

# High-speed racing

Andrea Zanussi (Italy) is winner

By Bogdan STEFANOV

The traditional international motor rally (named after two of the best Bulgarian sea resorts - Golden Sands and Albena) has attracted leading European drivers also this year. With a coefficient of 4, the rally in its first stage - Varna-Sliven (611 km) - included sixteen speed stretches of 242 km each, 75 km of

which on macadam and 167 km on asphalt. According to schedule the distance had to be covered in little over 12 hours.

Eighty-four crews from 13 countries started in the prologue, i.e. the closed circuit competition in the Albena resort. Those tipped by experts to win included the

*(Continued on page 8, column 4)*



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*(Continued from p. 1)*

Italian Andrea Zanussi with a Fiat 131 Abarth, the Hungarian Attila Ferienc driving a Renault 5 Turbo, Blazey Krupa from Poland also driving a Renault 5 Turbo, the Englishman Simon Everett who was driving a powerful Vauxhall-Chevette and the Bulgarian Iliya Choubrikov in a Porsche 911 SC. A fantastic race took place along the narrow alleys used for romantic walks by guests at the Albena resort.

The column was led by Zanussi, followed by Ferienc and Choubrikov. And suddenly everyone's attention was riveted on a red-and-white Porsche 911 SC. Later, the Belgian Marc Duez began methodically to overtake those ahead of him one by one, including Zanussi himself. The Belgian's excellent driving and mastery in negotiating the bends along the track made him winner of the prologue on the Albena track with a new record of 8.56 min.

The name of Marc Duez is not unfamiliar to those who follow closely the developments in motor racing: he is a competitor in Formula 3 of the Belgian championship, is well known as a great master in track races, and this year won victories in several rallies.

Yet Zanussi had not said his final say as his car Fiat 131 Abarth is very powerful on mountain stretches, especially macadam. Moreover, the Italian's navigator was a man who is said to make every partner a European champion. This was so with Antonio Zannini, Adartico Vudafieri and a number of other drivers. The name of this "grey eminence" is Bernacchini. It was his skillful piloting that enabled Andrea Zanussi to take the lead after

the long mountainous stage in the first night. Duez made great efforts to hold on to the first place but was only successful in doing so up to the fifth speed stage. Thenceforward the Italian reigned supreme. The two Renaults 5 Turbo of last year's European bronze medallist Ferienc and of Krupa came only seconds behind the leader. To the great chagrin of the hosts, Iliya Choubrikov's car developed a fault in the gear box and dropped out of the race. The best placed Bulgarian crew with a Porsche 911 SC driven by Radoslav Petkov was fifth.

On the way back in the second stage the drivers started in the following order: Zanussi, Ferienc, Krupa, Duez, Petkov, etc., Zanussi and Ferienc having increased their edge over the others by several seconds, by the time they reached the town of Shoumen (northern Bulgaria). Forty-five cars qualified for participation in the race over the final stretch leading up to the finish in Golden Sands. The only female crew in the rally with Renate Blume of the FRG as driver of a Peugeot 104 punctured a tyre in the closed route, clocked the worst time, thus performing well below the preliminary expectations.

The final standings are as follows: Andrea Zanussi (Italy) in a Fiat 131 Abarth, Attila Ferienc (Hungary) in a Renault 5 Turbo, Blazey Krupa in a Renault 5 Turbo, Marc Duez (Belgium) in a Porsche 911 SC, Radoslav Petkov (Bulgaria) in a Porsche 911 SC, etc.

**Andrea Zanussi, winner of the Golden Sands - Albena rally:** "The contest was simply fascinating. It is seldom that one sees such a rally in which the lead changes hands so often and the time differences are so small."