

Brendo has maintained fourth place at the end of day two of Rally Tasmania, at the wheel of a Subaru Impreza WRX STI prepared by Launceston's Les Walkden Rallying.

Driving against factory-backed Toyotas in the three-day, all-tarmac rally, Brendo and his co-driving sister, Rhianon Smyth, maintained fourth place for the entire day, which entailed eight stages and 116 competitive kilometres of driving.

They are comfortably in fourth place, although a puncture late in the day allowed the Toyota of fellow young gun, Glen Raymond, to close the gap.

"It's been a good day all things considered," Brendo said back at the service park in Burnie. "I cut a corner a little too tight on Savage River and put a small cut in the right front tyre. It didn't look too bad, but then three stages later the tyre blew out, taking the front mud guard and driver's side mirror with it! I'm not sure at this stage if the two incidents were related or not.

"We were quite lucky that the wiring loom didn't get torn out as well, because it caused a lot of damage. We drove the final five kilometres as fast as we could, but dropped around a minute to Glen (Raymond).

"Thankfully we've managed to maintain our fourth place. The car is going really well and I'm making improvements with the handling all the time. We just need to be consistent tomorrow and bring it home in one piece."

This is Brendo's first event for Les Walkden Rallying since the Rally of Melbourne at the end of 2007. The young Victorian spent last season honing his skills in a number of low powered, front-wheel drive cars, and is relishing being back in the all-wheel drive Subaru.

"It's fantastic to have lots of horsepower and four-wheel drive again," he grinned. "From the moment we began testing the car during the week I've loved every minute of it.

"It's such an awesome car to drive, and I'm rapt to have been given the opportunity from Les (Walkden) and the team."

Rally Tasmania continues tomorrow with a further eight stages which make up another 62 competitive kilometres.

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Note: Brendo currently holds down fourth place overall in Rally Tasmania, but the actual ARC pointscores will be determined by adding Leg 1 times to Leg 3 at the completion of the event on Sunday as ARC events can only consist of two heats. This means in the ARC tally, Brendo is currently in fifth place, just 0.6 seconds behind Glen Raymond.