

It's going to be a busy but exciting week for Rhianon and I as we head over to New Zealand to compete in Rally Whangarei, round three of the NZ Rally Championship and round three of the Asia Pacific Championship. We've leased a Ford Fiesta ST from Kayne Barrie Motorsport in Auckland.

Rally Whangarei is a nominated event for the new Pirelli Star Driver Search and that is one of the main reasons for us entering the rally. We are hoping to finish in the top two ~Pirelli Star Drivers' as we will then receive financial assistance to compete in Rally Malaysia in October, the second qualifying event of the Pirelli competition.. The eventual Asia Pacific winner of the Pirelli Star Driver Award will win a drive in six rounds of the 2009 World Rally Championship ~ how awesome would that be?!!

I've never been to New Zealand before so it's all going to be very new to me. All the other drivers in the Pirelli competition are Kiwis so they'll have an advantage over me there, however I am confident we can do well. We'll definitely be giving it our all, not only to prove to ourselves that we can do it, but also to thank our sponsors for their valuable support. We'll be joined by one of our own service crew members as well as a couple of guys from Kayne's team who know the car inside out. Hopefully they won't need to put their knowledge to use!

Whangarei is a large provincial town situated 160km north of Auckland and the rally itself has attracted a large field of 63 crews including fellow Aussies Cody Crocker, Dean Herridge and Scott Pedder who are contesting the Asia Pacific Rally Championship.

As I said, it's going to be a busy week, but I can't wait!! Here's my diary for the coming week:

Tuesday, June 3rd

Fly to Auckland.

Head to Kayne Barrie Motorsport where we'll set eyes on the car for the first time, and have the seats fitted correctly for Rhianon and I.

Drive to Whangarei ready for documentation and testing.

Wednesday, June 4th

We'll spend the day testing today and getting used to the car. It will be a bit different driving a front wheel drive Fiesta compared to the Subaru I'm used to all being four wheel drive.

Thursday, June 5th

Recce today. We'll drive over the rally stages and write our pace notes for the rally.

Friday, June 6th

Ceremonial start at 5.30pm

Saturday, June 7th

Rally 8am – 4.30pm

Sunday, June 8th

Rally 7.30am – 3pm

Monday, June 10th

Drive back to Auckland and fly home.

Wish us luck!!

Brendo.