

PRESS RELEASE No. 8

The Qualifying Stage will be almost eight kilometers long!

The 54th edition of the BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN will once again get the spectators excited even before the sharp start of the event. The Qualifying Stage for registered ERC1 crews, which will be followed by shakedown, will take place on Friday, August 15th in the morning hours. This year it will be run on the legendary section from Komárov to Pohořelice, which is 7.61 km long. The crews will return to this track after four years.

According to the new regulations from the FIA, the length of the Qualifying Stage must be over six kilometers. **“We are returning to the classic Komárov stage with the traditional spectator spot on the village square in Pohořelice. The reason for the new FIA regulation regarding the length of the qualification is so that the drivers have a chance to correct any mistakes and are not disadvantaged when determining the starting order by this special stage. With a length of almost eight kilometers, this is a full-fledged special stage with a number of nice spectator spots to watch the passing of the competition cars,”** said Miloslav Regner, chairman of the Barum Czech Rally Zlín organizing committee.

The Qualifying Stage began to be run in the FIA ERC series during gravel rallies, and since 2014 it has become part of all events of the European championship. From 2022, only drivers with FIA priority and those registered in ERC1, which are crews with Rally2 cars, will be able to drive both free practice and the Qualifying Stage. Everyone else, including other priorities, is limited to the classic shakedown. Since last year, the championship promoter, together with the FIA, has come up with a significant innovation: drivers do not choose their starting order for the first stage based on the classification results. In reality, this means that the fastest driver in qualifying starts first and the top fifteen are determined based on their times. After these drivers with Rally2 cars, all others will start for Saturday's section according to the entry list.

The crews will have the opportunity to make two passes through the stage as part of free practice from 8:00 to 9:20 a.m., while the times measured from these two runs will not be evaluated. The third run, which is scheduled for 9:31 a.m., will be decisive for the crews. They will start according to the order published in advance. The interesting thing about the Qualifying Stage is that, unlike classic special stages, it is measured to thousandths of a second. After the qualification, a test stage, or shakedown, will be held in Komárov from 10:15 to 13:00.

The start of the Qualification Stage, or shakedown, is behind the turnoff from the main road between Napajedla and Topolná. In the opening meters, there is a climb that combines technical section with fast bends. After passing through the village of Komárov, the crews are experiencing a fast descent on high-quality asphalt with lots of corners. This is followed by an interesting passage in the forest area, varied with a number of demanding turns and hairpins near the Hájenka recreation center and the local shooting range. After passing another climb, there is a fast descent and difficult turns around the Leopoldov farm. Immediately after arriving in the village of Pohořelice, there is a new section on a purpose-built road between houses, followed by a difficult junction over the edge between houses, a narrow passage through the village and a series of bends in a spectator area on the village square, including a right hairpin. The finish line is located in the left turn, the stop point is about two hundred meters away by the football field.



BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN

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