

Rali Ceredigion: Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew wins FIA European Rally Championship 2026*

- › Second place at the Welsh ERC round was enough for Teemu Suninen and Antti Haapala from Finland to secure the drivers' and co-drivers' title with one event still to go*.
- › With Mikołaj Marczyk and Szymon Gospodarczyk from Poland in third position, another Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew finished on the podium.
- › With fourth place overall, Max McRae/Cameron Fair (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) win the British Rally Championship classification.

Aberystwyth (GBR), 7 September 2026 – Rali Ceredigion was a new experience for Teemu Suninen and co-driver Antti Haapala. However, the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew from Finland delivered a stellar performance. By finishing second overall and winning the Power Stage, they amassed enough points to be crowned FIA European Rally Drivers' and Co-Drivers' Champions respectively*.

"It is my first visit to the Welsh tarmac. Considering the situation in the FIA European Championship standings, we don't need to win. All I want are some good points," said Teemu Suninen before the start. Additionally, the 32-year-old didn't feel entirely well at that point. In contrast, Andrea Mabellini/Virginia Lenzi, the Finns' main rivals in the championship, knew Rali Ceredigion from two previous appearances.

However, neither strategy nor illness prevented Teemu Suninen/Antti Haapala from powering The Racing Factory's Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 through the Qualifying Stage with the fastest time. This gave the ERC points leaders the advantage of starting first and enjoying roads less polluted from corner cutting.

The rally started with two stages on the narrow streets of Aberystwyth. "It feels a little bit like the Rallye Monte-Carlo," joked Teemu Suninen. Two more stages in the dark followed. The Finnish pairing finished the Friday leg with a lead of 0.9 seconds. Reigning FIA European Rally Champions Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk in third position and Jakub Matulka/Damian Syty in fourth underlined the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2's prowess on tarmac stages.

On Saturday morning, Teemu Suninen/Antti Haapala remained among the frontrunners, even though they had to relinquish the lead to eventual winners Kris Meeke/Noel O'Sullivan Jr. The stages were particularly challenging due to the rain and constantly changing grip. "It's tempting to push at the same level as Kris. But I realised that we have the pace to match, not to catch," admitted Teemu Suninen, who was still not fully fit. A spin, which luckily had no

consequences other than the loss of a few seconds, didn't help either. After twelve stages, Teemu Suninen/Antti Haapala trailed the leaders by 20.5 seconds.

At the end of the Saturday leg, Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk and Jakub Matulka/Damian Syty still held third and fourth position respectively. Max McRae, nephew of the legendary Colin McRae, and co-driver Cameron Fair followed in a Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 from Kowax DST Racing.

Sunday could have ended in disaster for Teemu Suninen and Antti Haapala. They started the day with the fastest stage time. However, 8.4 kilometres into SS14, they spun in a tight right-hand corner and hit a roadside bank. Their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 was damaged at the front. "Not ideal, but we'll try to carry on," said Teemu Suninen. He nudged the car to the service, where The Racing Factory's mechanics went to work. Thirty minutes later, the Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 was as good as new.

Polish pairing Jakub Matulka/Damian Syty were less fortunate. They escaped from a roll without any injuries. But their ORLEN Team Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 couldn't go any further. Meanwhile, team mates Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk didn't take unnecessary risks and managed third place until the finish. Max McRae/Cameron Fair climbed one position during Sunday and came home fourth overall as well as best-placed crew registered for the British Rally Championship.

But for Teemu Suninen and co-driver Antti Haapala a lot was at stake at the Power Stage. Finishing second would earn them valuable championship points. But a fastest time across the rally-ending stage would mean an additional five points and winning both titles ahead of schedule. The Finns gave their team members, who were watching the live broadcast on Rally TV, a hard time. They chose "maximum attack", powered their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 through the final 11.26 kilometres on the limit – and won the stage. "Amazing! On Wednesday, I couldn't believe we could be on this pace because I was quite sick. In the end, we did a good job on super tricky conditions on tarmac," Teemu Suninen beamed at the finish line.

This result caps a season characterised by consistency and competitiveness on a surface not traditionally favoured by Finnish rally drivers: tarmac. Teemu Suninen and Antti Haapala secured their maiden ERC victory on the asphalt stages of Rally Poland, going on to achieve three further second-place finishes on the "black stuff" at Rally di Roma Capitale, Barum Czech Rally Zlín and finally Rali Ceredigion. Teemu Suninen and Antti Haapala are the first FIA European Rally Champions from Finland since Škoda crew Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm achieved this success back in 2014.

The Rally Six Cities North of Portugal brings the 2026 FIA European Rally Championship to a close from 23rd to 25th October.

Number of the rally: 29

Second position overall and the Power Stage win earned Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew Teemu Suninen/Antti Haapala 29 points – enough to win the FIA European Rally Championship with one round still to go.

** Subject to confirmation of the results by the FIA*

**Result Rali Ceredigion (GBR), 4-6 September 2026,
6th round of the FIA European Rally Championship**

- 1 Kris Meeke/Noel O'Sullivan Junior, (GBR/IRL), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, 1:29:45.3 hours
- 2 Teemu Suninen/Antti Haapala (FIN/FIN), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +38.6 seconds**
- 3 Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk (POL/POL), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +1:03.4 minutes**
- 4 Max McRae/Cameron Fair (GBR/GBR), Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, +1:43.8 minutes**
- 5 Meirion Evans/Dale Furniss (GBR/GBR), Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, +1:51.2 minutes
- 6 Andrea Mabellini/Virginia Lenzi (ITA/ITA), Lancia Ypsilon Rally2 HF Integrale, +2:20.1 minutes

Standings ERC/Drivers (after 6 of 7 events)

- 1 Teemu Suninen (FIN), Škoda, 137 points**
- 2 Andrea Mabellini (ITA), Lancia, 98 points
- 3 Mikołaj Marczyk (POL), Škoda, 92 points**
- 4 Jakub Matulka (POL), Škoda, 53 points**
- 5 Simone Tempestini (ROU), Škoda, 52 points**

Contact**Jan Hrbek**

Communications Motorsport

P +420 730 867 534

jan.hrbek@skoda-auto.cz

<http://skoda-motorsport.com>

Škoda Motorsport:

Facebook



YouTube



X

Media images:



Škoda crews at Rali Ceredigion

Teemu Suninen/Antti Haapala from Finland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 from team The Racing Factory Motorsport Solutions) finished the penultimate round of the FIA European Rally Championship second overall.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rali Ceredigion

Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 crew Teemu Suninen and co-driver Antti Haapala are the first FIA European Rally Champions from Finland in twelve years.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rali Ceredigion

Defending FIA European Rally Champions Mikołaj Marczyk/Szymon Gospodarczyk from Poland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 of ORLEN Team) are currently third in the ERC overall standings.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rali Ceredigion

Max McRae/Cameron Fair brought their Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 home in fourth position overall, at the same time securing victory in the British Rally Championship classification.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rali Ceredigion

Simone Tempestini and co-driver Francesca Maria Maior (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 from Team MRF Tyres) finished in eighth position.

Source: Škoda Auto



Škoda crews at Rali Ceredigion

Jakub Matulka/Damian Syty from Poland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 from ORLEN Team) were among the frontrunners, but had to retire after an accident.

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 became 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 14 passenger car model ranges: Fabia, Scala, Octavia, Superb, Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Epiq, Elroq, Enyaq, Peaq, 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 Spain, 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.