

Media Information



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The Central European Rally eagerly awaits its WRC premiere

- **Exciting battle for top positions in the WRC at the Central European Rally**
- **A huge programme and prize draw for those car sharing await fans**
- **Advance ticket sale over – from Wednesday, only tickets for individual stages are available**

The teams in the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) have arrived, the special stages have been set up, and the organisers, volunteers and visitors are ready: everyone is excited about the premiere of the Central European Rally (26th to 29th October), the twelfth and penultimate WRC round of the season. At stake on the 18 special stages, with over 310 kilometres against the clock, is no less than the world championship title: Finnish Toyota driver Kalle Rovanperä could be crowned champion on the routes in Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. His last remaining rival in the title race is team-mate Elvyn Evans (GBR) in second place. Behind the Toyota duo, Belgium's Thierry Neuville (Hyundai) and Ott Tänak (EST, Ford) are battling it out for third place in the world championship. There promises to be fireworks when the rally gets underway in Prague on Thursday afternoon. Visitors can also look forward to a packed programme with multiple designated Fan Zones offering information, entertainment, live music and catering. The latest information and news on the action will be available all weekend on the rally homepage at centraleuropeanrally.eu.

Once the teams have moved into their positions in the Service Park in Passau, the 68 crews that make up the WRC field will go exploring from Monday onwards: on the so-called "Recce", they will discover the selective asphalt stages for the first time, before taking them on against the clock from Thursday. "I like new rallies and new challenges," says title contender Kalle Rovanperä. "A focussed recce obviously forms the basis of any success. I am intrigued what awaits us." The Finn finds himself in a strong position, coming into the penultimate round with a comfortable lead. "The way things stand in the world championship at the moment, I can afford to take a few more risks and go for the win. That obviously suits me," he explains. Belgian Thierry Neuville currently has his nose in front in the battle for third place in the championship, although his advantage of nine points over Ford's Ott Tänak is less comfortable. "My goal is to win. After all, I am a racing driver," says Neuville. "You have to have me on your radar, particularly at asphalt rallies. However, there are a few others who will have a say at the very front. That is what makes the World Rally Championship so great and so exciting. We know the usual suspects: it would surprise me if Ogier, Rovanperä, Evans and Tänak were not battling with us for victory. And you should also keep an eye out for my Hyundai team-mates. Esapekka Lappi and Teemu Suninen are really fast on asphalt. They could definitely cause an upset if we get everything together." So, the stage is set for more sporting drama – particularly as the strong WRC2 class is also set to provide plenty of excitement. Furthermore, the field also features a host of promising native drivers, who will want to have a say in the battle for class wins. Completing the field are the teams in the ADAC Opel Electric Rally Cup "powered by GSE", who will also start on certain individual stages and offer a glimpse of what motorsport could look like in the future.



Media Information



Diverse fan programme and live music in the Fan Zones

The highlights for visitors begin as early as Thursday: once Czech President Petr Pavel and Prime Minister Petr Píala have got the race started in Hradčany Square, the competitors head straight to the spectator stage at the racecourse in Prague (Velké Chuchle). Early that evening, they take on a compact circuit in Klatovy, where a large Fan Zone awaits visitors in the town centre, with entertainment on offer into the evening. Friday features six exciting stages in the Bohemian Forest in the Czech Republic. At the same time, Peilstein in Austria will be preparing for the WRC circus. Here, the large Fan Zone will already be up and running, with an LCD screen showing the rally action live. The highlight is the open-air concert with “The Voice” star Nana Falkner and chart toppers “folkshilfe” on the LT1 show stage (tickets at oeticket.com). On Saturday and Sunday, the action shifts to the routes in Bavaria and Upper Austria. The hotspots on Saturday will again be the Fan Zone in Peilstein and the Fan Zone at the Hochwaldhalle in Lackenhäuser. The day draws to a close on Saturday evening with live music in the fan arena at the Service Park in Passau.

Sustainable transport concept with shuttle buses and car sharing

Sustainability plays a major role in the concept of the new world championship rally. This fits perfectly with the WRC concept, in which the cars in the top class have been using hybrid drivetrains and fossil-free fuel for a long time. The organisers have also focussed on visitor transport as an important driving force behind reducing CO2 emissions. In order to improve the flow of traffic in the rally region, whilst at the same time reducing emissions, a shuttle system from the car parks to the route will be in place at certain stages in Germany and Austria. This service will run during the Shakedown on Wednesday. On Saturday, shuttles will run to and from certain Fan Zones on SS 11/14 Knaus Tabbert Bayerischer Wald and SS 10/13 Mühlthal. On Sunday, visitors will be able to reach all the Fan Zones on the Passauer Land special stage by shuttle from the visitor car park. Another important issue for the organisers is the appeal to visitors to share lifts. Anyone who travels with others – for example, via the ADAC Pendlernetz platform – is not only saving the environment but will also be entered into an attractive prize draw. Each car arriving at the visitor car parks with at least four passengers will receive a number of entries into the draw relative to the number of people in the car. The winners will then be drawn on a daily basis. All important information can be found at the event homepage at centraleuropeanrally.eu/ride-sharing.

Well informed and directed: free magazine, smartphone app and impressive homepage

Another aspect of the sustainability concept is the extensive avoidance of paper and the logistical effort caused by printing. What starts with a largely paper-free ticket system continues with visitor information: rally guests can choose between multiple digital formats, in order to remain well informed about the rally and well directed in the rally region (in offline mode too). For example, the homepage has detailed sketches and information on Fan Zones, including navigation links for the main navigation tools. They are available to be used online or downloaded at centraleuropeanrally.eu/program. The rally magazine can also be downloaded as a free PDF on the homepage. This also includes information on all the spectator points, as well as important things like the entry list, schedule and safety information. It goes without saying that the magazine also features detailed reports on the weekend’s sporting action, making it an indispensable and useful companion, which is perfectly suited to mobile devices. Last but not least, the smartphone app from event partner TW-Sportsoft combines online and offline information. It is available free of charge for Android and iOS



Media Information

devices in the app stores. After selecting the Central European Rally, the app clearly provides all maps and sketches of the Fan Zones, basic information, the rally magazine, live results, and much more. This way, the smartphone becomes your own rally command centre. The maps in both the programme and the app can be easily downloaded at home, ensuring they are then available on site when mobile reception by not be ideal.

Download links for smartphone app "TW-Sportsoft"

iOS devices: apps.apple.com/de/app/tw-sportsoft/id6445867133

Android devices: play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.tw_sportsoft

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