

Rally Japan: Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew aims for the WRC2 Challenger overall lead

- › At the 2025 FIA World Rally Championship's penultimate round, Nikolay Gryazin/Konstantin Aleksandrov are among the favourites for WRC2 Challenger victory
- › Also competing with a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, Gus Greensmith and co-driver Jonas Andersson chase a top result in the WRC2 category
- › Three times FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Champion Gaurav Gill from India makes a return to the world series at the wheel of a Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo
- › Three Japanese Škoda crews want to shine in front of their home crowd

Mladá Boleslav, 5 November 2025 – There are just two events left in the 2025 FIA World Rally Championship. And the fight for the WRC2 Challenger overall victory is still wide open. Of the three Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crews who could win this prestigious title, only Nikolay Gryazin and Konstantin Aleksandrov will compete in Rally Japan (6–9 November 2025). Three weeks before the season finale in Saudi Arabia, they could take the overall lead in the WRC2 Challenger drivers' and co-drivers' standings respectively.

Following Rally Islas Canarias and the recent Central European Rally, Rally Japan is the third round of this year's FIA World Rally Championship to be held entirely on asphalt. Nikolay Gryazin and Konstantin Aleksandrov of Toksport WRT are fully committed to scoring maximum WRC2 Challenger points. Currently ranked third and second overall respectively in the drivers' and co-drivers' standings, the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew are well placed to win both titles.

The Bulgarian-Kyrgyz pairing's entry also includes WRC2. "We won WRC2 at Rally Japan last year and came second in 2023. With the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, we have the right car to finish on the podium again. With our main rivals for the WRC2 Challenger titles not competing this time, we are definitely aiming to take the lead in the category," emphasises Nikolay Gryazin. Both Nikolay Gryazin and Konstantin Aleksandrov are currently listed 13 points behind the respective leaders. A WRC2 Challenger victory in Japan would earn both of them another 25 points. Even a second-place finish, worth 17 points, would put them in the lead of the drivers' and co-drivers' standings.

Four of their main rivals will not compete in Japan: Škoda crews Roberto Daprà/Luca Guglielmetti from Italy and Robert Virves/Jakko Viilo from Estonia skip the event. Also, current leaders Roope Korhonen/Anssi Viinikka and Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak are not on the entry list. According to the regulations, each of the top 6 of the

WRC2 Challenger drivers' and co-drivers' standings can score at Rally Saudi Arabia. Therefore, both WRC2 Challenger titles will be decided at the season's finale.

Moving on to the WRC2 category, Gus Greensmith and co-driver Jonas Andersson are aiming for their second win of the season. In March, the British-Swedish pair drove a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team RaceSeven to victory in the WRC2 category at the Safari Rally Kenya. Other Škoda crews to watch are Hiroki Arai/Hiroki Tachikui, Takuma Kamada/Yuichi Matsumoto and Osamu Fukunaga/Misako Saida, all from Japan. Back in the world series is Gaurav Gill from India. Not registered to score in WRC2, the 2013, 2016 and 2017 FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Champion shares a Škoda Fabia Rally2 evo with French co-driver Florian Barral.

The Forum8 Rally Japan, as the event is officially called, covers 20 special stages totalling 305.34 kilometres on winding, sometimes very narrow, asphalt roads. The event is based in Toyota City on Japan's main island of Honshu. The action kicks off on Thursday (6 November) with a 2.75-kilometre super stage inside Kuragaike Park. On Friday, competitors have to tackle six special stages totalling 108.30 kilometres. On Saturday, competitors face seven special stages totalling 121.91 kilometres. Sunday offers a further six stages totalling 72.38 kilometres. The winner is expected to be on the podium at 16h40 local time (8h40 CEST).

Did you know, that...

...the Rally Japan was already part of the FIA World Rally Championship from 2004 to 2010, albeit held in the north of the country on gravel stages?

...the current format of Rally Japan was established in 2022 with the service park located in Toyota City in Aichi Prefecture, a 300 kilometres road trip to the west of Tokyo?

