

**PRESS RELEASE no. 33**  
**Flash info after special stage 4**

Saturday morning saw many front field drivers retire from this year's Barum Czech Rally Zlín. Many crews made wrong tyre choices in the unpredictable weather conditions. The already crowned European champion Efren Llarena had a big crash on stage 3, Tom Kristensson and Ken Torn also couldn't keep their cars on track. Václav Pech is the current overall leader with Jan Kopecký second with a very small gap.

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

"Choosing the right tyres was very tricky, but I think it ended well. On the first stage it was raining hard. Lot of standing water on the road. Second stage was full wet but there weren't any puddles and both car and tyres worked perfectly. On Semetín it started raining. It was wet after start, but the road slowly started to dry out."

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

"Very difficult morning. We had totally wrong tyre decision, but I expected it to be worse. We had a bit of a moment at special stage 3, we lost a side mirror, but the rest of the car is OK."

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

"The drive was good for us. Shame is I made a few mistakes that lost us half a minute. That takes us out of the fight for the highest places. We must push hard now, we are in a contact, not with the first, but with the second place for sure. We have the speed so we will try."

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

"Unfortunately we chose the wrong setup and even worse tyres. But that's rally, you have to work with what you have, and I'm happy that we made it here. It's crazy how many crews had to retire, we have to go on with our pace and hopefully it'll be good."

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

"We used wet tyres, which gave us advantage on Březová. I wanted others in the morning, but my dad advised me to take three slicks and three wets, so he helped me big time with that. Držková and Semetín were much dryer than we expected and Jan Kopecký showed us how it's done. The main target is to finish the rally, so we're trying to set a pace that we enjoy and make it to the finish on Sunday."

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

"Survived these three stages, of course when you see a big crash has happened, you start just going backwards than just to do better, but you know with these kind of speeds and safety, the trees are not safe for us. We are just reconsidering our goal,

that is just getting experience and so it is not worth it for us. Efren's crash was one of the biggest I have ever seen."

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

"First one, our biggest problem was that we were coming from the service park with four medium tyres and we had two wet spare tyres. Immediately on the normal road we put the cross wet tyres. But it was not easy for me, since it was the first time with these new MRF tyres. Feeling was quite okay and the car and the tyres were working, but importantly we are here, because the stages are very tricky."

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

"Very difficult section for all of the teams. We had a good tyre choice, but after Efren's crash it was very hard to push. It was a huge crash, he's my friend, so after I saw it, it was very hard to focus."

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

"First loop was very difficult. Considering how many accidents we've seen in front of us it's only about surviving for us now. We know that's maybe not the perfect approach, but we know we have to gain some points for the championship. Even if we pushed more, we are realistic and know that we don't have the pace to fight for the podium. We have to wait a bit and see what happens in front of us."

**Martin László (HUN, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 17):**

"It was definitely not so easy, because it's the first time for me in the wet and muddy conditions with this car. But we made good tyre choice, we are here, I'm really happy for it and we'll see what happens in the afternoon."

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

"Good, I would have been happy on wet tyres but it was okay with the crossing it was better than I thought. Before the stage Držková we were waiting for so long on the start, you are waiting and you are not in the mood anymore. It took me a while to get into the speed and it was very slippery. I'm very happy so far, it is quite an exciting edition of Barum Rally."

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

"This is typical Barum rally with unpredictable weather and track conditions. Until the last moment we didn't know what tyres to choose, eventually we didn't pick the right ones, and we had lots of troubles on the slicks. Unfortunately we don't have any spies, so we didn't have the information about how it looks on stages."

**Emmanuel Guigou (FRA, Alpine A110 RGT, starting no. 19):**

"I liked the first few stages, but with the rear wheel drive, it was really hard to drive. I'm here for the first time and I can tell this rally is very specific. The roads are slippery and narrow, but at the same time there are many highspeed sections. Anyway, I'm happy."

