

Rally RAV4 Racing Program Poised to Win

February 11, 2016

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CHICAGO (Feb. 11, 2016) — The Toyota RAV4 that Ryan Millen piloted last year to four out of five Western U.S. victories is about to take an even bigger stage.

This year Toyota and Millen of the famed Millen family of racing legends will take their rally racing all over the U.S., from Oregon to New York to Michigan, just to name a few stops along the action-packed race schedule.

Millen and Toyota will chase the Atlantic Rally Cup in NASA's Rally Sport series. The team will also be vying for the Rally Sport National Championship.

And if that's not enough, Ryan will also be going for the championship in the Rally America series, where he already netted a second place finish in the Sno*Drift Rally.

"Last year was an amazing opportunity for me with Toyota," said Millen. "This year is truly like a dream come true, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to show what the RAV4 and I are really made of."

Interestingly, Ryan's navigator, Christine Fate, is also his fiancé. Trust is one of the most important things a driver can ask for in a navigator, so having Christine back this season should prove to be a real asset.

This year, Millen and Fate will campaign a RAV4 SE, new for the 2016 model year. The vehicle also receives revised livery highlighting new partners Toyota Certified Used Vehicles and JBL. Millen's refreshed vehicle was unveiled today at the Chicago Auto Show.

Toyota has not made any powertrain modifications, as the rally car is powered by a stock RAV4 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine that generates 176 horsepower and 172 pounds-feet of torque. The crossover was built to compete in the 2WD-Open Class so it is fitted with a six-speed automatic transmission that spins the front wheels only.

Most modifications are safety, communications, and convenience related. They include such items as a stout roll cage, driver/navigator comm. system, and air vents and helmet boxes.

Prior to driving the Rally RAV4 last year, Millen won his class in the 2014 Baja 1000 in a Toyota Tundra TRD Pro.

"This year we are stepping up our racing as well as our marketing efforts to expose a whole new audience to rally racing and the RAV4," explained Kibo Kitahama, national manager, vehicle marketing and communications. "It's going to be a wild ride, but we're thrilled to see our RAV4 SE take on all the twists, turns, and terrain that Ryan and life can throw at it."

The team's first NASA Rally Sport race of the season will take place on March 5 in Cheraw, South Carolina at the Sandblast Rally where over 60 cars and nearly 40 motorcycles are entered.

More information on the Rally RAV4 program can be found at www.RallyRAV4.com.