

Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Gelsomino have finished a dramatic Alpine Rally with a satisfying sixth place.

Bushfires caused the cancellation of two of the opening day's stages and all of the final day's stages before the event even got underway and, incredibly, persistent rain on Saturday resulted in the cancellation of Saturday's final two stages.

Despite the shortened course, crews contested just under 200 kilometres of competitive stages over wet and slippery forestry stages around Lakes Entrance.

Brendan debuted his newly built Datsun 1600 in the event and battled with overheating problems from the get-go. Nevertheless, just getting to the finish was an incredible effort and to finish in the top ten, when a number of cars slid off the road or crashed in the slippery conditions, was a well deserved result.

"Today's conditions were really tricky," Brendan said. "With the engine overheating we really had to drive to manage the situation.

"I wanted to keep on the pace but had to keep the engine temperature low so that it wouldn't overheat so the longest stage of 55 kilometres was a real test.

“On the shorter stages we could up the pace a bit so it was a real shame that the day’s final two stages were cancelled due to the rain.

“We can take plenty of positives from the rally, though. We’ve learnt a lot about the car - which we only really finished the night before the event - and know what we need to improve before the car’s next outing.”

The bi-annual classic rally attracted 100 entries, with 72 of the starters finishing. Outright winners were Nathan Quinn and Ray Winwood-Smith in a Mazda RX2.

[Visit Brendan's Photo Gallery to view images from the Alpine Rally >>](#)