

**Young Australian rally driver Brendan Reeves will be up against two of the Asia Pacific region's most experienced rally drivers in one of the subsidiary competitions being contested during July's International Rally of Whangarei.**

As well as competing for overall honours in the two-day rally, 21-year-old Reeves is gunning for points in the 2010 FIA Pacific Cup, a segment of the 2010 FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship. Also registered for Pacific Cup points are two of the sport's long-time competitors, New Zealand's Brian Green and Jean-Louis Leyraud from New Caledonia.

Reeves has contested the Whangarei event for the past two years, finishing third overall last year in a Subaru Impreza borrowed from Emma Gilmour.

Reeves' 2010 Pacific Cup campaign takes he and co-driving sister Rhianon Smyth to Rally Queensland and Rally New Caledonia after the Whangarei event.

"I really want to move my rally career onto the international stage and this is the first step, an amazing opportunity, and I will be driving at my best to take out first place," says the Victorian driver who will drive a Subaru Impreza that belonged to another top Kiwi competitor, Richard Mason, on the rally stages around the Whangarei.

While Green and Leyraud are nearly three times Reeves' age, their vast experience on all the three Pacific Cup rallies is not to be underestimated. Reeves is well aware both are former champions and said: "The best advice I was ever given was 'to finish first, first you must finish' and that will be my strategy."

Other entrants in the Pacific Cup are last year's Rally Whangarei winner, Hayden Paddon, and current New Zealand Rally Championship leader, Dean Sumner. Paddon and Sumner, as well as young Kiwi drivers, Sloan Cox and Ben Jagger, are all registered for Pacific Cup points, courtesy of their selection as APRC wildcard entrants.

Seeded sixth – with Leyraud 11th and Green 12th – Reeves is keen to impress with another solid result in Whangarei to help secure sponsors for a full APRC campaign in 2011. He expects his greatest challenge for Pacific Cup honours to come from Paddon who was the man to beat on last year's event and has plenty of experience on the roads around Whangarei. Paddon, Sumner, Cox and Jagger are not contesting the Queensland and New Caledonia events at this stage, leaving the regional series to be fought out by Reeves, Green and Leyraud.

The International Rally of Whangarei runs from July 2 to 4 with pre-event promotional activities like the popular driver autograph signing session and the official start ceremony taking place in Whangarei's Cameron Street Mall from 3:30 pm on Friday. The rally action runs Saturday and Sunday with stage times and the official rally map available from the event website, [www.rallywhangarei.co.nz](http://www.rallywhangarei.co.nz), or free from the rally headquarters at Quayside Town Basin. The event concludes with Sunday's official ceremonial finish from 3:30pm beside the rally headquarters.

The rally counts for points for:

- 2010 FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship (round 3)
- 2010 FIA Pacific Cup (round 1)
- 2010 Vantage Aluminium Joinery New Zealand Rally Championship (round 3)
- 2010 Stilo Top Half Rally Series

**Written by Official Event Release**