Standings WRC2 Challenger/Drivers (after 12 of 14 rallies)

- 1 Roope Korhonen (FIN), Toyota, 90 points
- 2 Roberto Daprà (ITA), Škoda, 86 points**
- 3 Nikolay Gryazin (BUL), Škoda, 77 points**
- 4 Robert Virves (EST), Škoda, 75 points**
- 5 Jan Solans (ESP), Toyota, 72 points
- 6 Kajetan Kajetanowicz (POL), Toyota, 72 points

Standings WRC2 Challenger/Co-Drivers (after 12 of 14 rallies)

- 1 Anssi Viinikka (FIN), Toyota, 90 points
- 2 Konstantin Aleksandrov (KGZ), Škoda, 77 points**
- 3 Jakko Viilo (EST), Škoda, 75 points**
- 4 Rodrigo Sanjuán (ESP), Toyota, 72 points
- 5 Maciej Szczepaniak (POL), Toyota, 72 points
- 6 Luca Guglielmetti (ITA), Škoda, 71 points**

Standings WRC2/Teams (after 12 of 14 rallies)

- 1 Toksport WRT, Škoda, 198 points**
- 2 PH Sport, Citroën, 178 points
- 3 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT NG, Toyota, 89 points
- 4 Sarrazin Motorsport-Iron Lynx, Citroën, 64 points

2025 FIA World Rally Championship

Rallye Monte-Carlo	22-26 January
Rally Sweden	12-16 February
Safari Rally Kenya	20-23 March
Rally Islas Canarias (ESP)	24-27 April
Rally de Portugal	15-18 May
Rally Italia Sardegna	5-8 June
Acropolis Rally Greece	26-29 June
Rally Estonia	17-20 July
Rally Finland	31 July-3 August
Rally del Paraguay	28-31 August
Rally Chile Bio Bío	11-14 September
Central European Rally (CZE/AUT/DEU)	16-19 October
Rally Japan	6-9 November
Rally Saudi Arabia	26-29 November

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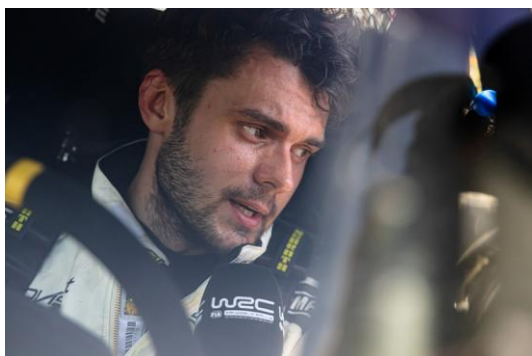
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Škoda crews at Rally Japan

Toksport WRT's Nikolay Gryazin/Konstantin Aleksandrov (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) are among the favourites for WRC2 and WRC2 Challenger victory.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Japan

Nikolay Gryazin (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team Toksport WRT) wants to take the lead in the WRC2 Challenger standings.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rally Japan

Gus Greensmith and Jonas Andersson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team RaceSeven) are chasing their second WRC2 victory of the season.

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 steering through the new decade with the Next Level Škoda Strategy;
- › aims to become one of the top three best-selling brands in Europe by the end of the decade by offering its customers the best of both worlds through a range of attractive BEV, hybrid & ICE products;
- › effectively exploits the potential in important growth markets such as India, Vietnam and the ASEAN region;
- › currently offers customers 12 passenger car model ranges: 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 more than 30 years;
- › is part of Brand Group CORE, an organisational merger of the Volkswagen Group's volume brands, with the aim of achieving joint growth and significantly increasing the overall efficiency of all five volume brands;
- › independently develops and produces components such as MEB battery systems, engines and transmissions for other Volkswagen Group brands;
- › operates three production plants in the Czech Republic; has production capacities in China, Slovakia and India, mostly through group partnerships, as well as in Vietnam and Ukraine in cooperation with a local partner;
- › employs around 40,000 people worldwide and is active in almost 100 markets.