

Day 1 of Targa Tasmania has been a good one for Brendan and Rhianon - they sit in third outright in their Mazda RX8 SP after eight stages of competition.

As expected, the pair 'cleaned' the first three stages of the day (completing them with no time lost) and that served as a good way to start getting re-acquainted with the RX8 SP. On the day's remaining five stages, Brendan consistently set top 5 stage times, and on SS7, he was only seven seconds behind stage winner and rally leader Jason White.

With four full days of competition remaining, Brendan is taking a smart approach and will try not to push too hard, particularly if it rains. He has only driven the RX8 SP once before, at Targa Wrest Point in January, where it was dry throughout the rally, making his speed on stage 7 today, in the wet, even more impressive.

Conserving the tyres to ensure they remain at their best for the remaining 32 stages of competition, is a high priority for Brendan and Rhianon, and with the car running perfectly, all looks set for a great result on Sunday.

"It's been good so far - I'm just getting the feeling for the car and not trying to push too hard," Brendan said.

"Now that it's raining, it changes things a lot as I've never driven the car in the wet. It's a totally different feeling for us, and hopefully we can build some speed in the wet and see how that goes. The windscreen wipers have been lifting off the windscreen when we start going fast, and it's made things a bit difficult, but hopefully we can fix that tonight."

At the end of Leg 1, Brendan and Rhianon are just 47 seconds behind White's Lamborghini

Gallardo.

Day 2 of Targa Tasmania covers the same number of competitive kilometres but all stages will be run in reverse to previous years, making it a level playing field for all competitors.

[Visit the Gallery](#) for photos from Leg 1 of Targa Tasmania.