

Last weekend saw the running of the 100th anniversary Alpine Rally, Australia's oldest motorsport event, and was the tenth outing for Brendan Reeves' highly modified Datsun 1600.

Reeves has spent the past few years building the car with the aim of winning the Alpine Rally and that was his primary focus going into this year's Alpine Rally.

The event was based out of Lakes Entrance in Victoria's Gippsland region, and started with three competitive stages on Thursday afternoon. Starting as car 2 on the road, Reeves and co-driver Kate Catford, struggled with grip from the brakes but were feeling positive.

With the cars being reseeded overnight, Reeves and Catford started as car 5 on Friday with 170 kilometres of competitive stages ahead of them. On the first stage they had a good clean run but they damaged the steering rack on the second stage after hitting a rock. This forced them to slow right down, costing them precious time.



After the mid-day service, heading to stage 6, the pair noticed the right rear brake caliper was leaking so some running repairs were made and they continued on with just three brakes.

The repairs were effective and a stage win was their reward, however the joy wasn't to last long as the left rear brake started leaking on the following stage. After blocking it off, Reeves drove the remainder of Friday's five stages with only front brakes, with the team finishing the day in 10th place.

Saturday's stages headed as far as Omeo in Victoria's High Country and with repairs made to the brakes overnight, Reeves and Catford were on a mission. With a good road position and great pace in the Datsun, they pushed hard and had moved from tenth up to third overall by the midday service.

Reeves loved the steep mountain stages and a stage win on the day's longest stage was just reward. The work the team have put into tuning the car to perform in higher altitudes has really paid off with Datzilla performing brilliantly on the mountain roads.



Heading into the final day of the event in third place, Reeves' aim was to keep pushing - his aim after all was to win the Alpine Rally.

Luck wasn't on his side, though, and a broken driveshaft mid-corner on the second (and longest stage) of the day, saw the car stuck in sand on the side of the road. It was a long eleven minutes until the car was extracted and the pair could rejoin the rally.

Despite their misfortune, Reeves and Catford pushed on, determined to finish the event. They did just that, finishing in 9th place with Nathan Quinn and Ray Winwood-Smith taking the top spot on the podium.

Whilst the event had many frustrations, Reeves was happy with the pace of the car. He is now more determined than ever to return to the next Alpine Rally in 2024 and take the honours.

Reeves and Catford were supported in the event by their hard working service crew and 20 supporters who donated funds to have their name on the car's bonnet.

See more photos from the event [here](#) .

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