

PRESS RELEASE no. XX Jan Sellholm back in Zlín

Even though the programme of Star Rally Historic begins on Thursday, already on Tuesday Zlín welcomed two of the most anticipated participants - Sweden's Jan Sellholm and Hans Gustavsson. Fans may remember them as one of the fast Nordic pilots, who were among the top drivers in Czechoslovakian international competitions in the 80ies.

Since 1979, Jan Sellholm was a regular participant of Barum Rally and Rallye Škoda, making his debut here with an Opel Kadett GT/E. A year later, started Sellholm's show of small cars of the brand Toyota and his name was almost always in the top ten of this or that rally. And the harder were the conditions, the better Jan Sellholm did. Especially on XI. Rallye Škoda (1984), which is remembered for its muddy roads after Friday's downpour. One big name after another was withdrawing behind the back of two leaders – Italy's Cinotto and Sweden's Carlsson. Jan Sellholm was hardly a favourite for anyone, driving a small Toyota Starlet 1300. But he finished fourth only one minute and a half after the Škoda factory driver John Haugland. Back then such margin was nothing.

Another great performance from Sellholm for Czechoslovakian spectators came two years later on XVI. Barum Trábeč rallye. Weather was lovely, but more than 300 kilometres made that year's Barum Rally one of the most difficult ones peppered with beautiful gravel sections. And that was really something for the crew Sellholm – Andersson! Their final sixth position is a testament, that on unsealed roads the Swedes are like a fish in water. Four years later, Jan Sellholm improved his historic score and finished on a fifth position. This happened in 1990 and he was driving Audi 90 Quattro. At the end of his career he also tried Škoda Favorit 136 L, but the Czech car did not bring him any luck. After celebrating his fiftieth anniversary, Jan Sellholm (born 23rd April 1949) came back driving historic cars. He bet on Opel Ascona A, and he is coming back to us with it after more than a quarter century.

Another unforgettable Sweden's driver who has already tried racing with Škoda car, was Hans Gustavsson, who is also starting this year in Star Rally Historic. Small 1300 cars were also his favourite and he regularly competed with them not only on Barum Rally but Rallye Valašská zima as well.

In 1990 with Suzuki Swift GTi, he made a very memorable somersault on special stage Prštné – Louky. In the valley below Mladcová, he went off icy road and piles of clay, trucked on adjacent land, catapulted his car high into the air. We all were very anxious when small Suzuki fell on the ground upside down. Fortunately, Hans Gustavsson and Göran Larsson were both well and alive and still were able to drive their demolished car to regrouping in Malenovice. Hans Gustavsson returned to Zlín last year and showed us that

he did not forget his driving skills. On his second Star Rally Historic, he will be defending a fifth position. Fingers crossed!

Incidentally, Jan Sellholm and Hans Gustavsson often meet on rallies in Sweden. Particularly on the legendary Midnatssolsrallyt (Rally of Midnight Sun) and Hans has a better score there. One last thing, their opponents from time to time are legendary Swedes, whose name is written in history of Barum Rally. Behind the wheel of the big Volva 242, was in this year's top ten probably the most famous 'demolisher' in Barum Rally's history Harry Joki.

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