

Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Gelsomino have won their second event from two starts, this time at the final round of the Brian Green Property New Zealand Rally Championship (NZRC).



Reeves was invited to contest the event in a Mazda 2 entered by Force Motorsport and despite never having driven on the roads used in the event, he took a convincing win.

The Mahindra Gold Rush Rally of Coromandel was the season finale for the NZRC and whilst the title had already been decided, Reeves had plenty of strong competition. With the cream of New Zealand's rally crews contesting the event, he went into the day with the main aim of having fun.

The rally, run on roads around Thames and Coromandel on New Zealand's north island, consisted of ten stages totalling 120 kilometres. Reeves and Gelsomino lead from the start and won six of the day's ten stages. Their winning margin was just over a minute.

Changing weather conditions throughout the day saw some rain and Reeves experimented with different tyre compounds.

"We went out with the ambition to go fast on the softs as we weren't sure what effect dust would have," Reeves said.

"We ran on hards in the middle of the day but it rained so that backfired and we went back to the softs to finish the day off and get back some time."

The Force Motorsport Mazda 2 ran perfectly all day. The feeling changed between the soft and hard tyres with Reeves commenting that he much preferred the softs.

“We are rapt with our result today,” Reeves added. “We went out to have fun and it showed.

“It was great to work with Force Motorsport and Andrew Hawkeswood and to learn more about the AP4 cars that Andrew is building in New Zealand.

Mahindra Gold Rush Rally of Coromandel, final results:

1. Brendan Reeves/Rhianon Gelsomino, Mazda 2;
2. Matt Summerfield, Subaru, +1:03.6
3. Dylan Turner, Mitsubishi, +1:06.1

4. Glenn Inkster, Skoda, +1:13.4

5. Andrew Hawkeswood, Mazda, +1:26.2

Photo by Scott Johnson