

PRESS RELEASE no. 27**105 crews passed scrutineering, Mabellini and Heikkilä do not start**

The 52nd Barum Czech Rally Zlín 2023 experienced a stress test. A total of 105 crews from 21 countries out of the original 114 entries entered the elite event, which is part of the FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) and the PSG Czech Rally Championship 2023 (MCR). From the leading crews, Andrea Mabellini from Italy and Mikko Heikkilä from Finland submitted the excuse.

Among the top favourites of this year's Barum Rally belong the ten-time winner of the Zlín rally and the champion of the last seven editions Jan Kopecký from the Czech Republic, or European Championship leader Hayden Paddon from New Zealand (Hyundai i20N Rally2) and former European champions Efrén Llarena from Spain (Škoda Fabia R5) with Alexey Lukyanuk from Cyprus (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2). Mads Ostberg from Norway (Citroën C3 Rally2) and Chris Ingram from Great Britain (Volkswagen Polo GTi R5) are also aspiring for the top positions. Apart from Kopecký, the other Czech drivers Filip Mareš, Adam Březík (both Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo), Erik Cais (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) and Dominik Stříteský (Škoda Fabia R5) are among the medal candidates.

Nine crews withdrew from the Zlín competition with apologies. Andrea Mabellini from Italy (Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo) and Mikko Heikkilä from Finland (Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) did not come to Zlín. Ola Nore Jr. (Renault Clio Rally4) is missing in the ERC4 Junior category. In the European starting field, Czech drivers Petr Leher (Škoda Fabia R5), Dominik Brož (Peugeot 208 R2) and Michal Horák (Ford Fiesta Rally4) were also excused. Miroslav Kalina (Ford Fiesta R1), Vlastimil Zigo (Škoda Felicia) and Marcel Havlásek (Renault Clio Sport) will not participate in the Czech championship.

The three-day-long 52nd Barum Czech Rally Zlín starts on Friday, 18 August at 4 p.m. on the square in front of the Zlín City Hall and ends on the finish ramp at the same place on Sunday, 20 August after 5 p.m. This year's Barum Rally covers a total distance of 761.19 km and includes 13 special stages on seven sections with a total length of 200.43 km. The introduction to the rally itself will be a qualifying stage, or rather a shakedown of 3.14 km in Malenovice on the legendary Maják section, which will be on the programme already on Friday morning.

In the list of entries there were several changes and specifications in terms of co-drivers and cars. Spanish Llarena will drive a Škoda Fabia R5, Australian Max McRae driving with a British licence will drive an Opel Corsa Rally4, Aoife Raftery from Ireland will be navigated by her fellow native Ronan Comerford. Věroslav Cvrček jr. has changed a co-driver seat, where Petr Těšínský will sit. Hungarian Zoltán László will be driving with Tamás Begala. Igor Widlak from Poland (Ford Fiesta Rally3) has joined the field of registered ERC3 drivers.

In the Czech championship Martin Klepáč will drive the Citroën in the RN10 class and Radim Orava will form a crew with Vojtěch Mudrák.



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Following crews have been excused by the organisers:

4 Andrea Mabellini, Virginia Lenzi (ITA, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2), MRF Tyres Dealer Team

8 Mikko Heikillä, Samu Vaaleri (FIN, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2), Mikko Heikillä

28 Ola Nore jr., Rune Eilertsen (NOR, Renault Clio Rally4), Ola Nore jr.

52 Petr Leher, Jiří Škořepa (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5), Petr Leher

61 Dominik Brož, Vítězslav Baďura (CZE, Peugeot 208 R2), Dominik Brož

64 Michal Horák, Karel Voltner (CZE, Ford Fiesta Rally4), Michal Horák

102 Miroslav Kalina, Radka Brisudová (CZE, Ford Fiesta R1), Miroslav Kalina

103 Vlastimil Zigo, Jan Skocz (CZE, Škoda Felicia), Vlastimil Zigo

111 Marcel Havlásek (CZE, Renault Clio Sport), Marek Havlásek

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

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