

Jan Černý is surprisingly leading Rally Bohemia after Leg 1

Press Release No. 14

Mladá Boleslav, 13th July 2019

Challenging conditions in the form of very changable weather awaited crews in the first stage of 46th Rally Bohemia. The order was significantly influenced especially by the late 11th special stage Milíře II, where most pilots from the foreground of the field suffered a puncture at the same spot.

46th Rally Bohemia is in its half and has a very exciting development. The reigning WRC 2 World Champion and also the ŠKODA Motorsport main favorite of the competition, Jan Kopecký, did not make the optimal choice of tires for the first passes of the new special stages and was also out of the track for about ten seconds on Special Stage 4. Before the afternoon service break, he was unexpectedly third with a loss of seventeen seconds to his Finnish teammate Kalle Rovanperä, who took the lead with the second Škoda Fabia R5 evo and demonstrated from the very beginning that he got used to the character of Czech tracks very quickly. There was also a lot of success for the leading man of this year's Czech Rally Championship, Filip Mareš, who won two special stages and was second after the first half of the leg with a loss of only five seconds on Rovanperä. Jan Černý and fifth Václav Pech had almost identical time after the first part of the leg, Jan Dohnal and Simon Wagner were struggling for the sixth place with a loss of over fifty seconds.

In the second part of the Saturday leg in the hills in the Liberec region, there was a very variable weather with frequent intense showers. In particular, tire defects on stage 11 Milíře came into play in the middle of this competition section. From the top of the starting field, only Jan Černý and Jan Dohnal avoided defects. The remaining front crews lost about three quarters of a minute by driving with punctures. Jan Černý was in the lead on the Škoda Fabia R5, and his leadership continued until the finish of the first leg. Behind him, the ŠKODA Motorsport factory team drivers are second and third as Kalle Rovanperä lost 7.6 seconds and Jan Kopecký 12.7 seconds. Not far behind them Filip Mareš with Fabia R5 follows, losing 22 seconds. The fifth is Jan Dohnal with Ford Focus WRC with a loss of 37.5 seconds, despite the fact that he was hampered by the limited wiper functionality in the final special stage. Václav Pech with Ford Fiesta R5 is losing more than a minute.

The situation in the first trio is therefore completely open before the Sunday leg. From the first special stage, ŠKODA Motorsport factory team's chasing of Jan Černý can be expected and especially a team battle between Kalle Rovanperä and Jan Kopecký. In the second section of Saturday's leg, after the tires were changed, the stages were running at times that were no more than one second apart.

In the classification of 2WD cars with one driven axle, Petr Semerád, a 18-year-old talent, on Opel Adam R2, with a 15-second lead over Václav Stejskal junior on Renault Clio R3T, are on leading positions. The third Tomáš Knápek is losing forty seconds. As expected, there is a tight battle between Martin Šíkl and Jaroslav Pešl in the class 3 production cars, with only a 5.4 second spacing between them.

On Saturday, the starting field of the Czech Historic Rally Championship was the first on the track. Here after the first stage, the main favorite Vlastimil Neumann is leading with Ford Escort RS

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Cosworth 4x4, who has already taken a lead of four and a half minutes before second Vratislav Hýbner on the Peugeot 205 GTI and third Teodor Stolarek from Poland on Suzuki Swift GTI.

In Sunday's final stage, the crews will have seven special stages with a total length of 77 kilometers.

Detailed results and other information on all parts of Rally Bohemia 2019 can be found at www.rallybohemia.cz. There is also the Internet Radio Rally Bohemia, which will broadcast interviews with the pilots from special stages during the competition and other information. You can also watch more information and get interesting facts about the competition on social networks. The traditional general partner of the competition is car company ŠKODA AUTO.

Rally Bohemia can be found on these accounts on social networks:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/rallybohemia

Youtube: www.youtube.com/user/RallyBohemia

Instagram: www.instagram.com/rallybohemia

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