

After a fantastic start to Rally Sardinia, Brendan and Rhianon have been forced to retire from Day 1 of the event after an oil cooler on their Ford Fiesta R2 split.

Brendan had started the rally in great form and was immediately on the pace, finishing second on the day's opening stage, just 2.2 seconds off the lead. On Stages 2 and 3 he was again in the mix with top four times and was third overall in the WRC Academy class at the end of Stage 3.

Unfortunately on the 19.66km Stage 4 the oil cooler split, forcing the pair into retirement. Whilst extremely disappointed, all is not lost as, under Superrally regulations, the pair can re-join the rally on Day 2. They will take a five minute penalty into Day 2 which will be added to the time of the fastest Academy competitor on Day 1. After clawing his way back from last place and a deficit of over four minutes at Rally Portugal, Brendan remains confident that he can make up plenty of ground on Day 2 and score more valuable Championship points.

"It's a real shame," a disappointed Brendan said from Sardinia. "The oil cooler just broke - I didn't hit anything, so it's really disappointing. We'll re-join tomorrow under Superrally rules and do our best to score some points."