

With plans for 2015 still to be confirmed, Brendan reflects on his 2014 rally season in which he just missed out on securing the Australian Rally Championship (ARC) title.

Round 1 - Rally of Canberra

Canberra was the most important rally for us to kick the year off. We had worked on the car's reliability over the off season and it surely paid off. Winning the Power Stage with a very close fight with Eli Evans and Scott Pedder was a good sign of what was to come.

Four seasons hit at once on day one as the rain poured down and we were able to slow to an easy win after Evans crashed out in his VW Polo and Pedder had issues in his Renault Clio.

On day two conditions were a lot better and we finished the event collecting top points for a strong win overall in the Mazda 2.

Result: 1st in Heat 1, 1st in Heat 2, 1st overall

Round 2 - Forest Rally (WA)

This was no doubt the longest adventure of the year and the toughest. Entries were low because most teams come from the East Coast and they opted out of the long trek to Western Australia. Eli Evans was also missing from the entry list.

We had a good qualifying stage but broke our handbrake which made driving the Power Stage difficult! We still managed to finish second in the pre-event Power Stage, though.

The rally really threw everything at us with the loose surface of the roads and long stages. We suffered from alternator lead issues early on but my awesome crew kept the car going. The rally also tested out Rhi's and my strength as we had to physically push the car into service.

We managed to win Heat 2 and the overall event, thanks in no part to the issues that Pedder had with his car, but that's how rally goes.

Result: 2nd in Heat 1, 1st Heat 2, 1st overall

Round 3 - International Rally of Queensland

The Queensland event was a joint round of the Asia Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) and ARC. Our aim for this event was just to finish to consolidate our lead in the championship. It was an endurance event which I tend to favour so we went into the event fairly confident of a good result.

This didn't start too well, though. A slippery corner caught us out in the Power Stage meaning the car had to be stripped and fixed overnight. Rhi and I walked over the start podium making imitation car noises!

Pedder's speed was unstoppable from SS1 but we pushed on, running our own race and at our own pace. It was hard not to push flat out but sometimes you just have to drive smart.

Over the weekend the car was strong, even against the APRC field and other ARC competitors, and we were happy with our final result.

Result: 2nd in Heat 1, 2nd in Heat 2, 2nd overall

Brendan will wrap up the second half of his 2014 season wrap soon. In the meantime, you can [browse photos of Brendan and Rhianon in action in 2014 in the Photo Gallery](photosvideos/photo-gallery).

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