

PRESS RELEASE no. 46

Kopecký back in lead ahead of Lukyanuk

Czech crew Jan Kopecký, Pavel Dresler (Škoda Fabia R5 Evo) leads after SS7 of the 49th Barum Czech Rally Zlín. Last year's winners have 4.9 seconds lead ahead of the Russian duo Alexey Lukyanuk, Alexey Arnautov (Citroën C3 R5). Czech duo Václav Pech, Petr Uhel (Ford Fiesta R5) moved to third place, other Czech representatives Filip Mareš and Jan Hloušek (Škoda Fabia R5) are currently fourth. Almost fifty seconds difference is between the first and third position.

Kopecký and Lukyanuk retained their positions from previous tests in the SS Semetín. They swapped places, and Kopecký got ahead. **“Our opponents are going very fast, but from what I heard, they are quite lucky to be on track. We try to avoid any mistakes. We are driving fast, but not at all costs, our goal for today is to keep Alexey behind,”** said Jan Kopecký. **“Until I lead, I won't be happy, and I will not enjoy it. I feel like we're doing a great job, but there's still something missing, but I don't know exactly what. I feel we don't have enough grip, I'm not sure,”** admitted Lukyanuk.

In the top five, there are two more Czech drivers. The third is Václav Pech, and the fourth is a talented young man Filip Mareš. Both of them moved up one place in SS 7. **“We are driving quite fast, I am trying to avoid mistakes, and we are doing quite well,”** said Václav Pech. **“We have a very close duel with Chris Ingram. Just a few seconds are between us. We have to stay on the road and go as fast as possible,”** said Filip Mareš. So far, fifth British Chris Ingram said they are mutually changing positions. **“I think Filip was always faster at Semetín, but in the next two stages, I will beat him. I'm confident,”** said Ingram.

After a flat tire, Nikolay Gryazin (Škoda Fabia R5) is again fighting for the best possible position. The Russian driver with a Latvian license was victorious in SS 7, but it is a long way from 14th place to top ten.

On the other hand, Tomáš Kostka (Škoda Fabia R10 Evo) remains in top ten, and Martin Březík (Škoda Fabia R5) is moving up the ladder, now he holds 9th place. Jaromír Tarabus (Škoda Fabia R5) closes the top ten.

The ERC2 championship is still dominated by Andrea Nucita (Fiat 124 Abarth RGT) from Italy before Juan Carlos Alonso (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X) from Argentina. In the ERC3 category, the Czech driver Petr Semerád (Opel Adam R2) won the SS Semetín, followed by Jean-Baptiste Franceschi (Ford Fiesta R2T). The first place still firmly holds Efrén Llarena (Peugeot 208 R2) from Spanish, the leader of Junior Championship.

Standings after SS 7:

1. Kopecký, Dresler (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5 Evo)	52:56.3 min
2. Lukyanuk, Arnautov (RUS, Citroën C3 R5)	+ 4.9 s
3. Pech, Uhel (CZE, Ford Fiesta R5)	+ 49.3 s
4. Mareš, Hloušek (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 49.7 s
5. Ingram, Whittock (GBR, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 52.4 s
6. Kostka, Kučera (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5 Evo)	+ 1:03.8 min
7. Griebel, Winklhofer (GER/AUT, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 1:12.1 min
8. Wagner, Winter (AUT, Škoda Fabia R5 Evo)	+ 1:38.3 min
9. Březík, Omelka (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 1:38.8 min
10. Tarabus, Trunkát (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 1:40.2 min
24. Nucita, Di Caro (ITA, Fiat 124 Abarth RGT), 1st ERC2	+ 4:32.8 min
26. Llarena, Fernandez (ESP, Peugeot 208 R2), 1st ERC3J, 2WD	+ 4:52.9 min

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