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BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN

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The autograph session of the stars in the Golden Apple attracted thousands of fans!

Thousands of excited rally fans gathered on Wednesday evening at the Golden Apple Shopping and Entertainment Centre in the centre of Zlín, where the traditional autograph session of the leading crews of the **53rd BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN 2024** took place. Signature cards or joint photos were handed out by the complete top of the Czech and European championship, who together with the fans were in a great mood for the upcoming start of the demanding competition.

Long queues of motoring enthusiasts were already forming in the Golden Apple tens of minutes before the official start of the program. The highlights were the crews of the European Championship, including the championship leader and defending champion Hayden Paddon from New Zealand and his closest pursuer Mathieu Franceschi from France. **"It's great to be back in the Czech Republic after a year and to see so many passionate rally fans. Last year was the first time we competed here and we have only the best memories of the atmosphere. Especially the city stage is amazing. It's clear that our sport is very popular here and we are looking forward to seeing it all again,"** smiled Paddon during the autograph session.

In addition to the European top drivers, the meeting with the fans was also attended by the leading crews of the domestic championship. Experienced racers and multiple winners of Barum rally Jan Kopecký and Václav Pech, the current leader of the Czech championship Dominik Střiteský, or home favourites Erik Cais and Adam Březík were not missing. Their autographs were of particular interest among the fans. **"We are glad that such a large number of fans found their way to the autograph session. It confirms that the Barum rally enjoys a huge popularity among drivers and visitors, which has persisted for many decades. We believe that, as in previous years, we will all enjoy a beautiful competition in a great atmosphere,"** said Roman Ordelt, Press Relations Offices of the event.

Among the competitors who signed autographs or took photos together, there was also the Bulgarian rider Ekaterina Stratieva, waiting for her fifteenth start in Zlín. **"When I started here for the first time, I was absolutely blown away by the atmosphere. It's unbelievable how quickly the fifteen years have passed. It's an amazing rally and I thank everyone for their support,"** said the Opel Corsa Rally4 driver.

The evening program in the Golden Apple lasted more than an hour, after which all the visitors went home happy. The next opportunity to meet the star crews will be on Thursday 15 August, when the autograph session of the Star Rally Historic drivers will take place at the same place. The competition itself will then begin on Friday, when the engines of the race cars will first sound on the morning qualification stage in Oldřichovice and then all the participants will drive through the starting ramp on Zlín's Náměstí Míru Square. The first sharp kilometres await them on the traditional urban super special stage in the streets of Zlín.

More information available at 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.

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INFORMATION



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