

PRESS RELEASE No. 26
Flash info after the qualifying stage

Friday morning during Barum Czech Rally Zlín traditionally belongs to shakedown and the qualifying stage, during which drivers race for the advantage of picking starting positions for the Saturday. On a short stage in Žlutava, the time differences were minimal, the fastest time belongs to last year's winner Jan Kopecký, who was just few tenths of a second faster than second Simon Wagner and third Filip Mareš. The qualifying stage was a success especially for the home drivers, who took four spots in the TOP 5.

Efrén Llarena (ESP, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 1):

„It was good qualifying for us. It is very close, we are only 1.5 seconds slower than the first one. Let's see tonight.“

Javier Pardo (ESP, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 3):

„It was good, even though the time is not the best. I need more confidence, in the second pass of free practice I made a little spin and we got a puncture. With that in mind, I think we can be happy with the qualifying, the real rally starts tonight and tomorrow there will be many stages where we can push.“

Alberto Battistolli (ITA, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 5):

„It was tricky as expected. Better than last year for sure, but still not the pace of the fast guys. I need more practice. This year will be more focused on arriving to the finish and gaining more experience, because I need it.“

Simone Campedelli (ITA, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 7):

„It was really tricky. In the first loop we had a moment, so probably we didn't push that much, because it was really easy to make some mistakes. But I don't think the other guys are completely flying. We knew that we could struggle, so we have to be clever and try to stay on the road and see if we can get some points.“

Ken Torn (EST, Ford Fiesta R5, starting no. 8):

„I think it is quite okay. We did two small mistakes, we cost us little bit of time, but it was quite okay run.“

Norbert Herczig (HUN, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 9):

„We have to get to know the tyres, I haven't driven on this tyre specification until this time, it's the softer than I'm used to. The car itself was working well, I think our speed and the time was OK for the qualifying.“

Tom Kristensson (SWE, Hyundai i20 R5, starting no. 10):

„The qualifying was OK for us, I'm satisfied with the pace and I think I couldn't expect more than that from myself. Obviously the guys in front are doing very well but they

also have proper experience. For me it's all about gaining confidence and trying to find some speed during the weekend. So far it feels very good so we're happy."

Simon Wagner (AUT, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 11):

„Proper stage, we had a lot of fun. We had a clean run with good pace, but next two days will be difficult for sure so we're looking forward.“

Filip Mareš (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 12):

„For me it started really soon, because when I see on the start clock 7 or even some worse number, than I wake up really slowly. It could be seen on the time from the first free practice, but then we woke up and got really close to the winning time. So, I am more sorry for small mistakes.“

Albert von Thurn und Taxis (DEU, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 15):

„It was a clean run, nothing too crazy. Stage was difficult, I could have been faster, I'm not very happy with the time, but I'm looking forward to the rally.“

Jan Kopecký (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 4):

„It is behind us, it was slippery, but it ended really good for us. I am really looking forward for the evening, there is unique atmosphere. I think that only few other events or I really don't know any other event, that has such an atmosphere like the Zlín one, because the fans here are unreal.“

Erik Cais (CZE, Ford Fiesta R5, starting no. 6):

„The previous two practice runs were better, in qualifying everyone already knows the track and every little mistake costs awful lot of time. Unfortunately I made one, but that's the way it is. We're trying to run the best we can, so we can show up on the home soil, but the most important thing for us is to get to the finish.“

Adam Březík (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting no. 14):

„I think it was good, it was beyond our expectations. Today, it's gonna be all about surviving the evening stage and the proper race starts tomorrow. It's going to be tough, even more if the weather will have its word.“

Martin Vlček (CZE, Hyundai i20 R5, starting no. 16):

„We will see, there was really a lot of dirt on the track. Fifteen cars going through the special stage twice really make a lot of mess, but I am satisfied. We go our own pace, enjoying the race, because who knows if and how long will we be racing, maybe it is our last Barum Czech Rally Zlín.“

Martin László (HUN, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, startovní číslo 17):

„I just drove into the stage. This is the first time for us with the big car, so I didn't try to risk that much. We're here, we're happy, so let's see what the weekend brings.“

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