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Pech with the old WRC beats the European competition

Václav Pech, a regular figure of Czech rallying for many years, once again shows that even with older equipment he can still play a very worthy role in battles with European top drivers driving much more modern cars. Although he is still getting the spectators out of their seats during this year's Barum Czech Rally Zlín with his passes in his Ford Focus WRC, he cannot join the fight for the overall victory. However, the reason is not the performance of the forty-six-year-old driver, but the rules of the European and Czech championship, which do not allow the classification of this type of car.

Pech, driving with the high starting number 76, flew into Saturday's stage like a hurricane and from the very beginning he measured his times with the best. **"Before the longest stage of the second section the organisers delayed us for about half an hour, because of the accident. I was a bit worried when we started, there was a lot of mud drawn in the curves. On the last stage the delay was repeated, we waited twenty minutes before the start and unfortunately in the meantime it had got a bit dark. We didn't count on that, we didn't have additional lights, so we drove carefully as we couldn't see much."**

In the end, he finished second, losing exactly twenty-two seconds just behind the leader Jan Kopecký, after all seven stages. **"We'll see, I don't think it will be possible to catch it closer, but we'll keep fighting,"** says the Pilsen native after reaching the service zone in Otrokovice. **"Tomorrow it will be very similar to today, it should rain at night, so in the morning it will be very wet again and we will have a lot of mud on the tracks. It will be a bit of a handicap for us, but in any case we knew what we were getting into, so we have to deal with it,"** he added.

Even if he manages to finish in the top three overall, fans will still not see the blue-and-yellow Focus WRC on the podium. European and domestic championship rules do not allow the classification of these cars and Pech and his co-driver Petr Uhl will only score points in the domestic Division 2 and cannot go for the overall title. However, this will not stop Pech from fighting the Czech championship leader Kopecký. The two-time Barum rally winner will go into tomorrow's stage fully motivated again. However, due to his high starting number 76, he will not be seen on the track long until after his direct competitors have passed.

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