

Australian brother-sister rally team, Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Smyth, have made a sensational American debut at the Oregon Trail Rally held around Portland at the weekend.

Driving a Ford Fiesta R2 for Team O'Neil, the pair immediately impressed their rivals and set a cracking pace in the 2WD class. Such was their speed and talent that they won every stage on Friday and Saturday and finished the event over three minutes ahead of their nearest class rivals.

The event, round 3 of the Rally America series, started in Portland on Friday night with four Super Special stages held on the access roads of the Portland International Raceway. Reeves kicked his rally off in the best possible way - taking an 18.6 second class lead into the first full day's action.

Saturday consisted of eight forest stages on tight, twisty roads and despite thick dust lingering over the roads, Reeves blitzed his opponents, winning every stage and extending his lead to over two minutes.

With five stages to run on Sunday, this time over fast forest straights, Reeves again impressed, finishing the rally over three minutes ahead of the second-placed 2WD competitor and fifth outright.

"What an amazing feeling it is to come to America for the first time and win two wheel drive convincingly," Reeves said. "We had a trouble-free run thanks to Team O'Neil and the effort they put in. The Ford Fiesta was brilliant even on today's blindingly fast stages, and Rhianon did a great job calling the notes."

The Oregon Trail Rally was won by David Higgins in a Subaru with Ken Block (Ford Fiesta) second, and Rifat Sungkar third.

Reeves and Smyth will now return to Australia to prepare for their next event, Scouts Rally South Australia, round three of the Australian Rally Championship, which will be held from May 24 - 26.