

After a long-awaited return to competition, Brendan Reeves and Kate Catford have secured valuable championship points at today's Western Victorian Crane Trucks Valley Stages Rally, round 4 of the Victorian Rally Championship.

Competing in Reeves' highly modified Datsun 1600, the pair returned to the stages after a five month layoff due to Covid-19 restrictions. Reeves admitted to not being 'race fit' but it didn't hinder his performance, with the duo finishing 1st 2WD and 2nd overall.

The event, which was based out of Yarra Glen in Victoria, consisted of ten stages, totalling 156 kilometres. Held on both shire and forestry roads, the weather gods were kind to competitors and the expected rain held off until after the event.

Reeves and Catford finished Heat 1 after the morning's five stages in third outright and first 2WD, and were second outright and first 2WD in Heat 2 (five stages).

Whilst Reeves has competed in the rally three times previously, winning his class on two occasions, this year's event was different in that it was fully route charted, not pace noted as has been the norm.

After spending the past few months of lockdown improving the handling of the Datsun, Reeves was pleased to see the adjustments show positive results.



“The car performed really well today,” Reeves said. “We’ve been able to improve the handling into tight corners as well as the acceleration out of the corners which we’ve struggled with in previous events.

“It’s good to know that the time and effort that has been spent working on the car has been worth it. We’ll continue to fine tune the car to make it even better.

Reeves was obviously rapt to be back competing again on the fast roads that he loves driving on and in an event he really enjoys.

"The roads were in great condition after recent rain in the area," he said, "but today's warm and muggy weather did make it a tough event. Fortunately the only stages where dust was a problem was on Mt. Slide."

"Kate did a great job again today and we are now eagerly awaiting the final event of the season, the Gippsland Rally on December 4," Reeves added.

With just one round of the Victorian Rally Championship to go, Reeves and Catford are looking forward to another good result to secure this year's 2WD title.

Outright Results - Western Victorian Crane Trucks Valley Stages

1. Darren Windus / Joe Brick, Subaru Impreza WRX, 1:35:27
2. Brendan Reeves / Kate Catford, Datsun 1600, 1:37:24

3. Justin Walker / Glen Raymond, Ford Escort Mk 2, 1:40:20

Photo: Wishart Media