FIA World Rally Championship's only full-snow event.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Sweden

Fan favourites – Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew Oliver Solberg (2nd from right) and co-driver Elliott Edmondson celebrates WRC2 victory at Rally Sweden.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Sweden

Finnish crew Lauri Joona/Janni Hussi (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team TGS Worldwide) came home sixth in WRC2.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Sweden

Michał Sołowow/Maciej Baran from Poland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Printsport) took maximum points in the WRC Masters Cup classification.

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. Mikkelsen became WRC2 Champion again in 2023 with team Toksport WRT, when the all-new Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 entered the scene. The Škoda Motorsport supported team Toksport WRT also won the WRC2 Teams' title four times in a row from 2020 to 2023.
- › 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.
- › effectively leverages existing potential in important growth markets such as India, North Africa, Vietnam and the ASEAN region.
- › currently offers its customers eleven passenger-car series: the Fabia, Scala, Octavia and Superb as well as the Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Enyaq, Enyaq Coupé, Slavia and Kushaq.
- › delivered over 866,000 vehicles to customers around the world in 2023.
- › 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 components such as MEB battery systems, engines and transmissions as part of the Volkswagen Group; these components are also used in vehicles of other Group brands.
- › operates at three sites in the Czech Republic; has additional production capacity in China, Slovakia and India primarily through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine with a local partner.
- › employs over 40,000 people globally and is active in around 100 markets.