

**PRESS RELEASE no. 29**

**Czech driver Erik Cais won the qualifying stage**

The Oldřichovice qualifying stage opened the program of the **53rd BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN 2024** on Friday morning. On the 2,7 kilometre-long track with the finish overlooking the town of Otrokovice, the starting order of the competing crews for Saturday's leg was determined. The overall fastest time of the drivers with ERC1 priority was set by the home favourite Erik Cais, who will start Saturday's leg from the first starting position. He was closely followed by Austrian Simon Wagner and Miko Marczyk from Poland (all in Škoda Fabia RS Rally2).

Twenty-five-year-old Cais demonstrated that he arrived at this year's Barum rally in great shape and is ready to fight for the top positions in his home region again. **"I'm excited. We'll see if the first position at the start will be an advantage or a disadvantage. Hopefully the weather will help us as well,"** smiled the racer after reaching the finish of qualifying.

Seven tenths of a second behind Caise was the runner-up, Simon Wagner from Austria, who will try to continue in taking a podium as he did for the last two years in Zlín. The fans will be able to see Mike Marczyk of Poland as third on the track on Saturday, being another three tenths behind in qualifying.

A busy programme awaits the competing crews on Friday, 16 August; from 4 pm on Náměstí Míru square in Zlín, they will drive through the starting ramp and in the evening they will take part in the popular urban special stage in the Bat'a complex.

**Standings of the qualifying SS Oldřichovice – length 2,77 km**

1. Cais, Bacigál (CZE/SVK, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	1:40,992 min
2. Wagner, Hain (AUT/GER, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 0,769 s
3. Marczyk, Gospodarczyk (POL, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 1,011 s
4. Mareš, Bucha (CZE, Toyota GR Yaris Rally2)	+ 1,045 s
5. Llarena, Fernández (ESP, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 1,050 s
6. Franceschi, Malfoy (FRA, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 1,167 s
7. Stříteský, Hovorka (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 1,238 s
8. Kopecký, Hloušek (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 1,301 s
9. Březík, Krajča (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 1,305 s
10. Neubauer/Ettel (AUT, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2)	+ 1,859 s

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.

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