

PRESS RELEASE no. 43

Feedback from the leading crews after reaching the finish of Barum rally

53rd BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN 2024 is history. Many stories were written, fans saw great battles for the top positions, drama caused by unpredictable weather, and finally, after eight years, new winners. We asked the most successful crews about their fresh impressions and emotions right in front of the finish ramp at Zlín's Náměstí Míru square.

Dominik Stříteský (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 15):

"It's fantastic to make a dream come true like this, and in front of a home crowd in a tough Barum rally. We are happy to have made it. Thanks to everyone who supported us, the team, partners, fans and families. It was not easy."

Simon Wagner (AUT, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 10):

"It's great to be here on the podium for the third time in a row. I'm also happy for Jara and the whole team, who I thank very much, as well as Michelin and Skoda Motorsport. It was an amazing weekend, the young Czech drivers are driving like crazy, but we really enjoyed it. We hope to be back next year."

Erik Cais (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 11):

"I'm happy, but it's a bit bitter-sweet because I know what speed we had, it could have worked for the win. But we'll take third place and we're happy."

Adam Březík (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 17):

"Some things went well, some things didn't. I see the negatives now, I will find the positives in a week."

Filip Mareš (CZE, Toyota GR Yaris Rally2, starting number 12):

"Satisfaction is relative. It is not a victory, but on the other hand, if we look for positives, we certainly have some. Today we won two stages, being second in the leg. The starting field was full of good home riders. They all did great. It's certainly no shame that we are in the top five."

Efrén Llarena (ESP, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 2):

"I think it's good. In general we had the pace to finish better, but after yesterday's mistake we lost all our opportunities. Today we were more involved in the fight for positions, but when you don't have enough space to do more it's hard to push. We will definitely be back next year."

Miko Marczyk (POL, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 7):

"It's always good to finish the Barum rally, we take seventh place. It would definitely be better to fight for a medal one day, but for now I admit that we can't do more now. I'm happy that we scored well in the ERC."

Hermann Neubauer (AUT, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 25):

"I'm happy. I've been here three times and never finished. I drove well in the last SS, I accelerated a little bit. However, mistakes through the weekend meant I had no way of catching the others. Thank you so much to everyone who helped me get to the finish of the Zlín Rally."

Jan Kopecký (CZE, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 16):

"First of all, I want to congratulate Dominik, he has done a really great job this year and clearly deserves to win at Barum rally. The same goes for Jirka Hovorka, who is actually almost my neighbour because he comes from a village a few kilometres from Kostelec nad Orlicí. Today must be a festive day for him too. We are glad that we kept up with them and justled for the first place at the beginning. Then, unfortunately, there was a puncture and too much effort on the wet Rajnochovice. We sorted ourselves out."

Václav Pech (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting number 18):

"We tried to learn as much as possible how to control the R5 category car. We still have a long way to go."

Martin László (HUN, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 14):

"Sunday was not easy. The fight with Albert was close. He overtook us, but I think it was our position, so we took it back. And next year? Hopefully we'll be back."

Hayden Paddon (NZL, Hyundai i20 N Rally2, starting number 1):

"It was a very tough competition. It's a shame about the four minutes we lost yesterday, otherwise we could have been fighting for the top five. But today we scored some points on the Power Stage and we're successfully at the finish line, which is good."

Albert von Thurn und Taxis (GER, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 24):

"We had a lot of fun, especially this morning I felt really great on such challenging stages. I was happy with our times. I made a few mistakes in the afternoon for which I apologize. It was a cool rally, the car is at the finish line without a single scratch, which I'm also very happy about. I'm happy to be at the finish and to have found the pace that we didn't have yesterday, so we ended on a positive note."

Aleš Jirásek (CZE, Škoda Fabia R5, starting number 19):

"I have mixed feelings. I made mistakes that I could have forgiven myself. They then affected our pace. I made a mistake in the morning at Smetín and all day I just wanted to finish. The only way to improve our performance was to reach the finish. There was nowhere to hurry. We weren't aiming for Europe and the guys in the Czech championship were far behind us. I regret the mistakes, but we were lucky to be here."

Andrea Mabellini (ITA, Škoda Fabia RS Rally2, starting number 8):

"We are at the finish line, which is great. Competitions like this are mainly about gaining experience. You can't come from Italy and race here against home riders and think you're going to win. Our goal was to achieve it, but we tried at least not to make any mistakes and bring the car to the finish in one piece. We did that, which is great because it's very easy to make mistakes here. Especially when it starts raining like yesterday, that's always a big risk. We're happy for this year and we'll see how we do here next time."

Filip Kohn (CZE, Ford Fiesta Rally3, starting number 27):

„Děkuji moc týmu, a hlavně mému tátovi. Jsem šťastný, že jsme v cíli. Získali jsme dobré body, porazili skvělé jezdce.“

Dan Polášek (CZE, Peugeot 208 Rally4, starting number 35):

"Amazing feelings, we are especially happy to be in the finish because it was both mentally and physically demanding. I just got on the scales yesterday at home and had already three kilos less than last week. The conditions were challenging, yesterday's storm messed with that a lot. We are happy."



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Jon Armstrong (IRL, Ford Fiesta Rally2 MKII, starting number 9):

"Saturday didn't went as planned, it was spoiled by a double puncture. Today we tried to enjoy the ride and the amazing but difficult roads. The best roads to ride on. Overall, I think we were fast. Yes, we would like to be closer to the best, but the Czech guys are incredibly fast. We have to keep learning and hopefully we will be faster next year."

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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