

PRESS RELEASE no. 37

Cardiac surgeon Pirk enjoyed the buggy race again

The tenth jubilee edition of GRAND PRIX BUGATTI ZLÍN under the patronage of the organizing team around Ladislav Samohýl could not work without the world-famous doctor, cardiac surgeon Jan Pirk. He has been coming to Zlín regularly, so he had a lot to remember during Friday's event.

The buggy race attracts every year, but Professor Pirk started his day in Bata city early in the morning. **"The day started nicely, at seven in the morning I went for a run around the hospital. After breakfast, my wife and I went for a walk, where she discovered many shops. She bought a handbag and two shirts, so we also supported local industry,"** smiled Jan Pirk next to his car from 1911.

Driving a 111-year-old vehicle is no fun, and according to the doctor, he definitely sweats more than he does during heart surgery. **"Definitely. First of all, the operating theatres are air-conditioned and secondly, this car has no power steering. You have to work all the time. Moreover, one has to keep one's brain quite busy because the buggies have pedals in a different way than modern cars. There is a throttle in the middle, a brake on the right and a clutch on the left, so when you change gear and need to step on the accelerator, you have to be careful not to make a mistake,"** said the seventy-four-year-old doctor.

As he says, he has a garage full of wreaths for his participation in the Barum rally. Some memories do stand out. **"Last year was interesting when we had a tyre blowout on the second lap and didn't finish. One year I almost hit the minister. At the finish after three laps they normally award a wreath, but this buggy is much slower than the eight-cylinder machines and we were just entering the second lap at that moment. She was about to give us the wreath and ran in front of the car, luckily the organisers pulled her away,"** Pirk, who use to meet his former patients at the car exhibition in front of the Zlín castle before the race, described his experiences colourfully.

"There were a few. There was one gentleman here whom I supposedly operated on twenty years ago and he is still doing well. That makes you happy." And his words were confirmed during the interview. For example, an elderly man came to Professor Pirk with his story, **"I've had heart surgery, I made it through. I have fourteen kilos less, but I'm alive, great,"** the patient was full of life. Immediately afterwards, an admirer shook Pirk's hand. **"I have to shake your hand too, I admire you very much. We like you in Zlín too, you are a great guy,"** the doctor received kind words.

Jan Pirk concluded by expressing his amazement at the number of people who went to the centre of the regional city on Friday afternoon. **"Perhaps there have never been so many people as this year. I'm glad people have gotten over their covid**

fear. I would like to say hello to all the readers and I hope everyone enjoyed Friday night and the whole Barum rally. And that we will reach the finish line," Jan Pirk concluded the interview. As he said, so it happened. He met his goal and the fans enjoyed not only the Spectator Super Stage.

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