

Media Information



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Strong line up for the third staging of the Central European Rally

- The elite of the rally world assemble with the WRC in the tri-border region from 16th to 19th October 2025
- Strong German teams – and a rising female driver in the Junior World Rally Championship
- Roughly 100 rally teams in the WRC and support series set to make the Central European Rally a motorsport festival

München. The very best rally drivers in the world will line up at the 2025 Central European Rally, which promises to deliver a thrilling battle in the race for the world title. The 48 teams in the official starter list include the championship leaders and their closest rivals in the scrap for the WRC crown – from Sébastien Ogier, Elfyn Evans and Kalle Rovanperä in the Toyota, to Thierry Neuville and Ott Tänak in the Hyundai, not to mention the Ford M-Sport spearheads. It is also well worth taking a closer look at the field from a German perspective: particular focus will be on Claire Schönborn in the WRC Young Driver Team, as well as the top drivers in the German Rally Championship. Behind them, a host of impressive WRC2 and WRC3 drivers and co-drivers from Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic will help ramp up the excitement levels. The full starter list and tickets for the event are available online at centraleuropeanrally.eu.

In the race for the world title, all of the top contenders will travel en masse to the Central European Rally, which, as one of three all-asphalt rallies on this season's calendar, looks set to be particularly explosive. After victories in Chile and Paraguay, championship leader Sébastien Ogier has a slender advantage over his Toyota team-mate Elfyn Evans, while Kalle Rovanperä is lurking within striking distance. Hyundai hopes are pinned on Ott Tänak and Thierry Neuville, who struggled recently on gravel and desperately need to score heavily on the European asphalt. Ford M-Sport drivers Grégoire Munster and Josh McErlean are also hoping to benefit from the challenging routes in Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic – traditionally a terrain, on which the asphalt specialists have a clear advantage.

WRC2: Top international drivers and impressive local racers

The title race has already been decided in the WRC2 class – Oliver Solberg (Toyota / Printsport) travels as the newly-crowned champion. However, the battle for the runner-up spot in the championship rumbles on at the CER, guaranteeing plenty of drama: Skoda Fabia drivers Roberto Daprà and Nikolay Gryazin are among the most promisingly positioned contenders. They line up against other strong drivers, including Alejandro Cachón (Toyota). Adding a bit of local flair will be Czech aces Jan Černý (Skoda), Filip Mareš (Toyota) and Filip Kohn (Skoda). There will also be lots of attention on Toyota driver Fabio Schwarz, the son of former WRC star Armin Schwarz, who is contesting his first season in WRC2 in his father's team.



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WRC3 / Junior WRC: German hopes rest with Claire Schönborn

German eyes will be on the field in the Junior World Championship, where a young German driver will be in action. Claire Schönborn came through a shoot-out against international opposition in the 2024 CER, and won the WRC “Beyond Rally” initiative at the start of 2025. Since then, she has been competing for the WRC Young Driver Team in her first season in the Junior World Rally Championship. Up to this point, she has been racing on loose ground in her first real season in JWRC, and has thus struggled somewhat. Now, however, she is determined to show her full potential in optimal conditions for the first time on asphalt. Drivers like Mille Johansson and Taylor Gill have dominated almost all the rallies so far, and are thus sitting pretty at the top of the JWRC table.

National starters: German champion Geipel starts on the WRC platform, along with Gaßner junior and senior

A whole host of teams are using the WRC event in their home country to gain experience on the international stage and (compared to national events) to learn from this “XXL rally”. They include genuine local favourites: Hermann Gaßner senior and junior will run two Renault Clio Rally3 cars. With a total of five DRM titles and many other successes, the Bavarian team is always good for a sporting surprise – even though that is no easy task on the WRC stage. Other well-known German rally drivers also want to mix things up, including 2023 champion Philip Geipel (Toyota GR Yaris Rally2), who currently lies second in the table, and Timo Weigert (Renault Clio Rally3). Completing the German contingent is a strong national Peugeot fraction, consisting of Johann Retzer, Florian Auer, Johannes Schmid (all Peugeot 208 Rally4) and Thomas Pahlitzsch (Peugeot 208 T16), as well as Ford driver Guido Hudelmaier (Fiesta Rally3).

Action-packed support programme

Once the WRC field has passed through certain stages, the action continues with the support programme. One of the highlights is the collection of almost 40 hand-selected original cars belonging to the Slowly Sideways group. Legendary cars like the Audi quattro S1, Lancia Stratos and Delta Integrale, Peugeot 205 T16, and the rare MG Metro 6R4 Group B will take to the route for a captivating demonstration run – without the pressure of competition, but with the goal of delighting spectators: fans are in for a treat when the legends bring rallying history to life. Furthermore, they can look forward to watching over a dozen Opel Corsa Rally Electric cars on the stages. The first one-make electric rally cup in the world, the ADAC Opel Electric Rally Cup powered by GSE is showcasing the future of rallying.

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