

Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais (leader)	Kawasaki ZX10R
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Mark Copeland	Kawasaki ZX10R
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Michael Zrb	Kawasaki ZX10R
Ian Payne	Honda CBR1000	John Willis	Kawasaki Z1000
John Rousseaux/Kate Stewart	Honda CBR1000	Paul Cail (1 st ride)	Yamaha R1
Nigel Oman (2 nd ride)	Honda CBR1000	Phill Hotshilt	Suzuki GSXR1300
Damir Djikic	Honda CBR1000	Chris Pointon	Suzuki GSXR1000
Ron Johnston	Honda CBF1000	Mark Rigsby	Suzuki GSXR1000
Pina Garasi (rear)	Honda CBR600	Steve Mudford	Suzuki GSXR750
Kurn Bridgeman	Honda CBR600	Peter Fisher	MV Augusta 1090
Matt Considine (2 nd ride)	Honda CBR600	Rob Langer	KTM 990

I had been looking forward to Marc's ride all week and I even set the alarm clock earlier than usual so I could get to Berwick in time for a latte and McMuffin. But before I knew it I was late, because I had been dawdling around the house thinking I had plenty of time, and I was now in a rush.

I only had 15 minutes to get from home to Berwick and I twisted the wrist more than I normally would have along the Monash Freeway. Even though I tried to be vigilant I was shocked to see flashing blue and red lights fill both of my mirrors. The female highway patrol officer seemed sympathetic when I told her I was rushing to a family emergency but it still cost me \$249 and 3 demerit points.

At Berwick Marc had given his pre-ride talk and was nearly ready to leave as I got there. I noticed a few new faces among the group as well as the usual gang of *hardcores* with one notable exception: Ben was missing, still recuperating from his crash the previous week. With Peter Fisher as rear rider, on his new MV Augusta, we set off for our first stop at Noojee.

The first leg took us through Harkaway and past Cardinia Reservoir, Pakenham Upper and on to Gembrook where we took the Gembrook Yarra Junction Road with its fabulous twisty bends. This road used to have a large dirt section years ago but the dirt has now been replaced with bitumen and fabulous smooth cambered corners that bring a smile to your face. From Yarra Junction to Noojee via Powelltown and what used to be a great stretch of high speed road is now littered with potholes.

Morning tea at Noojee saw the group divide up equally between the upper and lower cafes. Just as well because service was so slow that it took them over half an hour to get everyone's orders delivered. Steve kept himself busy by dismantling his bike and putting it together again. I'm not sure what his bike's problem was but at one stage I saw him holding parts of a fuel pump in the air.

After 45 minutes everyone had finished eating and drinking and we set off again. John and Kate left the ride to make wedding preparations and Marc decided to head straight to Moe for lunch via Hill End and Willow Grove to make up for lost time. The original plan was to ride the full loop to Moe via Erica, Rawson and Tyers but that would have meant a late lunch.

Ron and I corner marked at the roundabout as you enter Moe for what seemed an excessively long time until finally the remaining riders came through. Damir had been stopped at Willow Grove by a highway patrol car and was forced to make a \$249 donation. So much for the go-slow and work bans I had been reading about in Friday's newspaper.

After a leisurely lunch and refuel at Moe a few more riders left the ride including our rear rider Peter. So Pina stepped in as the new rear rider and we headed off for the Gippsland leg of the ride.

All was going to plan as we turned into Sunny Creek Road but just after the road turned to dirt we missed the Childers turnoff on our left and ended up riding for 8 kms on a very pleasant and scenic winding gravel road that overlooked the valley. Tony and Steve loved this dirt section and soon made their way to the front of the pack. Eventually we hit bitumen again just south of Yarragon and decided to keep heading south but after only one kilometre we came to a detour sign. We were all in an adventurous mood so the consensus was that rather than backtrack we would see if the detour would take us in the right direction.

After 10 kms of interesting roads we came to a huge road closed sign at Allambee with a large barricade across the road. The recent rain and wet weather had completely washed the road away making it impassable.

We backtracked and emerged at Yarragon and then a bit of highway to Trafalgar where we turned on to the familiar Thorpdale Road. After a quick blast along here we stopped at Mirboo North for fuel. Then it was off again taking the road south to Mardan picking up the Arawata Road through to Fairbanks including the three kilometre stretch of dirt. Tony and Steve again proved that sports bikes can be ridden like motocross bikes and left everyone to bask in their plumes of dust.

We turned off at Ranceby and then north at Poowong heading towards Drouin but before we got near Drouin we took more back roads that saw us emerge at Longwarry and finally at the BP service center on the highway for breakup.

I had a thoroughly enjoyable day, apart from making my morning donation. So did everyone else. Thanks to Marc for another good ride and Pina and Peter for rear riding.

Robert Langer