

Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Gelsomino continue to lead the Australian Rally Championship after finishing second in the Rally of Queensland, held on the Sunshine Coast.

Second place in both heats of the event sees the Victorians 16 points clear of rally winners, Scott Pedder and Dale Moscatt, heading into round four of the championship in South Australia.

Day two of the Rally of Queensland was held over five stages, including consecutive runs over a 35km stage that ended the event.

Reeves and Gelsomino decided early that chasing the flying Pedder and risking not scoring points was too risky, so they set about ensuring that they finished a strong second.

“Overnight rain made the road conditions a lot slipperier than yesterday, so we needed to proceed with a little bit of caution,” Reeves said.

Despite his caution, Reeves won the second stage of the day to reduce the gap to the lead.

“We tried pretty hard in the morning and won the second stage, but on the first run over the long stage the car wasn’t turning in all that well in the slippery sections.

“We quickly decided to back off and get the car to the finish in one piece, as retiring and scoring no points wasn’t an option for us.”

The Rally of Queensland stages were again tricky, with co-drivers such as Gelsomino needing to be right at the top of the their game.

“It’s probably the hardest rally in the whole championship for a co-driver,” she said.

“You can be on a main road in sixth gear one minute, and then the next you turn onto a grotty track that requires a different approaching to reading the pace notes.

“The weather also plays a part, particularly when it’s wet.”

For the third event in a row, the team’s Mazda2 ran brilliantly throughout, with reliability proving to be a real key in this year’s championship.

“I’m really happy with how the car went. It held together really well and felt strong for the entire rally,” Reeves said.

“Of course we would have liked to have won, but coming into this event the plan was to ensure we finished at least in second place.

“If Scott (Pedder) had dramas then we would be ready to take the lead, but that didn’t happen and he deserved his victory.”

Round four of the Australian Rally Championship takes crews to the fast and flowing stages of South Australia, an event Reeves and Gelsomino know well.

“It’s an event I love, and one that I’ve done more than any other ARC round,” Reeves added.

“It’s fast and open and we’ll need to be right on the pace from the first stage. I can’t wait!”

2014 Rally of Queensland - final results

1. Scott Pedder / Dale Moscott, Renault Clio R3, 2h21m18.4s
- 2. Brendan Reeves / Rhianon Gelsomino, Mazda2, +2m02.7s**
3. Tony Sullens / Julia Barkley, Citroen DS3 R32, +7m27.2s
4. Michael Boaden / Helen Cheers, Volkswagen Polo Vivo, +9m32.45s
5. Adrian Coppin / Tim Batten, Citroen DS3 R3T, +11m38.0s