**Raphaël Astier (FRA, Alpine A110 RGT, starting no. 20):**

“Good three stages. Good car for me, but difficult, lots of gravel and rain. But okay for the moment.”

**Jakub Jírovec (CZE, Alpine A110 RGT, starting no. 21):**

“To be fair it is wild out there. It is damp in the forest, not something I like. From second half of Semetín the roads were dry, there we enjoyed ourselves. We can't compete with the French Alpine drivers. We are just doing our tempo, trying to hold Martin Rada behind us and give Petr Nešetřil some challenge.”

**Martin Rada (CZE, Fiat 124 Abarth RGT, starting no. 22):**

„It was very difficult, after the rain in the morning we picked the wrong tyres. We struggled on the first two stages, overall it looks like a classical Barum rally. For the afternoon we're planning to make the car a bit softer and pick slicks for all four wheels, looks like it should be without rain.“

**Roberto Gobbin (ITA, Fiat 124 Abarth RGT, starting no. 23):**

„We finished fourth in RGT, which is not bad, but we're still waiting for the official results from FIA. The car works great so far, I'm happy.“

**Igor Widłak (POL, Ford Fiesta Rally3, starting no. 24):**

“I feel good, I don't have good speed. Little mistakes but it's very hard rally. Car and tyre choice was good. We must try to push more.”

**Laurent Pellier (FRA, Opel Corsa Rally4, starting no. 25):**

“For sure it's perfect start for us, I think we had good tyre choice, it was working well, especially at the long stage. But it will be still very long, the weather forecast is unsure for the afternoon and especially for tomorrow, so it's very complicated to plan some things.”

**Óscar Palomo (ESP, Peugeot 208 Rally4, starting no. 26):**

“This rally is very difficult. I enjoyed a lot the stage yesterday. First day was perfect. In the next stage I will try to take a little gap to Laurent Pellier.”

**Andrea Mabellini (ITA, Renault Clio Rally4, starting no. 27):**

“I really didn't enjoy this one, the conditions were really difficult, we preferred to go with slicks, which wasn't the luckiest choice. We made a mistake and lost some time, but the rally is far from over and we'll see what afternoon and tomorrow brings.”

**Toni Herranen (FIN, Ford Fiesta Rally4, starting no. 28):**

“We are through three stages, it was very difficult, because there was a lot of dirt on the road. It's my first time driving with the wet tyres, so it wasn't easy loop but we are here and ready to continue.”

**Dominik Stříteský (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting no. 46):**

“The conditions were better than how it looked like in the morning. For us there was a lot of dirt and gravel on Držková, it was very slippery. Semetín was good, it started drying out, same as Březová in the morning. I think we are more than happy with how we are doing.”

**Miklós Csomós (HUN, Škoda Fabia R5, starting no. 47):**

“We are really happy after the first loop, we enjoyed all the stages. We drove off road and lost some seconds in the third stage and after that one Clio crashed in front of us so we had to stop. But we were given a good time, we're on the fifth place so we can be happy.”

**Michal Horák (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting no. 48):**

“First stage was good for us. We chose the right tyres. For the second stage we were stopped two seconds before the start. Then it was just a drive trough. Third stage we had a small mistake so we just slowed down, because we were a bit scared.”

**Aleš Jirásek (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting no. 49):**

“Tourist tempo on Semetín. One fast corner after start, I slow down a bit, but I think I could go faster, next one I am happy that I slowed down and just made the turn. Very tricky conditions. I am still learning how to read these hard conditions.”

**Jaromír Tarabus (CZE, Peugeot 208 Rally4, starting no. 50):**

“We drove well. Our choice of wet tyres might have been bad. I was feeling like soft slicks would be better, but maybe I would say something else if I had it otherwise. For Semetín I put on the soft slicks. Troják was cancelled for us, but everything else is good.”

**Antonín Tlust'ák (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting no. 51):**

“The feeling was good. Now we have to make a choice if to get the light ramp for the next three stages or not.”

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