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BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN

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Qualification on asphalt under new rules this year

Prelude to 53. BARUM CZECH RALLY ZLÍN 2024 will be a qualifying session for registered ERC1 crews on Friday 16th August in the morning, followed by a test stage or a so called shakedown. This year it will take place in Oldřichovice on a 2.77 km long section. It will be the first time that this section will be run in the ERC European Championship, moreover with new rules. The route of the test stage partly uses the legendary Maják special stage.

The qualification stage was firstly introduced in the European Rally Championship (ERC) during the gravel rallies, and since 2014 it has become a part of all European Championship events. Two years back, only ERC1-registered drivers, which are crews with Rally2 cars, were given the opportunity to run both free practice and the qualification stage. All others, including other priorities, are referred to the classic shakedown only. Starting this year, the championship promoter together with the FIA has come up with a significant innovation, whereby on asphalt courses, drivers do not choose their starting order for the first leg but they are lined up based on the qualification time results. In practice, this means that the fastest qualifier starts first and the top fifteen are determined by their times.

After them, drivers who did not make it to the top 15, but were on the list published by the sports commissioners before the start of the qualification stage, can start the first leg. After the group of these Rally2 drivers, all the others will start Saturday's leg according to the entry list.

The crews will have the opportunity to make two passes through the free practice section between 8 and 9:20 a.m., and the measured times from these two runs will not be evaluated. The third run, scheduled for 9:31 a.m., will be the decisive run for the crews. The crews will start the race according to the pre-published order. An interesting feature of the qualification stage is that, unlike conventional stages, it is measured to thousandths of a second. After the qualifying session, a test stage, or so called shakedown, will take place in Oldřichovice from 10:15 to 13:00. The service area for free practice, qualifying stage and shakedown will be located in the Continental Barum s.r.o. complex in Otrokovice, any service outside the service area is prohibited!

The start of both, the qualification stage and the shakedown, is in the village of Oldřichovice in the direction from Pohořelice. Right in the initial meters the crews pass the municipal office and then a short passage on the county road awaits them. There is a challenging right turn at the local church, followed by a technical passage on a purpose-built local road in the village. After a short exit over rough terrain, the crews reach a challenging switchback at a former agricultural cooperative. They then have a fast section on the farm road with a left turn back onto the county road. After completing a challenging serpentine downhill, there is a sharp right turn onto a narrow purpose-built road with good quality tarmac. There is a fleeting finish after 400 metres and a stopping point after a further 500 metres.

More information available at www.czechrally.com and don't forget to follow the Barum rally on the official Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts and the other press information.

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