**PRESS RELEASE no. 37**
**Barum rally king Jan Kopecký still in the lead, ahead by 7.9 seconds**

The **54th BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN 2025** continues on Sunday, August 17, with the second leg and special stages called Pindula, Podhoran, and Kateřinice. Jan Kopecký is on track for his twelfth victory, increasing his lead over Jon Armstrong from Ireland to 11.6 seconds after winning the two stages. Less than ten seconds behind him is Italian driver Andrea Mabellini, who holds the third place ahead of Austrian Simon Wagner.

The opening timed stage on Sunday took the drivers to the dreaded Pindula. Erik Cais coped best with its pitfalls, starting his chase after Saturday's puncture with a 2.9-second lead over Wagner. Andrea Mabellini set the third fastest time, chasing the pair fighting for the lead. Jon Armstrong was slightly luckier in this battle, as he gained two tenths of a second on Jan Kopecký from the fourth place.

The situation was different on the longest stage of this year's Barum rally, the nearly 21-kilometer Podhoran. Jan Kopecký won his fourth special stage, leaving his Irish rival Armstrong 1.6 seconds behind. Filip Mareš took the third place with a larger gap, and, after winning the previous Pindula stage, Erik Cais was dissatisfied with his fourth placing, 7.2 seconds behind the winner. However, both Mareš and Cais received a ten-second penalty for failing to drive through the chicane correctly. Andrea Mabellini finished sixth, nine seconds behind Kopecký. Ján Kundlák, on the other hand, dropped out of tenth place after his Škoda Fabia RS Rally2 rolled over several times.

After the first run through the Kateřinice special stage, the Agrotec Škoda Rally Team's satisfaction grew even more. Despite minor mistakes, the crew of Jan Kopecký and Jiří Hovorka were again the fastest, less than a second ahead of Andrea Mabellini's car. Jon Armstrong took third place in the battle for first place, 3.7 seconds behind Kopecký. The home competition continues to be unkind to Erik Cais, who, after another puncture, is likely out of the running for the podium. He is currently sixth.

Polish driver Hubert Kowalczyk is leading the ERC3 category in his Renault Clio Rally3, with a 35.5-second lead over second-placed Irishman Case Coleman in a Ford Fiesta Rally3. Third place is held by Barum rally ambassador Daniel Polášek and Zdeněk Omelka, driving a Ford Fiesta Rally3. The best driver in the ERC4 (J) category is Craig Rahill from Ireland (Lancia Ypsilon Rally4 HF), who has a 30-second lead over Norway's Karl Peder Nordstrand (Opel Corsa Rally4) in the second place.

The 54th season of the famous European Rally Championship (ERC) event will culminate with the second passes of Sunday's special stages, with the final Kateřinice stage taking place as part of the Power Stage, starting at 4:05 p.m. The first crews will appear on the finish ramp in front of the Zlín Town Hall at 5:30 p.m.

**Standings after the 10th Special Stage:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Kopecký, Hovorka (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) | 1:32,59,7 hod |
| 2. Armstrong, Byrne (IRL, Ford Fiesta MkII Rally2) | + 11,6 s |
| 3. Mabellini, Lenziová (ITA, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) | + 21,4 s |
| 4. Wagner, Ostlenderová (AUT/DEU, Hyundai i20 N Rally2) | + 31,3 s |
| 5. Mareš, Bucha (CZE, Toyota GR Yaris Rally2) | + 50,0 s |
| 6. Cais, Trunkát (CZE, Hyundai i20 N Rally2) | + 59,6 s |
| 7. Marczyk, Gospodarczyk (POL, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) | + 1:06.6 min |
| 8. A. Březík, Krajča (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) | + 1:07.0 min |
| 9. Matulka, Syty (POL, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2) | + 2:04.9 min |
| 10. Pech, Uhel (CZE, Citroën C3 Rally 2) | + 3:51.2 min |

19. Kowalczyk, Hryniuk (POL, Renault Clio Rally3), 1st place ERC3   + 8:43.9 min

23. Rahill, Smith (IRL, Lancia Ypsilon Rally4 HF), 1st place ERC4 (J) + 10:41.2 min

**Won SS:**

5 – Kopecký, 2 – Armstrong, 1 – Mabellini, Marczyk, Cais

For more information, visit www.czechrally.com and don't forget to follow Barum rally on the official Facebook, Instagram and X accounts, and in other press releases.

**Zlín, 17tht August 2025**                    **Jakub KUDLÁČ**
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