

PRESS RELEASE no. 47

Flash info from nearly thirty leading drivers from the finish of Barum rally

This year's Barum Czech Rally Zlín is over. During the last weekend of August, the competing crews had to face challenging special stages in the Zlín region again, the difficulty of the competition this time was intensified by the changeable and unpredictable weather. However, the results did not change compared to the last six years. Jan Kopecký is again enjoying the overall victory, the second place in a close duel was won by Filip Mareš, the bronze medal was given to Simon Wagner from Austria.

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

"My small mistake on Saturday cost us the opportunity to fight for a great position. That happens in rallying. Because of that, we drove quite slowly today in the extremely difficult conditions that occurred on the tracks on Sunday. But in the end I'm very happy, we gained experience as we planned. I said at the end of the last stage that it was our first stage that we did properly in a race car, I felt the rhythm. Still, we drove carefully. I would say this weather was probably the hardest I've ever raced in."

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

"Apart from the second pass through Březová, where the hose dropped off, it was absolutely great this year. We are very happy with the times we achieved, we have moved somewhere we never dreamed of in the last two years and we are able to compete with the absolute top, so we are very happy."

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

"It's been amazing here. It's very important for us as a team that we managed to finish. We only have one competition in Catalonia left before the end of the season, and we need to prepare well for that, as we are fighting for second place overall in the European Championship. I think we are able to get it, so we will work hard and do our best."

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

"It was a perfect weekend for us, we won and secured the RGT title. The competition was beautiful, I love these challenging conditions. Our Alpine worked great, the whole team did a great job."

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

"This was the hardest competition of my life. It was the first time we drove a Rally2 category car, and in these extreme conditions where we had everything like rain, fog, mud but snow. The stages here are already difficult and this made them even harder."

So I'm very happy that we were able to finish, I would like to thank my team, my co-driver David and my family."

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

"What a crazy weekend! We reached the limit of our capabilities and maybe even a little bit beyond it. I race for fun, it's a big hobby of mine, but in such extremely challenging conditions I sometimes wonder why I do it at all? Especially in moments like this morning, when we had a huge crisis in high speed on black slippery tarmac on the horizon where you couldn't see a thing. We lost some seconds there, which turned out to be crucial in the battle with Martin. But he was very fast and did a great job here, so I'm happy with the final position, I don't think much more was possible for us. Overall I really like it here, I will definitely be back next year."

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

"We were realistic, we knew from the start that it would be very difficult for us here and that we probably wouldn't be able to keep up with the best. That's why we took the competition as a great opportunity to gain valuable experience. We did that, drove the car to the finish line, drove smart and scored points for the championship. We believe that we will benefit from this experience in the future and when we come back here we will be a bit higher again."

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

"We are very happy to be standing in front of the finish ramp. It was a very important event for me as my co-driver (Ramón Ferencz) could be back in the car. The feelings are great. The car was excellent, the atmosphere was amazing. We gained a lot of experience with the tyres, at the end of the season. If we can get the budget together, we will definitely come again next year."

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

"It wasn't bad. We could have done better. We tried everything in the last stage, but we made a small mistake. Overall, we made small mistakes throughout the whole weekend, which probably cost us a better position. We learned a lot and improved. We'll see you next year."

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

"Honza set a pace that we couldn't compete with. If we counted off the seconds we lost yesterday due to my mistakes, we would have been relatively close, but that's not how it's played. Maybe Honza didn't have to push so hard today. We are happy for the second place, it is a small victory for us, we competed with great drivers who were not easy to beat."

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

"The last stage didn't go well because of my mistake. We ended up falling into a bush, we lost about twenty seconds, but in the end the result is not bad at all. Of course we

are disappointed a bit, but it's great compared to last year. It was much worse, but the points are there, the car is in the finish, and that's the main thing."

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

"I have to sit over the boards and analyse my performance. It is very hard to find positives at the moment, the emotions from the last stage are still fresh. For three years in a row I have not been lucky on the last stage of the Barum rally, I don't know why. We are missing one piece to the puzzle that we have to find."

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

"Thank you for your congratulations. It belongs of course to me, my co-driver Honza Hloušek, and the whole team who did a great job. This year's Barum rally was difficult. Today the weather played with us, I have to say that I experienced different conditions on each stage. The morning section was all about finishing for us and I'm glad we're here on the finish ramp."

Martin Viček (CZE, Hyundai i20 R5, starting number 16):

"It was a very challenging Barum rally this year, basically like any other. We fought hard, but we made two punctures, in Malenovice a stream of water flowing down the road rolled up on us and that was it. We lost six minutes, we probably lost a nice position and some nice points, but that's motorsport in a nutshell."

