

Loch Sunday 9th October, 2011

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| Ben Warden (leader) | Honda CBR1000 | Marc Marais | Kawasaki ZX10R |
| Misho Zrakic/Pina Garasi | Honda CBR1000 | Ron Johnston | Honda CBF1000 |
| Paul Southwell | Honda CBR1000 | Kurn Bridgeman | Honda CBR600 |
| Tim Emons | Honda CBR1000 | Roman Biaroza | Honda CBR600 |
| Damir Djikic | Honda CBR1000 | Rob Langer | KTM 990 (rear) |
| Tony Stegmar | Honda CBR1000 | | <i>11 bikes, 12 people</i> |

Sunday's are always a highlight of my week as I get to unwind and get together with my MSR riding mates for a fang on awesome roads, letting the stress of the week evaporate in my wake. Getting home after a good day's ride means another long week to get through before the next ride. It seems to take ages but eventually Sunday arrives and, no matter what the weather, I'm up for a ride.

I was on a vacation down at Inverloch for a few days over the school holidays and decided, seeing as we had to check out early, that I may as well head back to Melbourne and try to catch the ride. I left Inverloch (in my car) at 6:30am, got home, geared up and headed out to the meet point.

Ben is leading and I'm looking forward to some interesting roads that only Ben knows (along with potential dirt/pot holed cattle tracks, but nevertheless a lot of fun). The weather is dismal, but being Melbourne things can change quickly, so I head to the meeting point at Berwick. The rain has cleared but just after I arrive (and coincidentally when Damir arrives) it starts to bucket down. I make a joke about how Damir has brought the rain with him, but it falls flat. After huddling under cover and waiting for the rest of the riders to arrive, the rain eases off slightly.

After the formalities are dispensed with, we set off down the freeway towards Drouin. The roads are absolutely soaked, the bikes ahead of me shooting up rooster tails like some jet skis do. I'm starting to despair but decide to keep going. Paul bails out, which I can fully understand.

Tony crashes his brand new `blade on the Korumburra Warragul Road after losing the front end – "minor cosmetic" as the Club calls it. He's unharmed although I can imagine not happy. The engine cover has ground away and dumped oil on the road. Robbie recommends taping the cover up and riding to the next stop to get some oil, having done a similar trick in Tasmania when his KTM fell over and lost oil. It may have worked, considering it was only the alternator cover and there was probably some oil left, but Tony decided it was not worth the risk. He and Ron head back to Melbourne to get a trailer. Thanks to Ron for always being willing to help out, as he did when my Triumph decided it was time to drop a gudgeon pin in the sump and jam up the works resulting in major engine damage.

Only eight riders left out of the eleven starters as we head for the first stop, Loch. We retreated under cover at the bakery for coffee and hot food. The weather had cleared slightly but starting raining again.

Damir and Roman decided to leave the ride. I told Damir I would join them but at the last second decided to continue, thinking what was I going to do at home anyway? As I've said before, any ride is a good ride, no matter what! I didn't get a chance before they left to tell them I'd changed my mind, so apologies if you guys waited.

A short time later the rain cleared and the sun poked through the clouds. "Good on ya, Melbourne!" This ride leg was amazing. So many roads in Gippsland I never knew existed. I really wished I had put my GPS logger on because there is no way I can remember where we went. I know we stopped at the top of a hill with a view of the ocean with Phillip Island in the distance. As advertised in the ride blurb, the sea appeared completely unexpectedly! After a group photo we continued on to Korumburra for lunch before heading off again. A slight change to the itinerary saw us finishing the ride at Longwarry North with a fraction of the original riders.

All in all, a fantastic ride. As always, interesting roads, places I haven't seen before and, of course, my weekly ride fix administered! Thanks Ben for the great ride. Tony, I hope your bike repair is going well.

Marc Marais