



PRESS RELEASE No 17

Almost 150 crews are coming to Barum rally

The full list of the competing crews for the 45th Barum Czech Rally Zlín numbers 143 crews from 26 countries. The incoming entries swamped the secretariat in the last couple days before the deadline. Among the front-runners for the title is a three times winner of the Barum rally and a Škoda Motorsport factory driver Jan Kopecký who won Asia-Pacific Rally Championship and this year he seems to be unstoppable in winning his third Czech title. Six drivers out of the top ten of the ERC will be seen in the Czech Republic. 90 crews will be competing within the European championship and out of them 45 will be doing their best to get points to the ERC. Fans will see 12 vehicles of the R5 category and 11 vehicles Super 2000 category. Within the Czech Championship five WRC vehicles will be here as well.

Aside from Kopecký, there are two drivers who fight tooth and nail for the victory in European Rally Championship. Irish driver Craig Breen ((Peugeot 208 T16) and Polish driver Kajetan Kajetanowicz (Ford Fiesta R5) will be trying to steal precious seconds from one another. Other favorites are Russian driver with Belarusian license Alexey Luyanuk (Ford Fiesta R5) who won Estonia Rally, which is an event within the European Championship, then French Robert Consani (Citroën DS3 R5), German Sepp Wiegand (Škoda Fabia S2000), Dutch driver Hermen Kobus (Škoda Fabia R5), Estonian Raul Jeets (Ford Fiesta R5), French Charles Martin (Peugeot 208 T16) or Austrian Hermann Neubauer (Ford Fiesta S2000).

Moreover, the Czech drivers are also among the favorites. Last year's winner and Czech Rally Championship defending champion Václav Pech (Mini John Cooper Works S2000) will not make it easy for the foreign drivers and the same can be expected from Tomáš Kostka, Jaromír Tarabus (both Škoda Fabia R5), Roman Odložilík (Ford Fiesta R5) and Pavel Valoušek (Škoda Fabia S2000). Another Czech drivers who are aspiring to reach the top ten are Antonín Tlust'ák, Jan Černý, Jan Jelínek, Martin Vlček (all Škoda Fabia S2000) or Miroslav Jakeš (Citroën DS3 R5). In the category of production cars ERC 2 the leading driver Vojtěch Štajf (Subaru Impreza STi) will be striving to increase his lead over Lithuanian driver Dominykas Butvilas (Subaru Impreza STi) and Hungarian Dávid Botka. However, the Czech drivers Martin Březík, Jan Votava (both Mitsubishi Lancer EVO IX), Jaroslav Szeja and Václav Kopáček (both Subaru Impreza STi) will not take a back seat.

Barum Rally will be the last event in FIA ERC Junior Championship with R2 cars. Swedish Emil Bergkvist, already a winner of the ERC Junior Championship, (Opel Adam R2) is coming followed by the fast Latvian driver Ralfs Sirmacis, Norwegian Steve Rokland or British Chris Ingram (all Peugeot 208 R2). Also the Czech drivers like Egon Smékal, Ondřej Bisaha (both Citroën DS3 R3T), Václav Dunovský, Tomáš Pospíšilík (both Peugeot 208 R2), Patrik Rujbr (Renault Clio R3T) and others will be fighting for the podium. The starting field is jazzed up by the female rally drivers. Fans can see Ukrainian model driving with Finnish license Inessa Tushkanova, Bulgarian Ekaterina Stratieva or the Czech female singer and actress Olga Lounová (all Mitsubishi Lancer EVO IX).

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INFORMATION