

Brendan and Rhianon will return to competition this afternoon when Targa Tasmania gets underway in Launceston. Once again they will be competing for Mazda Motorsport in a Mazda RX8 SP.

After finishing third outright in the RX8 SP in their last tarmac outing (Targa Wrest Point in January), and fourth outright in last year's Targa Tasmania in a Mazda 3MPS, Brendan is itching to get back behind the wheel.

This year's Targa Tasmania is radically different from previous events with many of the stages run in the reverse direction and a number of new stages added. Brendan and Rhianon spent last week doing their reconnaissance for the event which included writing new pace notes for 23 of the event's 40 stages.

Targa Tasmania starts this afternoon with two Prologue stages which will be used to determine the starting position for tomorrow. The rally proper then kicks off tomorrow (Wednesday) morning, however Brendan feels the first three stages of Wednesday are 'cleanable' (they should be easily completed in the allocated time), and therefore he won't really start getting into 'rally mode' until stage 4.

"We'll use today's Prologue and the first few stages tomorrow to get a feeling for the car before we start to push too much," Brendan said. "Apart from a 2 kilometre drive in the car yesterday, I haven't driven it since Targa Wrest Point so I'm keen to settle in and get comfortable."

This year Brendan and Rhianon will have a new team mate competing in the same Class (Modern), as Matt Rickard and Bernie Webb join the Mazda team in another RX8 SP. Multiple Australian Rally Champions, Simon and Sue Evans, will again contest the Showroom Class for Mazda Motorsport in a Mazda 3MPS.

With a lot of recent experience in writing pace notes, Brendan believes he and Rhianon have had a great preparation for Targa Tasmania and is once again aiming for a podium finish.

Check Brendan's website daily for updates, results and photos.