

PRESS RELEASE no. 5

At the end of the holiday season, Barum rally will be held a week earlier!

In the second half of August, the city of Zlín and its surroundings will once again come alive with roaring engines and fast competition cars. The 52nd edition of the popular Barum Czech Rally Zlín will take place from 18 to 20 August 2023 and will once again be part of the prestigious European Rally Championship (ERC) series. The Zlín Rally is one of the key events and highlights not only of the European Championship but also of the Czech Rally Championship.

Barum rally has been a part of the European Championship for forty years, as the first time it was held for European points in Zlín in 1984! Since the last season, the European Championship has been under the new promoter WRC Promoter GmbH, based in Munich, Germany. The promoter of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) also secures the rights for the ERC, which was an important development for the championship in the world of rallying. At the promoter's request, the date of the Barum rally has been moved up by a week. The schedule follows the proven format of last year's stages, yet some timed sections have been changed. **"Compared to the last year's edition, 62% of the special stages have been changed, measuring a total of two hundred kilometres. In the itinerary we can also find two timed sections when parts of these stages were last run in 1994,"** said Miloslav Regner, chairman of the rally's organising committee.

The prelude to the competition itself will be a test stage / shakedown in Malenovice on Friday morning on a part of the classic Maják section. There will be a qualifying session for registered ERC1 drivers, which will determine the order of crews for Saturday's leg.

On Friday, a popular circuit Super Stage will be held in the night streets of the regional town. On Saturday, two passes through a trio of stages are on the agenda and the same line-up is set for Sunday. In total, 13 special stages on 7 sections are on the itinerary. As usual, it will be busy in front of the Zlín Town Hall, where the ceremonial start will take place on Friday, 18 August at 4 pm and on Sunday, 20 August, the rally finish, the announcement and prize giving will take place from 5.40 pm.

The eight-part European championship is currently in its halfway phase with a very high quality driver line-up this season. A number of drivers have been successful in the WRC in previous years. Hayden Paddon from New Zealand (Hyundai i20 N Rally2) is leading after four mainly gravel events, with the extremely fast Latvian youngster Martins Sesks (Skoda Fabia RS Rally2) in second and Mads Ostberg from Norway (Citroën C3 Rally2) in third place.

In recent years, the Star Rally Historic has been an integral part of Barumka. The popular rally, which has grown into a proper event and a solid pillar of the Czech

Historic Rally Championship, will take place for the fifteenth time. **"The Star Rally will traditionally start on the city circuit and then take place again on both days of the weekend. Spectators can also look forward to a demonstration run of the Rally Legend, which will finish on Saturday,"** said Ing. Jan Regner, Clerk of the Course of Barum Czech Rally Zlín.

European Rally Championship 2023 (ERC) standings - drivers:

(after 4th rally)

1. Hayden Paddon (NZL)	113 pts
2. Martins Sesks (LAT)	83
3. Mads Ostberg (NOR)	69
4. Efrén Llárena (ESP)	50
5. Mathieu Franceschi (FRA)	50
6. Yoann Bonato (FRA)	47
7. Mikko Heikkilä (FIN)	45
8. Mikolaj Marczyk (POL)	40
9. Georg Linnamäe (EST)	35
10. Joshua McErlean (IRL)	35
15. Filip Mareš (CZE)	17
18. Erik Cais (CZE)	13

More information available at www.czechrally.com and don't forget to follow Barum rally on the official Facebook, Instagram, Twitter accounts and other press information.

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