

Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Gelsomino will head to Warragul in Victoria later this week for the final round of the ECB Australian Rally Championship (ARC) with just one aim in mind – raising the 2014 Australian Rally Championship trophy.

The pair trail series leaders Scott Pedder and Dale Moscatt (Renault Clio) by just 27 points going into the final round of the six-round series and with 80 points on offer at Rally Victoria, Brendan is aiming to give it his all this weekend.

“A lot of people have written us off and have penciled Scott and Dale in as ARC champions already,” Brendan said, “but there’s still plenty of points available and we’ll be doing everything possible to make that title ours this weekend.

Brendan and Rhianon started the 2014 ARC off in fine form, winning the opening two rounds in Canberra and Busselton (WA) in their Rallyschool.com.au Mazda2. They then placed second in the following two events at Caloundra and Gawler, and despite a broken camshaft forcing their retirement in Leg 1 of the three-day Rally Australia at Coffs Harbour, the pair stormed home with victories in Leg 2 and Leg 3 to finish that event fifth overall.

Despite the pressure on him this weekend, Brendan remains confident that victory can be his. Pedder crashed on both days of Rally Victoria last year and is under just as much pressure as his younger rival. The addition of Eli Evans to the field for Rally Victoria could also play in Brendan’s favour. Last year’s ARC champion returns for his first event of the year and is expected to resume with the pace he showed throughout 2013.

“Having Eli and Glen (co-driver, Glen Weston) in the field throws up lots of scenarios,” Brendan said. “If I can take a Heat win and Eli can finish ahead of Scott, things are going to be pretty interesting. You can’t discount the Citroens of Adrian Coppin and Tony Sullens, or Steve Mackenzie in his Fiesta, either.

“With hot and dry conditions forecast for testing on Wednesday and then rain expected on Friday, it’s going to make the conditions very interesting. I’m really looking forward to the battle.”

Brendan is no stranger to high-pressure situations. He was under enormous pressure to put in a good result when he competed for a place in the WRC Academy (now called the Junior WRC) in Spain in 2010. He did just that and secured a place in the exclusive team. Last year, with the Rally America 2WD title up for grabs, Brendan went into the last stage three seconds behind the series leader and beat him, clinching the title and proving he has nerves of steel.

There’s no doubt they’ll need to perform at their absolute best this weekend to have any chance of victory, but come Saturday evening, Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Gelsomino are planning on being crowned as 2014 ECB Australian Rally Champions.

Bring on the battle!

Rally Victoria will be based at Warragul, south east of Melbourne on Friday and Saturday, November 15 & 16. The rally gets underway on Friday morning with the ArmorAll Power Stage with Heat 1 starting at 2pm. Saturday will be a full day of competition with the event winners and ARC champions to be crowned at 5pm.