

Swedish ERC round Royal Rally of Scandinavia: Three Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crews on the podium

- › **Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen win second event of FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) from Mārtiņš Sesks/Francis Renārs and Isak Reiersen/Stefan Gustavsson.**
- › **Seven Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crews finish inside the top 10.**
- › **Three Škoda drivers on top of the overall standings: José Antonio Suárez from Spain and Mikko Heikkilä from Finland share the lead, Mārtiņš Sesks from Latvia holds third place.**

Karlstad (SWE), 25 May 2026 – Three crews competing with Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 sprayed champagne on the podium of the Royal Rally of Scandinavia, second round of the FIA European Rally Championship. Mikko Heikkilä and co-driver Kristian Temonen from Finland took the victory for team TGS Worldwide for the very first time. Second place went to Team MRF Tyres' Mārtiņš Sesks/Renārs Francis from Latvia. Swedish duo Isak Reiersen/Stefan Gustavsson of team JC Raceteknik secured the third position at their home event.

The second ERC round was predominantly run on extremely fast stages known from the Karlstad-based era of Rally Sweden until 2020. However, the May date meant that the competitors faced gravel instead of the snow and ice that were customary for the FIA World Rally Championship winter event in the area. But the speed didn't change. Winners Mikko Heikkilä and Kristian Temonen powered their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 through the forests of Värmland at an average speed of 122.4 kph.

It was a tough fight for the Finnish crew of team TGS Worldwide. They held only third position after the first leg. Mārtiņš Sesks and co-driver Renārs Francis of Team MRF Tyres were positioned fourth on Saturday evening. The Latvians survived a massive spin, when Mārtiņš Sesks managed to keep the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 on the road. They were followed by local Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew Isak Reiersen and Stefan Gustavsson of team JC Raceteknik.

On Sunday morning, the battle of the Finns continued with Teemu Suninen defending second place ahead of Mikko Heikkilä. However, the flat-out stages took their toll: During SS12, Jaspas Vaher/Rait Jansen had to retire after an accident. As a result, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew Teemu Suninen and co-driver Antti Haapala of team The Racing Factory – Motorsport Solutions moved into the top spot. But only for a short time. Three stages later in a fast left-hander, the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 went off the road – the damage to the car was too severe to continue.

While new leaders Mikko Heikkilä and co-driver Kristian Temonen could afford to back off a little bit at that point, the fierce fight between Mārtiņš Sesks/Renārs Francis and Isak Reiersen/Stefan Gustavsson continued. They had repeatedly swapped positions throughout the whole of Saturday and Sunday morning. They went into the final power stage with a mere 4.2-second gap between them. However, Mārtiņš Sesks kept his cool and defended second place.

Four more Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crews finished inside the top 10: Simone Tempestini/Francesca Maria Maior in fifth, Mikołaj Marczyk/Daniel Dymurski in seventh, Brandon Semenuk/Keaton Williams in ninth and Fabrizio Zaldívar/Marcelo Der Ohannesian in tenth position.

"I was trying to get this for a long time," Mikko Heikkilä commented on his first ERC victory. "Finally, my race engineer can see me happy. He told me to look happier, and I told him that I would be when I won." Heikkilä now shares the lead in the overall standings with José Antonio Suárez. The Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 driver from Spain won the season-opening Andalusia Rally-Sierra Morena – Córdoba World Heritage Site. Mārtiņš Sesks holds third position in the drivers' ranking.

Following the gravel event Royal Rally of Scandinavia, the FIA European Rally Championship returns to tarmac. The next round is the Rally di Roma Capitale in Italy, which takes place from 3rd to 5th July 2026.

Number of the rally: 12

Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crews won twelve of the 16 stages. These victories went to Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen (4), Teemu Suninen/Antti Haapala (4) and Benjamin Korhola/Patric Öhman (1), all from Finland, as well as to Mārtiņš Sesks/ Renārs Francis (2) from Latvia and locals Isak Reiersen/Stefan Gustavsson (1).

Royal Rally of Scandinavia (SWE), 22-24 May 2026, 2nd round of the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC)

- 1 Mikko Heikkilä/Kristian Temonen (FIN/FIN), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, 1:31.07.8 hours**
- 2 Mārtiņš Sesks/ Renārs Francis (LVA/LVA), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +15.7 seconds**
- 3 Isak Reiersen/Stefan Gustavsson (SWE/SWE), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +31.4 seconds**
- 4 Calle Carlberg/Jørgen Eriksen, (SWE/NOR), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +1.18.6 minutes
- 5 Simone Tempestini/Francesca Maria Maior (ROM/ROM), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +1.55.1 minutes**
- 6 Eyvind Brynildsen/Anders Fredriksson, (NOR/SWE), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +2.18.2 minutes
- 7 Mikołaj Marczyk/Daniel Dymurski (POL/POL), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +2.26.4 minutes**
- 8 Joosep Ralf Nõgene/Aleks Lesk (EST/EST), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +2.32.1 minutes

9 Brandon Semenuk/Keaton Williams (CAN/GBR), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +2.33.2 minutes
10 Fabrizio Zaldívar/Marcelo Der Ohannesian (PAR/ITA), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +2.36.9 minutes

Standings Drivers (after 2 of 7 events)

- 1 José Antonio Suárez (ESP), Škoda, 30 points**
- 2 Mikko Heikkilä (FIN), Škoda, 30 points**
- 3 Mārtiņš Sesks (LVA), Škoda, 28 points**
- 4 Ivan Ares (ESP), Toyota, 27 points**
- 5 Teemu Suninen (FIN), Škoda, 23 points**

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Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia

Mikko Heikkilä and co-driver Kristian Temonen from Finland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team TGS Worldwide) celebrated their first victory in the FIA European Rally Championship.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia

Latvians Mārtiņš Sesks/ Renārs Francis jump their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of Team MRF Tyres at the famous “Colin's Crest”.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia

In third place overall, Isak Reiersen and Stefan Gustavsson (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of team JC Raceteknik) took the honours of being best-placed Swedish crew.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia

Full Škoda podium with (from left) second-placed Mārtiņš Sesks and Renārs Francis, winners Kristian Temonen and Mikko Heikkilä, third-placed Isak Reiersen and Stefan Gustavsson.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia

Simone Tempestini and co-driver Francesca Maria Maior from Romania (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) finished fifth.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia
“This is always the hardest rally for our package,” defending FIA European Rally Champion Mikołaj Marczyk said after finishing seventh together with fellow Polish co-driver Daniel Dymurski.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia
Canadian Brandon Semenuk and British navigator Keaton Williams brought their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 home in ninth position.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Royal Rally of Scandinavia
Regulars in the FIA World Rally Championship, Fabrizio Zaldívar from Paraguay and Italian co-driver Marcelo Der Ohannesian (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) collected seven ERC points by finishing tenth overall.

Source: Škoda Auto

Škoda Motorsport

- › Škoda celebrates 125 years of Motorsport since the first efforts in 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) and 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 three times in 2020, 2022 and 2023. In 2025 Toksport WRT took another WRC2 Teams' title and Nikolay Gryazin/Konstantin Aleksandrov of Toksport WRT become WRC2 Challenger drivers' and co-drivers' champions respectively.

- › 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 1,040,000 vehicles to customers worldwide in 2025;
- › 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 Slovakia, Kazakhstan 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.