

Rally Estonia: Škoda driver Robert Virves celebrates maiden WRC2 victory on home ground

- › **Sharing a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of Toksport WRT, Estonian pairing Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo dominates WRC2 at the eighth round of the FIA World Rally Championship.**
- › **Finnish Škoda crews Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen (TGS Worldwide) and Lauri Joona/Samu Vaaleri (MS Munaretto) also collect WRC2 points.**
- › **Former Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 driver Oliver Solberg scores his first WRC overall victory.**

Tartu (EST), 20 July 2025 – As expected, Rally Estonia was ruled by crews from Nordic countries. In WRC2, the top 6 positions feature drivers from Estonia or Finland. Victory went to Robert Virves and co-driver Jakko Viilo – the first ever WRC2 win for the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 pairing from Estonia.

Despite suffering from food poisoning, Robert Virves set the pace from the outset. The 25-year-old Estonian and co-driver, Jakko Viilo, recorded the fastest WRC2 time in shakedown and took the category lead after the very first stage. Winning seven of the eight special stages of the first leg, they built up a lead of 35.3 seconds over Georg Linnamäe/James Morgan. The third-placed crew was already more than one minute down. "There's no need for big changes to our Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 for tomorrow," Robert Virves said at the day's finish before seeing the doctor.

The next morning, Robert Virves was back at full strength. Now as the first WRC2 competitor on the road, the 2022 FIA World Rally Junior Champion had to work his way through the loose gravel behind the Rally1 cars. The result of the reduced grip on the lightning-fast stages was a less dominant day in terms of WRC2 stage wins. However, with some tweaks to their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2's set-up, Robert Virves and Jakko Viilo successfully managed their lead over Georg Linnamäe/James Morgan. Heading into Sunday's three stages, the gap between first and second place in WRC2 remained at 26.5 seconds.

The final leg comprised only three stages, totalling just a little over 60 kilometres of competition. However, it was far from a walk in the park for WRC2 leaders Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo. And the reason was not the rain that hit the Tartu area and made the stages even more slippery. In the day's first test, the Estonian pair received a ten-second penalty for a jump start. But, as Georg Linnamäe was struggling to adapt to the unfamiliar conditions, he could gain less than five seconds. One stage later, the Toksport WRT Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 overshot a junction. Heading into the 24.20-kilometre, rally-ending power stage, the lead of Robert Virves and Jakko Viilo was down to 14.5 seconds.

Undeterred, they gave it their all one last time and beat their rivals by 3.9 seconds on the power stage, bringing the final gap to 18.4 seconds: Robert Virves and Jakko Viilo had secured their very first WRC2 victory. They also won the WRC2 Challenger classification.

With Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo and Georg Linnamäe/James Morgan way out in front already after day one, a thrilling battle developed for third position in WRC2. In the mix: Finnish Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crews Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen (TGS Worldwide). They had to recover from a 10-second penalty due to a jump start and eventually finished fourth. Another Finnish Škoda crew, Lauri Joona/Samu Vaaleri (MS Munaretto), brought home sixth position in WRC2. Nikolay Gryazin and co-driver Konstantin Aleksandrov, among the pre-event favourites for the WRC2 top position, didn't reach the finish after damaging the suspension of their Toksport WRT run Škoda Fabia RS Rally2.

For Rally Estonia, current WRC2 leader Oliver Solberg swapped his usual Rally2 car for a top-class Rally1 machine. The Swede, who last season drove a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Toksport WRT to WRC2 second overall, celebrated his first overall victory in the FIA World Rally Championship. His direct rivals in the WRC2 overall standings didn't compete Rally Estonia at all. Consequently, Rally Estonia did not change the positions at the top of the category leaderboard. Englishman Gus Greensmith (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team RaceSeven) remains in third position, Roberto Daprà from Italy (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of Delta Rally Team) stays fourth overall.

Next on the FIA World Rally Championship calendar is another ultra-fast event: Rally Finland (31 July to 3 August 2025) is aptly nicknamed "The Gravel Grand Prix of Finland".

Number of the rally: 121.5

The soft gravel roads of Rally Estonia, with their long straights, allowed for very high average speeds. On "Kääriku", the 24.20-kilometre power stage, the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew of Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen posted the fastest WRC2 time, averaging 121.5 kph.

Rally Estonia (EST), 17-20 July 2025, Result WRC2

- 1 Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo (EST/EST), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, 2:45:18.5 hours**
- 2 Georg Linnamäe/James Morgan (EST/GBR), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +18.4 seconds
- 3 Roope Korhonen/Anssi Viinikka (FIN/FIN), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +49.4 seconds
- 4 Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen (FIN/FIN), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +52.7 seconds**
- 5 Romet Jürgenson/Siim Oja (EST/EST), Ford Fiesta Rally2, +1:11.5 minutes
- 6 Lauri Joona/Samu Vaaleri (FIN/FIN), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +1:36.0 minutes**

Standings WRC2/Drivers (after 8 of 14 rallies)

- 1 Oliver Solberg (SWE), Toyota, 85 points
- 2 Yohan Rossel (FRA), Citroën, 82 points
- 3 Gus Greensmith (GBR), Škoda, 57 points**
- 4 Roberto Dapra (ITA), Škoda, 49 points**

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Škoda crews at Rally Estonia

Leading from start to finish: Robert Virves and co-driver Jakko Viilo (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Toksport WRT) were never really challenged on the way to their first ever WRC2 victory.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Estonia

The WRC2 podium with winners Robert Virves (right) and Jakko Viilo in the middle. The Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew beat Georg Linnamäe/James Morgan (2nd) and Roope Korhonen/Anssi Viinikka (3rd).

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Estonia

Finnish crew Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team TGS Worldwide) were locked in a fight for third position in WRC2 at the beginning. They eventually finished fourth.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Estonia

Lauri Joona/Samu Vaaleri from Finland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team MS Munaretto) collected WRC2 points for sixth position.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Estonia

Dutchman Bernhard ten Brinke and British co-driver Tom Woodburn (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Wevers Sport) rounded up the top 10 of the WRC2 classification.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Estonia

Fabrizio Zaldivar from Paraguay and Italian co-driver Marcelo Der Ohannesian (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Toksport WRT) didn't compete for WRC2 points in Estonia but finished ninth in the RC2 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. In 2024, the WRC2 title fight was not decided until the season finale. Škoda driver Oliver Solberg of team Toksport WRT finished second overall.
- › 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 pursuing its Next Level – Škoda Strategy 2030
- › aims to be among the three best-selling brands in Europe by 2030, with attractive offers in entry-level segments and additional electric vehicles
- › is unlocking growth potential in key markets such as India, North Africa, Vietnam and the wider ASEAN region
- › currently offers 12 passenger-car series: Fabia, Scala, Octavia, Superb, Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Elroq, Enyaq, Slavia, Kylaq and Kushaq
- › delivered more than 926,000 vehicles to customers worldwide in 2024
- › has been part of the Volkswagen Group – one of the world's most successful car manufacturers – for over 30 years
- › belongs to the Brand Group CORE, the Volkswagen Group's alliance of volume brands established to drive joint growth and boost overall efficiency
- › independently develops and produces components such as MEB battery systems, engines and transmissions, including for other Group brands
- › operates three production plants in the Czech Republic and, largely through Group partnerships, has manufacturing capacities in China, Slovakia and India, as well as in Vietnam and Ukraine with local partners
- › employs around 40,000 people worldwide and operates in almost 100 markets