

A flat tyre has ruined any chances of a top result for Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Smyth in the Rally of Whangarei, in the north island of New Zealand. Despite being clearly the fastest of the Ford Fiestas in the event, Reeves suffered a puncture on the day's third stage, and after changing the tyre, the car failed to restart because of a battery fault.

“We got back to service, the boys changed the battery and it fired straight up,” Reeves said after enduring a frustrating road-side halt.

“So it seems like a tiny little problem has ruined our weekend. We were pretty quick this morning; the first stage we did out in the forest this morning Rhianon (co-driver) and I said that was probably the best stage we had ever done. It was a perfect stage and we are just loving the roads and it’s just awesome fun.”

Unfortunately, the delay saw them run out of late time, but they returned to complete the final three stages of the rally, again being comfortably the fastest Fiesta.