

Toyota and Millen Set Sights on Prescott Rally

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Plano, Texas, October 6, 2017 — To date, 2017 has been a year of domination for the Toyota Rally RAV4. Following the Ojibwe Forests Rally in August, driver Ryan Millen and co-driver Rhianon Gelsomino are coming in hot off an undefeated sweep of the American Rally Association 2WD Class, in which they won all six races.

Millen and Gelsomino now gear up for their penultimate race in 2017, the 30th Annual Prescott Rally kicking off in Prescott, Arizona. The Prescott Rally is also the NASA RallySport National Championship event.

Prescott just so happens to be the place where Millen and Gelsomino first drove together. Last year the Rally RAV4 team won the event overall. If they can pull off another class win this year, it will be the RAV4's third time in as many years.

“You could call it our ‘hometown’ rally—the easiest rally to get to,” Millen said. “ARA finished in August so it’s nice to have the next two events to continue our rallying. No pressure—just fun, and a good way to start wrapping up the season.”

The team's dominant 2WD Class performance this year is a testament the Rally RAV4's toughness and reliability. Millen notes that there have been no mechanical issues so far and he doesn't expect any to start now.

"I could literally do a season without prepping it," he said. "Other than the stuff that gets damaged on the bottom, the bumpers maybe, but that's it."

For her part, Gelsomino would like to see the team continue to progress and keep pushing their skills.

"I think there's always something to learn," she said. "I want to see us keep developing, keep trying new things, keep up with the things we've been experimenting with. We need to keep moving forward, watching the videos, learning the stages. At the end of the day we know what we need to do—but this one will be fun."

The Prescott Rally features sweeping desert vistas with unpredictable sand and gravel road surfaces, as well as numerous elevation climbs and descents that will present their own challenges.

"We're second on the road so it gives me a little more experience with that," Millen said. "If next year we get to 4WD, it will put me in a place to get used to that. Right now I follow everyone else's tracks... I look for the sweep line but can make my own lines, too."

Even after taking the ARA 2WD Championship in stunning fashion, the Rally RAV4 team is jumping at the opportunity to use Prescott to continue to hone their skills, show off the RAV4's awesome capability, and begin preparing for next year.

"These are the rewards at the end of the year that keep you motivated and sharp," Millen said. "Otherwise there's a huge gap between the close of this season and the start of the next. We look forward to it every year."