

## PRESS RELEASE no. 1

### Barum Czech Rally Zlín in 2017 continues with the FIA ERC

It's been almost thirty five years since the biggest Czech automobile rally, Barum Czech Rally Zlín, became a part of the international FIA European Rally Championship. And this relation remains untouched also for the nearest future – in 2017 and 2018 the Barum Czech Rally Zlín will be again a part of the FIA ERC calendar as one of its long-term pillars and keystones.

The upcoming 47<sup>th</sup> Barum Czech Rally Zlín will be the first step in the second decade of cooperation between Barum rally organizers and promoting company Eurosport Events Ltd. It all started back in 2007 when Zlín for the first time welcomed the brand new Intercontinental Rally Challenge. This series became soon highly popular and interested many private drivers as well as official factory teams. Thanks to that Zlín could host many drivers who currently belong to the WRC elite - such as Kris Meeke, Thierry Neuville, Andreas Mikkelsen or Craig Breen. During the years the relation of the IRC and the European Rally Championship had become closer and closer and finally in 2013 both series merged into one strong championship combining the traditional mark of the FIA European Rally Championship and progressive promoting coverage by Eurosport in once. And the Barum Czech Rally Zlín was again the part of the game.

During October 2016 the Barum rally organizers and Eurosport Events Ltd. have detailed the agreement extension which has resulted in prolonging the contract for two upcoming years. **"Extending our long-term agreement with the Barum Czech Rally Zlín organizers is really good news. Not only does it ensure that one of Europe's best and most popular rallies will continue to form part of the ERC and ERC Junior schedules, it also enables us to cement our excellent working relationship with a team of highly professional, loyal and dedicated individuals. And it's a team that has always been open to change and keen to embrace important initiatives such as the ERC Junior Experience. Barum Czech Rally Zlín has enjoyed a rich history aligned to the ERC and we look forward to this long-standing partnership growing well into the future,"** says the Eurosport Events Ltd representative and FIA ERC General coordinator, Mr. Jean-Batiste Ley.

Mr. Miloslav Regner, the Clerk of the course: **"With realistic insight, the European Rally Championship is the highest FIA rally series which can be organized in our region. More than ten years back we were thinking of entering the WRC but after the decade with IRC and renewed ERC I'm persuaded that choosing these series which are mainly focused on private teams and drivers was the right decision for all sides. Every year we try to keep high level of the event and also bring something extra and we are happy that drivers and rally fans year by year return to Zlín. I hope they will enjoy also the 47<sup>th</sup> Barum Czech Rally Zlín!"**

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Barum Czech Rally Zlín will take place on its usual date at the end of summer holiday, on weekend from 25 to 27 August 2017\*. The main racing action will be again accompanied by rich additional programme including the vintage cars Star Rally Historic which is going to celebrate its first decade anniversary.

\* subject to FIA approval

Zlín, 16 November 2016

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