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

"We will celebrate a bit tonight. This competition was a little bit different than the Bohemia rally. We didn't go at such a pace. We saw the mistakes of our competitors, which Petr (Machů) kept repeating to me, that we need to finish Barum rally. When you go crazy, you go fast, people make mistakes and a lot of them drop out. The plan was to finish this competition in the first year and to show others that neither Bohemia rally nor Hustopece was a coincidence and we are able to finish the races consistently. The pace was reasonable, sometimes it was better, sometimes worse. We didn't always have the right tyres on, but we are here, and that's the main thing. I hope we'll show up again next year."

Antonín Tlustý (CZE, Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo, starting number 51):

"This year was one of our best Barum rallies, seventh place in the Czech Championship and fifteenth overall is a success for us. It was great for the conditions, it's just a pity that we didn't make it to Držková yesterday, the crashes there were big. But fortunately nobody was seriously injured, it is obvious that modern cars are very safe. The conditions here were difficult, on one stage it rained three times, then three times dry again, I don't remember that. Fortunately we hit the tyres well, we were driving safely, and it was worth it."

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

"We are very, very happy. It was a difficult competition. For everyone. When you win a competition like this, you are really happy. Crazy weather, lots of mud. Sometimes

it was dry, then the next curve was all muddy. The conditions kept changing, it was a challenge. Now we are European champions, which is very important for us and Opel Motorsport. Normally the winner goes to the JWRC. So if Barum Rally gets into the WRC championship, we will definitely be back."

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

"I'm happy. Second place in the RGT category is an achievement for me. It was one of the most difficult Barum rallies, the tracks were very slippery, the weather was constantly changing and you never knew where it would be dry or wet. Every pass, every curve was completely different every time, so we have to be happy for this result."

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

"For the first time I drove a 4WD, and we didn't have much luck with the tyres today. We had a bad luck at Maják, but we made it up on the dry Pindula and had a nice drive. We are happy, the car is all right, which is the most important thing and we can start preparing for Vyškov."

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

"We are happy. It was a tough competition. The weather made it even harder. But we are second, and we managed to finish the competition. The most important thing of the weekend, however, is that Efrén Llarena, Sara Fernandez, Alberto Battistolli and Simone Scattolin are okay and we hope to see them in the car soon for the next events."

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

"I'm very happy with my performance in the competition. It was very tough. We learned a lot and the experience we gained will help us in future races. We placed well on the podium. Congratulations to Pelier, he drove really well. We will try to come again next year. I love this competition and this championship."

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

"As always, it was challenging here, this year maybe a bit more challenging in terms of tyre choice, which we didn't always get right. On the other hand, it could have been worse, so we are happy. In difficult conditions, we made it to the finish line, and we did what we needed to do for the Czech championship and the Peugeot Cup. Yesterday we got a slightly worse time twice at the cancelled Držková, which put the possibility of fighting for second place in Europe off, but we probably wouldn't have catch the winning Pellier anyway, because he is really very fast. At the last Pindula we still tried, but in the end we were seven seconds away from second place. Nevertheless, we are definitely satisfied."

Dan Polášek (CZE, Ford Fiesta Rally4, starting number 35):

"The goal was a podium, which we obviously were not up to, so we're glad we finished. We are very happy for the fourth place. We were already driving Pindula

confidently, just to finish, knowing that we had a kilometre to go, a kilometre behind. We hope to participate again next year."

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

"I am very happy. On the stages I didn't think the result was good, but when we reached the finish line, it was excellent. I think it was the best rally of my career. I definitely want to come back next year. Everything here in Zlín is great. Amazing organization and great spectators. The weather was also good, because we could try everything, both dry and wet tyres and different car settings."

Jakub Jirovec (CZE, Alpine A110 RGT, starting number 21):

"Satisfaction is probably far away. On Saturday it was quite ok, I accepted the fact that half was wet, half was dry. I kept some pace. Now on Sunday, the first Maják confused me quite a bit. We had a couple of bad crises where I'd already jumped out of it and never got back up to speed. Saturday was positive, but Sunday was a disaster. Next year again and hopefully faster and more competitive. I don't have enough mileage to compete."

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

"I'm happy. The main thing is that we are at the finish and we have gained experience. It was only my second asphalt competition and it was very difficult, especially in these conditions when it was raining and the track was slippery. Hopefully we will be back next year."

In Zlín, 28 August 2022

Vojtěch GARGULÁK, David ŠTÍCHA
Satellite Press Centre
Barum Czech Rally Zlín

