

Croatia Rally: European titles for Škoda crew Mikołaj Marczyk and Szymon Gospodarczyk*

- › **Third place saves Mikołaj Marczyk and Szymon Gospodarczyk (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) the FIA European Rally Championship in the drivers' and co-drivers' category*.**
- › **The title hopes of Italian Škoda crew Andrea Mabellini/Virginia Lenzi came to an end when they went off the road during the fourth special stage.**
- › **Estonians Robert Virves and Jakko Viilo (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) fought back to fifth place after a time loss due to an off-road excursion.**

Zagreb (CRO), 6 October 2025 – It was game, set and match for the Škoda crew of Mikołaj Marczyk and Szymon Gospodarczyk at the finale of the 2025 FIA European Rally Championship. Third place overall at the Croatia Rally (3–5 October 2025) was enough for the Polish pair to win the drivers' and co-drivers' titles*. Their main rivals Andrea Mabellini and Virginia Lenzi from Italy had to retire their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 after going off the road.

Rally Croatia, the finale of the 2025 FIA European Rally Championship (ERC), promised to be a tough fight for the title contenders. With only the seven best results out of eight rallies counting, the difference between first and second place in the overall standings was mathematically no more than two points before the start: the two Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crews of Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk from Poland, and Andrea Mabellini/Virginia Lenzi from Italy.

As always in the ERC, the fastest crew in the qualifying stage got to choose their starting position first. This right is especially important for a tarmac event like the Croatia Rally. Driving the stages before the other competitors means that the track is less polluted. Mikołaj Marczyk, who was the fastest qualifier, consequently opted for the first starting position. Andrea Mabellini, on the other hand, could only manage the eighth fastest time. "It was a disaster of a stage for me. I have to start seven positions behind Mikołaj," he admitted. "It would have been better to stay at home."

After the first three stages of the opening leg, Andrea Mabellini and Virginia Lenzi had climbed to fifth position. However, during the next stage, the Italian pair's hopes of winning the title came to an end. "After a crest, I lost the back of the car and touched a small patch of grass, which caused us to spin. There was a rock waiting which broke the radiator. The engine started to leak oil and we were unable to continue. That's the end of our dream of winning the ERC title," reported Andrea Mabellini.

Meanwhile, their title rivals Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk overshot a junction, dropping them to seventh place. By the time they reached the leg's finish on Saturday evening, they had climbed to sixth position. Another Škoda crew, Estonians Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo, were listed in second place behind the Irish title contenders, Jon Armstrong/Shane Byrne. Also among the top runners were Mille Johansson and co-driver, Johan Grönvall from Sweden, who reached the end of the leg in fourth place with their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2.

On Sunday morning, Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk moved up to third place after Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo went off the road in heavy rain. The Estonians fought back to fifth position with a string of fast stage times until the finish. Meanwhile, the battle for the title went down to the wire between the Škoda crew from Poland and their Irish rivals, Jon Armstrong and Shane Byrne. The power stage had to decide the outcome. The second running of the 'Zagorska Sela – Kumrovec' stage offered valuable extra points to the five fastest drivers (5–4–3–2–1).

Ultimately, winning both the rally and the power stage was not enough for Jon Armstrong/Shane Byrne to overtake Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk in the ERC overall standings. By finishing in third place, the Polish duo collected enough points to stay ahead of their Irish rivals. Mikołaj Marczyk and Szymon Gospodarczyk were crowned 2025 FIA European Rally Champions of their respective categories. "It was a tough day, but a dream came true. Thanks to everyone who has supported me for so many years," beamed Mikołaj Marczyk.

Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo finished the final round of the 2025 ERC season in fifth place followed by another Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew, Lauri Joona/Kristian Temonen from Finland.

Croatia Rally was the last ERC round, where participating teams could score in the Škoda Motorsport Bonus Programme. Thanks to Mikołaj Marczyk's success, his team Topp Cars has won the top prize. The Racing Factory, the team of Andrea Mabellini, will get the reward for their drivers' third position overall.

Number of the rally: 1

For the first time, Škoda crew Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk became FIA European Rally Champions.

Croatia Rally (CRO), 3-5 October 2025, Result ERC

- 1 Jon Armstrong/Shane Byrne (IRL/IRL), Ford Fiesta Mk II Rally2, 1:50:57.4 hours
- 2 Mads Østberg /Lorcan Moore (NOR/IRL), Citroën C3 Rally2, +45.7 seconds
- 3 Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk (POL/POL), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +1:46.1 minutes**
- 4 Romet Jürgenson/Oja Siim (EST/EST), Ford Fiesta Mk II Rally2, +2:47.3 minutes
- 5 Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo (EST/EST), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +3:25.7 minutes**
- 6 Lauri Joona/Kristian Temonen (FIN/FIN), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +3:58.6 minutes**

Final Standings ERC/Drivers*

- 1 Mikołaj Marczyk (POL), Škoda, 154 points**
- 2 Jon Armstrong (IRL), Ford, 148 points
- 3 Andrea Mabellini (ITA), Škoda, 131 points**
- 4 Mads Østberg (NOR), Citroën, 104 points
- 5 Roope Korhonen (FIN), Toyota, 60 points
- 6 Isak Reiersen (SWE), Škoda, 60 points**

** subject to the final confirmation of the results by the FIA*

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Škoda crews at Croatia Rally

Mikołaj Marczyk and co-driver Szymon Gospodarczyk (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Topp Cars) mastered the difficult conditions and finished the season's finale in third position.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Croatia Rally

Škoda crew Mikołaj Marczyk and co-driver Szymon Gospodarczyk from Poland won the 2025 FIA European Rally Championship.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Croatia Rally

"A dream came true."

Newly crowned FIA European Rally Champion Mikołaj Marczyk (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2).

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Croatia Rally

Estonians Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) finished fifth overall.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Croatia Rally

A late charge saw Finns Lauri Joona/Kristian Temonen (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) climb to sixth position at the finish.

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