

PRESS RELEASE no. 39

Kopecký enters Sunday with a lead, European champion Llarena is out

Saturday's leg of the 51st Barum Czech Rally Zlín 2022 certainly did not bore the fans. However, the drivers were delayed by rain and could race in sunny and dry conditions in the afternoon. Many crews are already out of the game, but one name continues confidently. It is no other than Jan Kopecký, who will go into Sunday's stage with a 34.6 second lead over second-placed Erik Cais for his tenth jubilee laurel. Dominik Stříteský is the third.

The first Březová stage on Saturday was a surprise. At first it seemed that Adam Březík would rule it, but then the Hungarian Miklós Csomós with the starting number 47 took the lead. With his impressive performance, he beat his Czech competitor by 6.8 seconds. Jan Kopecký finished tenth.

But the real excitement came at the next SS Držková, the longest stage of this year's competition, measuring 24.32 kilometres. Jan Kopecký drove it with confidence, beating second-placed Mareš (both Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo) by 18.4 seconds. Who, on the other hand, did not reach the finish line was Kristensson from the Sweden and, above all, this year's pre-crowned European champion Efrén Llarena from Spain, after whose serious crash the stage was paused for tens of minutes. When it was resumed, the Italian Dapro also crashed and the commissioners decided to cancel the stage.

Jan Kopecký also dominated the third SS, beating Erik Cais by 2.3 seconds at Semetín. By the trip into the bushes cost Filip Mareš a few seconds. Shortly after him, Estonian Torn also slid down in the same place, but he also turned his car sideways after two hundred metres and had to give up the fight for the standings.

The second passes were driven on dry ground. Kopecký triumphed for the third time in a row ahead of Dominik Stříteský, while his competitor Cais finished seventh on Držková. A puncture delayed the Spaniard Pardo for almost three minutes, while a fallen pipe from the intercooler to the turbo knocked Adam Březík down by more than six minutes.

For the second time, the drivers did better also on the tricky Držková. For the first time, Erik Cais won the first place by eight tenths of a second over Kopecký. On the other hand, a crash here stopped the winner of SS2, Hungarian Csomós.

Semetín, however, once again ruled Jan Kopecký. He scored his fifth triumph out of seven stages, giving him a comfortable 34.6 second lead over Erik Cais on Sunday. Once again, the Barum rally proved to be extremely challenging for foreigners, as no home driver crashed out of the lead.

51. Barum Czech Rally Zlín 2022 - standings after 1st leg:

1. Kopecký, Hloušek (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2)	1:04:06,9 hod
2. Cais, Těšínský (CZE, Ford Fiesta R5 MkII)	+ 34,6 s
3. Stříteský, Hovorka (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5)	+ 46,6 s
4. Mareš, Bucha (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo)	+ 48,2 s
5. S. Wagner, Winter (AUT, Škoda Fabia Rally2)	+ 57,7 s
6. Herczig, Ferencz (HUN, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo)	+ 3:02,8 min
7. Campedelli, Canton (ITA, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo)	+ 3:08,8 min
8. Battistolli, Scattolin (ITA, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo)	+ 3:12,7 min
9. von Thurn und Taxis, Ettel (DEU/AUT, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo)	+ 3:39,2 min
10. László, Berendi (HUN, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo)	+ 3:41,6 min
11. Astier, Vauclaire (FRA, Alpine A110 RGT) 1 st in RGT cat.	+ 3:42,4 min
14. Pellier, Pelamourgues (FRA, Opel Corsa Rally4) 1 st in ERC4J cat.	+ 5:27,9 min
27. Widlak, Dymurski (POL, Ford Fiesta Rally3) 1 st in ERC3 cat.	+ 9:45,1 min

SS Winners:

5 – Kopecký, 1 – Csomós, Cais.

In Zlín, 27 August 2022

Jakub KUDLÁČ
Press Centre
Barum Czech Rally Zlín

