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BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN

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Barum Czech Rally Zlín 2025: more compact, return of the juniors and prelude in Komárov

Five months before start of the **54th BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN 2025**, the organizers revealed first informations for this year's edition of the event. The Zlín Rally is one of the pillars of the prestigious European Rally Championship (ERC) and will traditionally be held in the middle of August (15th to 17th). This year's Barum Rally will offer a more compact course of the competition, higher mileage of the special stages, the return of the ambitious juniors as part of the European Championship and a qualifying stage over six kilometers long.

The popular competition in the Zlín region is one of the key events and the highlights of the season at the European and also the domestic championship. Four decades ago, in 1984, Barum rally was for the first time included in the European Championship series, which has been held regularly since 1953 and is entering its 72nd season. This year, European points will be awarded in the Zlín region for the forty-first time in a row! **"Being part of the ERC is a commitment for us to keep the organizational standard and prepare a quality competition again. At the same time, it is an appreciation of the quality work of the entire organizing team, which has been involved in the successful course of the competition for many years. We have had an unforgettable event last year in many respects, when the Barum rally once again proved its position among the best rallies in Europe. We would like to thank the public institutions, the event partners led by Continental Barum s.r.o. and, last but not least, the spectators, without whose help we could not organize the competition,"** said Miloslav Regner, chairman of the Barum Czech Rally Zlín organizing committee.

The Zlín organizers are faithful to the traditional holiday date as the competition will take place, just like last year, in mid-August. The crews will pick up their itineraries on Wednesday morning, and the recces will be held during the afternoon and on Thursday. On Friday, there will be a qualifying stage for priority drivers followed by a shakedown (test stage) on the Komárov stage. According to the new regulations from the FIA, the length of the this stage must be over six kilometers. **"You could say that it will be a full-fledged special stage. We are returning to the classic Barum section with the traditional spectator spot on the village square in Pohorelice. The reason for the new regulation from the FIA regarding the length of the qualifying is so that the drivers have a chance to correct any mistakes and are not disadvantaged when determining the starting order,"** explained Ing. Jan Regner, director of the Barum Czech Rally Zlín.

On Friday afternoon, a ceremonial start will take place in front of the Zlín City Hall followed by the traditional Super Special Stage in the night streets of the regional capital. The Barum rally returns to the composition of three different stages during Saturday and Sunday, with the crews completing each stage twice. A total of 13 special stages will be run on seven track sections. **"After last year's premiere, the Bunč special stage in its new form will not be missing from the competition itinerary this year either. This pearl and the royal stage of the Barum rally will be run again thanks to the kindness of the Forests of the Czech Republic and the Archbishop's Forests. A big thank you goes to Mons. Josef Nuzík, the Archbishop of**



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Olomouc and the Metropolitan of Moravia, and all the municipalities. Bunč is one of the most difficult special stages in the Czech Republic and we believe that nature will be more kind to us this year than last year, when we had to cancel the second run for safety reasons due to the heavy rain," said Jan Regner.

The exceptional character of this special stage, the demanding nature and the beauty of the Chřiby hills are also evidenced by a great video clip made by Ivo Novák from the web portal rallylife.cz. He introduced one of the two new sections under the title "Wedding Road" even before the last year's start.

"The total length of the special stages will be at the upper limit. If everything works out, we will drive 207 competitive kilometers. Since last year, we have continuously made the rally more compact in the sense that there will be no large crossings from the special stages. The competition itself will be shorter in total mileage by about 120 km in terms of crossings, because we will no longer have to make the long crossing from Vsetín to Bunč. Before every third special stage, regrouping checks will take place on Saturday and Sunday," said Jan Regner.

Very positive information not only for the organizers, but especially for the spectators is the return of the junior championship (Junior ERC) back to Zlín after a one-year break. In recent seasons, the European Championship has been a showcase for young drivers not only from Europe but also from overseas. The junior championship has produced a number of top drivers who have become elite in higher categories. These names include, for example, current WRC World Championship drivers Sami Pajari from Finland, Martinš Sesks from Latvia, Grégoire Munster from Luxembourg or Russian Nikolaj Gryazin, currently racing for Bulgaria. Then there are the European champions Chris Ingram from Great Britain, Efrén Llerena from Spain, Stéphane Lefebvre from France, Jari Huttunen from Finland, Andrea Crugnola from Italy and many others.

"The Junior Championship will once again attract promising and ambitious youth to Zlín. The one, who is remembered by fans the most, is Max McRae a nephew of the legendary Colin McRae, who suffered a major crisis in Halenkovice two years ago. Another Briton, Jon Armstrong, also showed great ferocity, so the visitors definitely have something to look forward to," concluded Jan Regner. A new feature of this year's European Championship is the introduction of the FIA Master ERC category, where drivers who were over 50 years old at the beginning of the year can compete for the title.

For more information, visit www.czechrally.com and don't forget to follow Barum Czech Rally Zlín on social networks, official Facebook, Instagram, X profiles as well as other press releases.

In Zlín 26th of march 2025

Roman ORDELT
Press spokesman
Barum Czech Rally Zlín



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