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Press release 1: Rashid Al-Ketbi of Dubai to test Istrian roads at 43. Croatia rally

Exactly three weeks are remaining to the ceremonial start of the 43. Croatia rally, oldest and most difficult motorsport event in Croatia. This year Croatia rally will be held from 29. September till 1. October and it will be penultimate station of European Rally trophy for Central Europe. Preparations for the 456 kilometers long rally have entered the final phase. The response of the crews is excellent, and closing date for entries is 14. September.

For the fourth consecutive year Croatia rally will be held in Istrian peninsula. The Headquarters of the rally, service area, start and finish are located in the center of the city of Poreč. The itinerary consists of 12 special stages, 185 km long, on 6 different tarmac tracks. In comparison to last years event the most of the special stages have been changed, but still they pass through well-known sections of narrow Istrian roads.

Last year's winners Murat Bostanci and Onur Vatansever unfortunately will not be able to defend their title, but there will be a fierce podium fight. At the moment crews from nine countries have entered the rally, led by Rashid Al-Ketbi and Karina Hepperle with Ford Fiesta R5. The crew from United Arab Emirates and Germany is currently leading FIA ERT championship of the Balkan region, and this will be her first appearance in the FIA ERT Central Europe series.

Crews fighting for the final FIA ERT competition, to be held in Austria in the second half of November, could win crucial point in Croatia. For it's complexity, Croatia rally has coefficient of 3, so the crews can win the triple points. Croatian crews Juraj Sebalj and Maja Sabol, as well as Krisztian Hideg and Istvan Kerek are in the top of the standings. FIA ERT final will be reached by top three crews.

Key Dates:

- 14. September – Closing date for entries
- 23. September – Publication of Entry list
- 29. September – Ceremonial Start
- 30. September – Start of Leg 1
- 01. October – Start of Leg 2 and Finish of rally

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