

PRESS RELEASE no. 41

Kopecký still in the lead, ERC leader Kajetanowicz is out

Biggest favourite Jan Kopecký (Škoda Fabia R5) still holds the first position at the 46th Barum Czech Rally Zlín, which is the eight event of the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) and the fifth event of Auto-club Czech Rally Championship 2016. The 34-year-old driver has 9 seconds on Russia's Alexey Lukyanuk (Ford Fiesta R5) after six Special Stages. Unfortunately, the leader of ERC and the defending champion of FIA ERC Poland's Kajetan Kajetanowicz (Ford Fiesta R5) was forced to retire due to technical problems.

On the first four stages Kopecký was always the fastest one and he was gradually increasing his lead on Lukyanuk. But on the fifth stage, the Russian driver pushed hard, won the stage by 5 seconds and suddenly he was only 1.4 seconds behind the defending Czech champion. Third was Tomáš Kostka (Škoda Fabia R5) who outran France's Bryan Bouffier (Citroën DS3 R5) in their tight fight for the third place overall. Jan Jelínek was forced to retire after an accident on SS 5.

The sixth stage Březová (11.74 km) was again ruled by Kopecký. The Škoda Motorsport factory driver was under pressure from Lukyanuk, but his chaser damaged suspension and lost 7 seconds.

At that time Poland's Kajetan Kajetanowicz was no longer on the road as his car Ford Fiesta R5 lost power during SS 4 Hošťálková (13.75 km). The leader of ERC retired due to technical problems after finishing SS 4. Also Latvia's Ralfs Sirmacis was unlucky as he had a puncture and his leeway rose up to two and a half minute and he fell out of the top ten. Troubles with brakes hit Roman Odložilík (Ford Fiesta R5) on the first passage through SS Hošťálková, causing him to leave the top ten.

The category ERC2 is led by Italy's Giacomo Scattolon (Mitsubishi Lancer EVO IX), in the category ERC3 and Junior British Christopher Ingram (Opel Adam R2) is in the lead and he is also the fastest in the two-wheel drive category. Germany's Marijan Griebel (Opel Adam R2) hit a post and damaged steering. In the following stage he broke a wheel so he's done on Barum Rally.

There are only three stages left on Saturday. Sunday's programme comprises of six stages. The winner arrives on a finishing ramp on náměstí Míru square on Sunday 28th August at 4:25 p.m.

Standings after 6th SS:

1. Jan Kopecký – Pavel Dresler (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	46:13.4 min
2. Alexey Lukyanuk – Alexey Arnautov (RUS, FORD Fiesta R5)	+ 9.0 s
3. Tomáš Kostka – Ladislav Kučera (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 30.2 s
4. Bryan Bouffier – Gilbert Dini (FRA, Citroën DS3 R5)	+ 38.6 s
5. Pavel Valoušek – Veronika Havelková (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 43.3 s
6. Jan Černý – Petr Černožorský (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 47.7 s
7. Jaromír Tarabus – Daniel Trunkát (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 50.1 s
8. Fabian Kreim – Frank Christian (DEU, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 1:09.6 min
9. Martin Vlček – Jindřiška Žáková (CZE, Ford Fiesta R5)	+ 1:44.9 min
10. Vojtěch Štajf – František Rajnoha (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 1:46.0 min
25. Ingram – Edmondson (GBR, Opel Adam R2), 1st place ERC3, JERC	+ 4:03.1 min
26. Scattolon – Zanini (ITA, Mitsubishi Lancer EVO IX), 1st place ERC2	+ 4:12.9 min

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