

Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Smyth have finished day one of Rally New Zealand in a brilliant 39th place.

Driving a rented Ford Fiesta, Brendo and sister, Rhianon, were clearly the fastest two-wheel drive car in the field, and were rapt with their first competitive day in the World Rally Championship.

Reeves' pace was so fast that he finished the day over 50 seconds in front of fellow Australian, Bruce Fullerton, driving a Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VIII.

“The day's gone really well,” Brendo said at the end of day service at Hamilton's Mystery Creek complex.

“We took it pretty easy to get used to the roads and the car, but the times have been good, so I'm very happy.

“On the second pass through the stages it was a lot rougher, and I had to take a different line through the corners because the four-wheel drive cars had pulled some big rocks onto the road,” he added.

Brendo's nearest challenger in the Fiesta Sporting Trophy is over 11 minutes behind the Victorian, who totally dominated the day's stages.

Tomorrow sees a further six stages and 130km of competitive driving, before the event finishes on Sunday.