

Mt Buninyong Fire Tower

Sunday 2nd October 2011

Willem Vandeveld (rear)	Honda ST1300	Ross Smith (1 st ride)	Suzuki 1250
Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Darryn Hutchinson	Suzuki GSXR1000
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Duane Rafferty	Suzuki GSXR1000
Ian Payne	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Jason Wilson	Kawasaki ZX9
Nigel Oman (2 nd ride)	Honda CBR1000	Bill Kennedy (1 st ride)	Kawasaki Z750
Mark Copeland	Honda VTR1000	Peter Fisher	MV Augusta 1090
Mirko Strasser	Honda CBR929	Rob Langer	KTM 990
Borris Papuga (1 st ride)	Honda VFR800	Graeme Tattersall	Triumph 675
Kurn Bridgeman	Honda CBR600	Rod Merrett	BMW S1000RR
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Geoff Jones (lead)	Yamaha R1
Roman Biarozza	Honda CBR600	Ed Simonis	Moto Guzi 1200S
Paul Cail (2 nd ride)	Yamaha R1		<i>25 bikes, 25 people</i>

Rain and wind, thunder and lightning all day Grand Final Saturday and I have an R1 with maybe one dry ride left in its tyres. What to do? Val suggests I should fit new ones but instead I fiddle around in the shed: laser align the chain run with one of my recent E-Bay purchases, and balance the carbs. I trust the weather forecast that promised dry conditions, but not much in the way of warmth where the ride was to go. Two cold places in the first section, Trentham via Mt Macedon and then on to Ballarat. Chills if not thrills guaranteed. We would see tomorrow.

Sunday dawns. Cats the new Premiers. On with wet weather gear and off to Whittlesea.

Tony Stegmar and Paul Cail already there but soon followed by an enormous turn up. Chase up the ICE numbers, talk-the-talk to the first timers, do the pre-ride spiel, neglect to mention the first aid options, and don't ask for a write-up volunteer; must be getting old. I bet I felt a tad better than Ben, two weeks on from his encounter with the Donna Buang road complete with healing ribs and other sore spots. His new bike picked up the day before, a tasty tri-colour CBR1000, white wheels and all. New gear including a very nice helmet, supplied by Eddie Simonis, who was on hand to stop Ben hanging his new lid on the Honda's mirrors.

No rack delivered as yet so Ben struggled out of, and into, his backpack at each stop as well as trying to keep his very tender torso off the seat as the road shocks did not do four problem ribs any favours. His legs protesting, more drugs needed.

10 am start has gone so off to tackle the Eden Park twisties. Some wet patches but clean and drying. On to Wallan to pick up the Romsey road. Pace up to keep my mirrors clear - not an easy task - but livened-up by closing fast on a group of Harleys out for a sedate tour. Shut down behind them but knowing what sort of hydro-carbon storm was developing behind, I jumped them using as much tact as I could muster: leave the R1 in top and pull its trigger. Job done. They turned right at Romsey, I gather.

Cameron's Corner comes and goes. Pina mentioned later that it may have been an anniversary of that particular incident.

Up Straws Lane, then along the twisties on the north side of Mt Macedon, still wet and covered with debris from the storms. Through the back streets of Woodend and on to the Ashbourne Road complete with water running from the high side of the road in a few corners. Straight road through Trentham East past the Pig and Whistle Pub, and into cold Trentham for first break after 100km.

Pina takes the coffee group to her favoured location; the rest hit the bakery. Roman leaves here; problems with the indicators on the CBR600 to be addressed at home. Jason relates some

interaction with a spiritedly driven Merc which remained in the ZX9's mirrors despite Jason's best efforts.

Through Trentham, past a couple of local car drivers who have had a coming together in the middle of the road, then on to the back road to Springhill, pace picking due to the timing of the Japanese MotoGP telecast on *One* at 4.30pm. Can we get home in time to watch Casey do his thing?

Through Glenlyon and in to Hepburn Springs the back way trying to avoid the Sunday traffic that always seems heavy in Daylesford. Pick up the sweepers on the Midland Highway, watching for "the man", till Blampied, and the blast to Creswick. Low trafficked open roads seem to suit the Club's culture well, but there is always the risk of detection, something that occupies one's mind at the pointy end. So far, no problems.

Long drone along Gillies Road to the BP at Lake Wendoree for lunch and fuel. Subway or fish and chips, unless you pack your own.

Time waits for no man so it's off to Mount Buninyong Fire Tower for a look at the now very green countryside. More photos of the assembled mass which had thinned as people went their own ways during the day. Not too sure of the stats on this but Ben, despite his pain levels, may have gathered the data, as he does.

Back down the tower road and in to Buninyong to pick more back roads to Mt Mercer and I thought, Meredith. Pace picking up, tyre depth going west at a great rate, and the R1 playing its oil level warning party trick. I recall suggesting to Ross and Bill at the pre-ride that we don't get lost because we have well organised leaders with well thought out routes. Not this day.

Despite Rob suggesting that I might be taking the wrong road, I continued on the newly surfaced road to Shelford, thinking I was on the Meredith Road. Mirrors full of ZX10 and, I think, CBR, prompted some low flying but I soon realised my mistake as Marc blasted past at warp speed, disappearing over a brow. I shut down and did an embarrassing U-turn to return to Mt Mercer and head for the Brisbane Ranges. Small section of dirt road, and then into Meredith for fuel. Marc turned up 10 minutes later, the Kwaka "singing", his reason for passing the leader.

Some discussion of the ride finish at Werribee sees it changed to Bacchus Marsh which suits Mark (VTR1000) and me with Gisborne just up the road.

From Meredith we headed through Steiglitz, Anakie, and then through Staughton Vale to Balliang and the long straights into The Marsh. Jason quoted some interesting numbers on his speedo along here.

Rather brutal stop at the Freeway entrance to declare the ride over, much to Rob's dismay.

I got to Gisborne about 4.50 pm and the race broadcast started around 5pm so I saw Casey do his thing, but not as expected. A tank slapper knocking his brake pads away from the disks saw Casey furiously pumping the brakes and running off into the gravel. He finished third. Pedrosa held the Honda Banner high with Lorenzo's Yamaha second.

Thanks to Willem and Ian for rear riding. No police interest to report and we all stayed rubber side down. The rain stayed away and I am sure your plugs would have been cleaned well. Hope all enjoyed the day.

Geoff Jones