

Brendan Reeves and Kate Catford will be back in action this weekend when they contest the Gippsland Rally, round 5 of the 2022 Australian Rally Championship (ARC).

Despite being run previously, this year is the first time the Gippsland Rally is part of the ARC so, for many competitors, it will be their first taste of competition on the eastern Victorian roads.

Reeves and Catford competed in the event last year and were in line for a top four position in their highly modified Datsun 1600 before a broken fan belt ended their rally.

They head into this weekend's event with confidence after a podium finish in their last start at the Bega Valley Rally in June.

Starting as car 7, Reeves and Catford will face strong competition in Gippsland. Reigning ARC champion Harry Bates (Toyota Yaris AP4), former champ Scott Pedder (Renault Clio) and young guns Max McRae (Subaru Impreza WRX), Troy Dowel (Hyundai i20 G4) and Taylor Gill (Subaru Impreza WRX) all have more modern vehicles than Reeves but he's proved time and again that the Datsun, nicknamed Datzilla, can match all comers.

This weekend's event will be held over two days with eight stages to be run on Saturday and five stages on Sunday. In total, crews will cover around 170 kilometres of competitive stages across the weekend.



With Saturday's stages a repeat of last year's, Reeves is well prepared with a good set of pace notes from the 2021 event ready to go. They will write their pace notes for Sunday's stage during Reconnaissance on Friday.

Although this is only the second ARC event for Reeves this year (he and Catford finished on the podium in a Hyundai i20 N at the Rally of Canberra), he will use the rally to get more time behind the wheel in preparation for the Alpine Rally in November.

The Alpine, Australia's oldest rally, will be held in a similar area of eastern Victoria as this weekend's event, so the more time Reeves is keen to get as familiar with the road conditions as possible.

The Gippsland Rally will begin with a ceremonial start at the Heyfield Service Park at 9.30am on

Saturday, 27 August. Crews will then contest four stages before a midday service break, and then finish the day with another four stages.

There are five stages to be run on Sunday, including the Power Stage, before crews return to the Heyfield Service Park for the podium presentation at 4pm.

Photo: Wishart Media