

## PRESS RELEASE no. 20

### The fourth virtual Barum rally presented a thrilling battle for victory

For the fourth time, a virtual version of the **BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN** took place as part of the supporting program, taking place in the legendary computer game Richard Burns Rally. However, compared to the previous format, this year brought several innovations and an impressive battle on its track!

The **4th BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN ONLINE** was set as a free event this time, which allowed the organizers to boost the difficulty of the track and the overall length of the competition. For the first time, it was divided into two legs and contained a total of thirteen timed stages with a total length of over 131 competitive kilometres. This summer, the Richard Burns Rally computer game celebrated an extraordinary 20th anniversary since its release, but thanks to the continuous development and work of independent creators creating new tracks, the entire current virtual Barum rally came true. Just like in real life, it started with a city special stage in the streets of Zlín, followed by the usual routes Komárov, Biskupice, Halenkovice, Semetín, Zádveřice and Barák.

A rich starting field of 175 drivers from ten countries gathered at the start, and there were many of them who have attended the real Barum rally live in the past or are preparing for it this year. The biggest favorites were to be found in the RC2 category, with Rally2 and R5 cars of the narrowest Czech-Slovak RBR top scene of the last few years. From the very first liners, a group of competitors crystallized at the top of the standings, constantly overflowing their rankings from the beginning until the end of the first leg. In the end, Tomáš Buriánek in the Citroën C3 Rally2 was the overnight leader, defending a tiny half-second lead over second-placed Pavel Steiner in the Hyundai i20 N Rally2. Almost five seconds behind this duo was the third Štěpán Paulát in a Ford Fiesta Rally2 followed by Dennis Zet'ák driving another Citroën with a second and a half behind. The Slovak driver got an unfortunate oversteered on the first pass through Halenkovice otherwise he'd ended up better. Tomáš John driving another Hyundai, who remained in good shape after his fastest shakedown, ended up closing the top five with just a seven-second loss.

Unfortunately, it was the end for him in this year's online Barum rally as the RaceX WRTeam driver crashed in the opening liner of the second leg and left the competition. The weather had a significant impact on the second half of the day, with the last few laps of the event taking place on wet and slowly drying tarmac. However, this did not slow down the remaining four top drivers, on the contrary! The water literally boosted Zet'ák and Paulát, who pushed the second Steiner behind their backs and in the very end also started to threaten the leading position of Buriánek. The given order resisted the pressure from Zet'ák, who was second after the penultimate SS, but neither of them was able to fend off the crushing finish of Paulát. The latter, after a heroic performance, he took the lead at the last possible moment

and eventually won the whole rally with a difference of only one tenth seconds ahead of second-placed Burianek and seven tenths ahead of third-placed Zet'ák! **"Unbelievable, I gave it everything I had and right at the first big brakes it was too much. Thanks to my rivals, I've never ridden under such pressure and the difference at the finish speaks for itself. Thanks for the organization, it was the highlight of the season and I am looking forward to the next year,"** commented Štěpán Paulát at the finish.

In addition to the top RC2 category, other classes were also raced in the virtual Barum rally. Jan Čech won the RGT category with Alpine A110 RGT ahead of Lukáš Prošek with Porsche, who failed the final inspection and the silver medal went to Michal Labudek with another 911. The third place in the official classification among the GTs belongs to Jozef Mydliar from Slovakia, driving another Alpine.

The category of the strongest RC3 2WDs was led by Robert Kořístka, who already has a second experience with the real Barum rally tracks from a driver's seat. He took to the virtual tracks in a Citroën C2 S1600, with which he beat second place Stanislav Juřic in the more modern Citroën DS3 R3T Max by less than a quarter of a minute. The French vehicles eventually dominated the winning podium in this category, as the bronze position was taken by Martin Kožíšek with another C2.

In the RC4 category, it was the current Rally4 cars that played the main role. The fastest of them was the Renault Clio of Slovak driver Mario Juhasz, who successfully defended the first place almost from the beginning of the rally. Less than a minute behind him at the finish line was the local Jindřich Španěl in a Peugeot 208, with third place going to Poland to Mark Ogrodzki in the same car.

Michal Vasicek dominated the classification of the least powerful 2WDs. The second best time was set by Tomáš Hopp, but even he did not meet the conditions of the final inspection and the silver trophy went to Martin Julínek. The third place went to David Soják. The RC5 category consisted of just one car, with all the drivers driving in Renaults Clio Rally5.

The 4th Barum Czech Rally Zlín Online has offered a lot of fun, adrenalin and valuable prizes, which will go to the top three drivers in the overall classification. The drivers will be awarded at a ceremony just before the start of the real Barum Rally, on 16th August 2024 at the Barum Czech Rally Zlín starting ramp in Zlín on Náměstí Míru square, with the ceremony of this year's virtual Barum Rally scheduled for 3:15 pm.

More information available at [www.czechrally.com](http://www.czechrally.com) and don't forget to follow the Barum rally on the official Facebook, Instagram, and X accounts as well as the other press information.

#### 4th Barum Czech Rally Zlín Online - overall standings

1.	Štěpán Paulát (CZE), Ford Fiesta Rally2	67:22,33
2.	Tomáš Buriánek (CZE), Citroën C3 Rally2	+0,13
3.	Dennis Zeťák (SVK), Citroën C3 Rally2	+0,68
4.	Pavel Steiner (CZE), Hyundai i20 N Rally2	+6,99
5.	David Hrbáček (CZE), Hyundai i20 N Rally2	+48,77
6.	Štefan Spišák (SVK), Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+1:16,59
7.	Martin Bujáček (CZE), Ford Fiesta Rally2	+1:56,94
8.	Robin Suchánek (CZE), Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+2:26,16
9.	Jakub Bujáček (CZE), Ford Fiesta Rally2	+3:09,11
10.	Dominik Hořčica (CZE), Škoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+4:31,39

#### Complete results:

<https://rbr.onlineracing.cz/index.php?act=tourmntres2&torid=4fe61ace07a024fcb358e0b381ea3153>

#### SS victories:

Štěpán Paulát – 4, Dennis Zeťák – 4, Tomáš Buriánek – 3, Tomáš John – 1, Mateusz Polok – 1

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