

Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Tony Newman (1 st)	Kawasaki ZX14
Ben Warden (leader)	Honda CBR1000	Mark Copeland	Kawasaki ZX10
Misho Zrakic/Pina Garasi	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Tim Emons	Honda CBR1000	Bill Kennedy	Kawasaki Z750
Geoff Jones	Yamaha R1	Gordon Heydon (1 st)	Kawasaki ZX6
Rod Silver (rear)	KTM RC8	Ed Simonis	MotoGuzi 1200 Sport

Saturday and rain all day. Sunday forecast looks fair, so on with the wet weather gear as there was still wetness around for the run to Whittlesea. I made it okay despite some flooding at Wallan but Tony Stegmar and Ian P [P for Pres] failed to make it, Tony so near yet so far, submerging his CBR near the Donnybrook Plenty Road intersection. Big bow wave is good on 4x4s but the air intakes on the Honda are not positioned for water crossings. Drowned motor with probable hydraulic lock the result. Ben's Social Sip message via Google indicating the same fate for the Pres. He also mentioned a three pointer; more on that later.

Twelve bikes is a good roll up. First there is new rider Tony Newman on the grunt master Kawasaki ZX14 with a head light modulator an eye-catching mod. Rear stop light may have had a modulator also. Tony was interested in the "spirited" nature of the MSR rides and was soon into the swing of things once dry roads became the norm for the day. Gordon was also a first timer on his ZX6.

Ben did the ICE and pre-ride spiel while taking calls from the drowned Tony Stegmar. We got away around 10.15am. The road up the hill and through to Flowerdale was mainly wet but dried out quickly once on the section to Strath Creek, pace adjusted to suit. Up the Murchison Gap complete with armco, past the Broadford Motorcycle complex, through Broadford and on to the back roads to Pyalong. Then down that tasty sweeper-type road to the first stop, Lancefield. Fuel for some and instruction from Paul to Rod on rear rider finer points. Temperature now rising and I was lamenting leaving the inner liner in both pants and jacket.

Morning tea included an update on Tony, now contacting Ben via Frank's mobile, Frank a friendly car driver, as Tony's mobile was out of credit. Then it's up the Burke and Wills Track to try the newly surfaced, but not smooth, Watchbox Road, which goes from the Track across to the Tooborac Road south of Redesdale. Worth a try but the trade off is missing the sweepers on to and after the old bridge north of Redesdale. Next the Redesdale Bendigo road to the Spillway road to tick off Lake Eppalock. On to the McIvor Highway to Derrinal, then back roads in to Heathcote for lunch. Along here we encountered a police 4x4 who flashed and pointed at Willem but seemed to lose interest, turned off his lights, and kept going; no dreaded U-turn.

After a pleasant break we headed down the Northern Highway turning right at Tooborac and left at Emu Flat to Pyalong to do a re-run of the section to Lancefield. The aforementioned three pointer occurred here. I turned on to the Highway and, unlike Mark who had seen the Candy car, I proceeded to join Ben who was waiting for corner markers at the Lancefield Road. I joined Ben but with said Candy car in tow and so began the roadside chat about bikes, speed, age, R1 suitability, faded number plate etc., etc. Ben moved off but most of the Club headed south on the Highway only to return and trundle past me and Leading Senior Constable M. Lyneham of the Wallan Highway Patrol who relieved me of three points and \$244. After suggesting I take a paint brush to the faded plate he seemed pleased that I had not done the rear fender eliminator thing so common amongst sport bike riders. He did comment on a certain CBR with a bent rear plate, hello Paul.

Meanwhile the Club parked 15 km down the road, waiting news of my fate. Not too bad, as it turns out. Into Woodend for a break and fuel [finally] for the Honda race team. Misho seemed to think I hadn't been assertive enough with the long arm of the law and I should have at least got him out of his car to do the deed. Eastern European style as against Aussie apathy, but at least he did not cast a close eye over the R1.

Talk-the-talk Woodend style over, some headed home their own way while Ben headed for the Bulla end of Tullamarine runway spot via Cameron's Corner and the Wildwood Road. I turned off to Riddells Creek and home and have not yet had the balls to tell Val about the fine. I will cop a blast that will put Mr Lyneham to shame I think; that's if she is talking to me.

Thanks Ben for a great ride. Plenty of "spirited" stuff for us all. Thanks Rod for rear riding.

