

## Press release

26 June 2013 – no. 7 – ADAC Rallye Deutschland (22 to 25 August 2013)

### **“I Dream of Winning my Class at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland”**

- Interview with the rising German rally driver Sepp Wiegand

Munich/Trier, 26 June 2013 – He is young, fast and successful – his name is Sepp Wiegand. The 22-year-old rally racer from the Ore Mountains region in Saxony is touted as the greatest German rally talent around. Walter Röhrl himself thinks highly of him and for much longer than the ŠKODA driver's astounding Rally Monte Carlo win of the WRC-2 category in January 2013 and place eight in the overall standings. In his first “Monte”, the young gun was at eye level with the world's best. Three WRC rallies and two podium places later, the fifth-placed in the WRC-2 standings looks forward to the ADAC Rallye Deutschland (22 to 25 August 2013). In his interview he spoke of his preparations and the importance of a “home game”.

#### **Mr Wiegand, how do you prepare for the ADAC Rallye Deutschland?**

Sepp Wiegand: “Basically, preparing for the ADAC Rallye Deutschland is not much different from preparing for any other WRC rally. With the exception maybe that I still have some of my own footage from last year's practice. I will have a very close look at this on-board footage this year. I do not have this option at other rallies since the ADAC Rallye Deutschland is the only one I have been in before.”

*(Note: In 2012, Sepp Wiegand did the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC) in a ŠKODA. He was on his way to the top ten at the 2012 ADAC Rallye Deutschland but had to give up due to suspension failure near the end of the rally.)*

#### **In your view, what are the particularities of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland?**

Sepp Wiegand: “For me, the special stages in the vineyards make the ADAC Rallye Deutschland so special. The speeds are quite high in places and the roads are narrow and tortuous, going up-hill or down through the vines. So there is no room for error. And they are often lined with concrete or stone walls on one side and steep hillsides on the other. One little mistake can do you in. Another particular at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland is the pavement. I am not aware of any other rally where the asphalt is like here. When you are cutting through a turn it can get extremely slippery which is a major challenge for your concentration. Also, it is quite hard to memorise the itinerary in the vineyards since many places look so much alike. So the vineyard stages of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland especially are very taxing on the drivers and co-drivers as well as the cars.”

#### **What are your goals for the German WRC event?**

Sepp Wiegand: “Of course, I dream of winning my class at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. I must be quite an experience to win such an important event in one's own country with all the German fans watching. But the road there is hard. We want to find a fast but safe pace. We want the sort of mix that allows you to finish the rally and drive some really good times. And then we'll see where that takes us. We will certainly do our best.”

#### **How important is the advantage of the “home game”? Is there something like a “home game” in rally racing at all?**

Sepp Wiegand: “It is important to have a “home rally”. But I would not want to say that I am the “local hero” at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. After all, home for me is some 600 kilometres away from Trier. Insofar as I know the itinerary better than someone who has never driven here, I might have a small advantage. I have raced the ADAC Rallye Deutschland twice already, but each time in a completely different car: a 170 hp front drive in 2011 and a 270 hp ŠKODA Fabia S2000 in 2012.”

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*(Note: In 2011, Sepp Wiegand gave his ADAC Rallye Deutschland debut in the WRC Academy. In a Ford Fiesta R2, he came in seventh.)*

“But actually – if I may say so – my advantage is not that big. Compared to the two previous years, there are two new special stages, the itinerary was changed and there is one stage we drive from the other end. Also, I will have another co-driver, Frank Christian. I look forward with excitement to the driver presentation in front of the Cologne cathedral. I am certain that will be a great experience. And I am hopeful that the fans will cheer the German competitors even louder than the others. That would be a nice bit of extra motivation for the 16 special stages ahead.”

### What is your typical day during a rally?

Sepp Wiegand: “That changes from rally to rally. But one thing applies to all WRC rallies: your days will be very long. And they start even before the actual fight for points and standings in the special stages. Take the recce, for instance. You are often required to be out there on the rally at seven in the morning and your day will usually not be over until after midnight when we have to edit our recce notes at the hotel.”

*(Note: At the ADAC Rallye Deutschland, the recce, or reconnaissance run during which the crews write up their “recce notes”, is scheduled from 19 to 21 August 2013. The actual rally starts with the driver presentation at the Cologne cathedral on 22 August 2013.)*

“Once the rally starts, it stays much the same, except that the start in the morning varies from rally to rally. At the Rally Sweden, my alarm clock went off at 4:15 in the morning. The evenings are very long as well as we look at practice videos from the special stages in order to prepare for the next day.”

### Let us end with a question about talent promotion: What would you tell young talent who want to get into rally racing?

Sepp Wiegand: “Be ambitious and passionate! Next to a knack for driving that is probably the most important prerequisite. But to get a foothold in rally racing, a few other things must fall into place as well: For instance, you need support from your family or other people who believe in you and who drive you forward. Luckily, there are very good structures for taking care of this in German motor sport, for instance the ADAC Stiftung Sport foundation. Sebastian Vettel was also on the roster of the ADAC Stiftung Sport. If you are planning a career in motor sport, the foundation is the right place for you.

### About Sepp Wiegand

Sepp Wiegand was born on 9 January 1991 and his rally gene was probably innate. His father, Carsten Wiegand – a motor sport veteran of 30 years – took the boy to rally practice on the back seat when Sepp was only three years old. At the age of seven, the youngster from the town of Zwönitz in Saxony's Ore Mountains took up motor bike riding. In 2009, he came in seventh with the German juniors' team in the International Six Days Enduro. In 2010, now a trained auto mechanic, he switched to rally racing and scored four class wins in regional rallies from the get-go. After winning the 2011 ADAC Rallye Junior Cup and finishing second in the ADAC Rallye Masters and after first international experiences in the WRC Academy, he started for ŠKODA AUTO Deutschland in the 2012 Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), finishing fourth in the overall standings. In the running 2013 season, he starts in the WRC-2 World Championship in a ŠKODA Fabia S2000.

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### **Tickets to the ADAC Rallye Deutschland:**

The German “flat rate” for rally fans: Five days of unadulterated rallying, including access to each and every spectator area at the Shakedown and every Special Stage. The passes also grant access to the Service Park, where the fans can watch the mechanics at work and meet the rally drivers. They also include a spectator map covering all essential information and showing the best viewing spots, a pass lanyard and an ADAC Rallye Deutschland decal. The passes are available for €69.00 (€64.00 for ADAC members) + shipping through the Ticket Shop at [www.adac-rallye-deutschland.de](http://www.adac-rallye-deutschland.de). Call the ticket hotline at: +49 (0)261 13 03 66. Tickets for one or the other Special Stage only are available starting at €15.00.

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