

Brendan Reeves and Ben Searcy have arrived in New Zealand ahead of this weekend's Mahindra Goldrush Rally Coromandel, round 4 of the New Zealand Rally Championship.

The Australians have joined an expanded Force Motorsport team and will drive a brand new Mazda 2 AP4 in the event.

In preparation for the rally, which Reeves won last year, it will be a busy couple of days. After checking seat fittings on Thursday morning, the team then did a short test in the car in the afternoon.

The rally's reconnaissance will take place on Friday afternoon followed by the official opening ceremony that evening.

Mahindra Goldrush Rally Coromandel is a one day event and features 125 kilometres of competition over seven stages on Saturday. It is held on roads around Thames and Coromandel on New Zealand's north island.

Reeves's biggest threat in defending his Coromandel title will be Kiwi World Rally Championship star Hayden Paddon who will drive a Hyundai i20 AP4+, but with a field of 79 cars taking on the special stages, he's not be expecting an easy day out.