

Subaru of New Zealand

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Media Information

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Mason Top Kiwi

Despite losing well over four minutes during the event, Richard Mason was the top local driver to finish the World Championship, Rally of New Zealand this afternoon.

Mason from Masterton and co-driver Sara Randall's never give in attitude also saw them finish third in the Production Car World Championship class and 15th overall in their Subaru Impreza WRX STI.

It was a Subaru one two amongst the kiwi drivers with Palmerston North's Sam Murray, the leader of the national championship going into the final round at Nelson at the end of the month, finishing second.

And Mason and Randall's efforts made it clean sweep for Subaru in the PCWRC class where Toshi Arai, co-driven by Tony Sircombe who is originally from Otorohanga won the class from Irishman Niall McShea, both driving similar Impreza WRX STIs to Mason.

Mason started the day 23 seconds behind Murray in the battle for top local driver honours and soon hauled in the deficit. Another display of aggressively fast driving also had him leap fogging international drivers in the production class standings, from seventh place after the end of Saturday's competition.

"It's great to be the top Kiwi home again," said Mason. "And getting third in PWRC after the trouble we've had was a bonus."

"The last day of the event around Raglan hasn't always been kind to us, but everything went really well out there today."

"One thing I've learnt in this sport is you never give up, because other people could be having even more dramas than what you are!"

Mason lost close to three minutes when he had to stop and change a punctured tyre in the rally's longest stage on Friday and then in Saturday's final stage he was forced to do 16 kms with only the use of first and second gear.

His team changed the gearbox at Saturday evening's service for his back up transmission which did not slow him down at all.

Whangarei school girl Kirsty Nelson showed remarkable maturity to finish the event in sixth place among the local drivers in her older model Impreza WRX STI.



Rally NZ - Top NZ drivers

- 1, R Mason, S Randall (Subaru Impreza WRX STI) 4 hrs 14 mins 46 secs;
- 2, S Murray, R Ryan (Subaru Impreza WRX STI) 4.16.03.2;
- 3, B Martin, G Marra (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo9) 4.18.14.4;
- 4, M Stewart, M Fletcher (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 6.5) 4.23.27.3;
- 5, P Malley, R Bennett (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo9) 4.25.29.6;
- 6, K Nelson, M Brunt (Subaru Impreza WRX STI) 4.28.16.4.

Production Car World Rally Championship class

- 1, T Arai, T Sircombe (Subaru Impreza WRX STI) 4 hrs 13 mins 35.8 secs;
- 2, N McShea, G Noble (Subaru Impreza WRX STI) 4.13.38.4;
- 3, R Mason, S Randall (Subaru Impreza WRX STI) 4.14.46.0;
- 4, G Pozzo, D Stillo (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo9) 4.14.48.9;
- 5, F Nutahara, D Barritt (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo9) 4.14.55.7;
- 6, A Araujo, M Ramalho (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo9) 4.15.16.0.

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