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Egon Smékal to repeat last year's wonderful performance

Egon Smékal is a Czech leading driver in the two-wheel drive category who will do his best to repeat his last year's wonderful performance at Barum Czech Rally Zlín. He won the Czech title in the two-wheel drive category last year and despite only occasionally competing in rally sprint races he managed to win the silver medal. Last Barum rally he finished on 16th place in overall classification and second in the front-wheel drive vehicles category. **“Last season was great, we won the first two races but then we were dealing with technical problems. Later, we were trying to catch up. Luckily, the end of season went well for us and we won the title,”** Egon Smékal summarized the last season.

This season is in its second half but the Zlín-born driver is not happy about its progress due to prolonged technical problems on his car. **“This season's beginning was very good for us. We won Šumava rally and stayed strong during the first leg at Český Krumlov rally. But then a technical issue hit us. It was probably the left front silencer which led to an ugly accident and that ruined our chances for a good result,”** said the 45-year-old driver. This accident negatively affected the following rally in Hustopeče as there was not enough time for a thorough repair but still the car was more or less rally-fit. Then the problems were piling up, namely with the gearbox. However, the next races suggested that his team managed to fix the problems. **“We fixed the car and even did some testing which led to the victory at Rally Bohemia and the victory at rally sprint in Vyškov,”** said Egon Smékal.

His partner in crime in their car Citroën DS3 R3T is a female co-driver Monika Hýbnerová. Egon described their cooperation as follows. **“Women as co-drivers are more cautious, they watch the arrival times for scrutineering more carefully and generally are more conscientious. I think they have better sense for reading directions and I prefer to listen to female voice in a car. Altogether there are more and more women in the crews and in my opinion it is all for best,”** said Smékal.

As part of the testing before Barum rally Egon competed in Pačejov and finished second in the front-wheel drive vehicles category. **“I would like to make use of shakedown, which is organized again and last year it was a very good test because it proved to be helpful for setting the car,”** said currently second driver of the Czech Rally Championship in R2 category who is looking forward to Barum rally. Crew Smékal, Hýbnerová will try their luck with Citroën and starting number 58.

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