

PRESS RELEASE no. 42

Flash info of the leading drivers after Sunday morning's passes

On Sunday morning, the competing crews of the 51st Barum Czech Rally Zlín again completed three special stages, where, as yesterday, they were facing unpredictable conditions. While Bunč and Maják were wet, Pindula, on the other hand, avoided the rain, which confused many drivers with the choice of tyres. However, nothing has changed at the top of the standings, with Jan Kopecký still ruling the Barum rally, keeping a 40-second lead. Behind him, however, a big battle for the remaining podium positions is brewing, as Mareš, Střítecký, Cais and Wagner are only eight seconds apart. During the regrouping check in Otrokovice we got the following feedback from the leading drivers.

Tom Kristensson (SWE, Hyundai i20 R5, starting number 10):

"We are happy to be in the service. Honestly, we could have ended up elsewhere. The conditions are very difficult as it can start raining out of nowhere and you never know what will happen. We are gaining experience. We don't have the speed yet, but we would have to take a big risk to get faster."

Ken Torn (EST, Ford Fiesta R5 MkII, starting number 8):

"The stages are beautiful and very challenging, as they always are in the Czech Republic. The weather, which is always changing a lot, plays with us. Compared to yesterday, we made some small changes in the set-up of the car and I think that helped. I'm enjoying it, but at the same time I have to be careful."

Adam Březík (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting number 14):

"The first stage was the driest, most readable. It rained a lot at Maják, but luckily we had the wet version of the tyres with us. We also kept it at Pindula, which helped us in the forest and saved us a couple of times in crisis moments."

Javier Pardo (ESP, Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 3):

"I feel good, we chose the right tyres considering the hard to predict weather. There are a lot of places on each stage where the grip changes, so we have to be careful. We'll keep going, our times weren't bad, but I think we can be even faster."

Raphaël Astier (FRA, Alpine A110 RGT, start number 20):

"We had tough three stages in which it was difficult to find any grip. I'm trying to go as carefully as possible and not take any unnecessary risks."

Martin László (HUN, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 17):

"We didn't have a good choice of tyres for the second stage. It was very wet. We had a spin on the last stage, but we're glad to be in the service."

Albert von Thurn und Taxis (DEU, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 15):

"The first stage didn't go well, the tyres didn't work as I expected. I had two small crashes at the beginning and lost confidence. The second stage started well, but then we got aquaplaning at high speed on the approach to the horizon and just slid down the hill like on ice. I have to say that we were very lucky. It was raining heavily in the rest of the section so I slowed down, lost a lot of time but just didn't feel like going any faster."

Alberto Battistolli (ITA, Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 5):

"It's still good for me. There was a lot of mud on Pindula, but we expected that. Bunč was tricky, but we also managed it. The car is fine, I didn't hit anything, so I'm happy with the morning."

Simone Campedelli (ITA, Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, entry number 7):

"Just like yesterday, it's a big challenge, but I think our tyre choice was good. But on the second stage it suddenly started raining heavily, we had the wet tyres with us all the time but unfortunately we didn't use them. We were cautious on the Pindula, but we enjoyed it."

Norbert Herczig (HUN, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 9):

"Everything was good, the choice of tyres before each stage was correct as we always had information on how the track looked. Our time is good, the feeling of the car is great and we are working well with our co-driver."

Simon Wagner (AUT, Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, grid number 11):

"It wasn't bad, we closed the time gap on the driver in front of us. The tyre choice wasn't 100 percent, but I think we did a good job this morning."

Filip Mareš (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 12):

"We made it through without a mistake, but I overslept on the first stage this morning. Unfortunately, we can't cover up the scars from yesterday, so we're taking them with us. It's good that we are second, but the differences are really close, so we still have big battles ahead of us."

Dominik Střítecký (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting number 46):

"There is a lot of tension for the last three stages. The rain is coming, so it's still not easy and nothing is certain."

Erik Cais (CZE, Ford Fiesta R5 MkII, starting number 6):

"It came out as bad as it could for us. We started with five hard tyres, which unfortunately cost us a lot of time and two positions. I'm not happy about it, but we still have the afternoon section where everyone will try as hard as they can and it's going to be a big fight."

Jan Kopecký (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 4):

"It's complicated, the conditions are challenging. Bunč was dry, but otherwise all the grass areas are waterlogged, so there is a lot of mud on the track. There was a cloud stuck at Maják and it was raining heavily. We didn't have wet tyres with us, so we just wanted to ride it to the finish. At Pindula we tried to make the best time in the dry, then drive cautiously in the woods and towards the end we accelerated again. I think we had enough control over both Bunč and Pindulla."

Aleš Jirasek (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting number 49):

"The water spoiled our plans a bit. There were streams of water and we had one harder and one softer tyre, so we choose a mix. We drove cautiously, because we were after the overall result, not partial times."

Antonín Tlust'ák (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 51):

"We didn't quite make it, I was too cautious. But we are still around 15th place, which is good. Pindula was drier than we expected, we had wet tyres at the front, anyway, we're here now and we'll see how it looks in the second section."

Laurent Pellier (FRA, Opel Corsa Rally4, starting number 25):

"We are enjoying today, just like yesterday. I think we have a great understanding with the car and everything is working perfectly. The conditions are still unpredictable, it rained a lot on the second stage. But it was okay, fortunately we chose the right tyres and we have a good lead, so we hope to make it to a successful end."

Emmanuel Guigou (FRA, Alpine A110 RGT, starting number 19):

"It's very difficult, we are second but the gap to the first is too big. So today will be about keeping the car on the track and getting the crate."

Michal Horák (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting number 48):

"The first two stages didn't work out at all because we chose the wrong tyres. Maják on the hard tyres was a horror, it was just about passing it and not hurting the car. The third was fine, surprisingly Pirelli and Michelin worked well together."

Andrea Mabellini (ITA, Renault Clio Rally4, starting number 27):

"It's difficult to work with tyres in this weather and even more difficult to choose the right ones. But so far we are happy. Today we are not trying to chase the time anymore. We know that the junior championship is decided. Now we're just trying to finish without any problems."

Óscar Palomo (ESP, Peugeot 208 Rally4, starting number 26):

"This morning was very difficult, we didn't have a good first stage, but it's true that I'm learning a lot. I'm just thinking about reaching the podium. We took Maják on dry tyres, which was difficult, but it's true that it's hard to make the right choice."

Jaromír Tarabus (CZE, Peugeot 208 Rally4, starting number 50):

"It was pretty good. We failed to hit the tyres at Maják, we could have had two wet tyres in the boot, but in the end we decided not to carry them. There was a bit of aquaplaning throughout, so we chose a more cautious pace. The rest of the stages we managed well."

Igor Widłak (POL, Ford Fiesta Rally3, starting number 24):

"The conditions are crazy and hard to predict. It was raining on the second stage, and for the first time in my life I drove on a mix of wet and dry tyres. We're going well, just a bit slow, but we were on our limits at Pindula, so we're very happy."

Toni Herranen (FIN, Ford Fiesta Rally4, starting number 28):

"The conditions are similar to yesterday, the tracks are very slippery, especially when we drove with dry tyres in heavy rain at Maják. We lost third gear on the last stage, so we'll see if we can do something about it in the workshop."

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