



Violet Town

Sunday 8th July, 2012

Willem Vandeveld (rear)	Honda ST1100	Mark Copeland	Kawasaki ZX10
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Aiden Baker	Kawasaki ZX10
Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Andrew Newbury	Kawasaki ZX10
Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Geoff Jones (leader)	Yamaha R1
Hans Gouws (1 st ride)	Honda CBR1000	Graeme Tattersall	Yamaha MT01
Craig Morley	Honda VTR1000SP1	Andy Maher (1 st ride)	Yamaha R6
Simon Wastney	Honda VFR800	Phill Hotschilt	Suzuki GSXR1300
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Rob Jones	Suzuki GSXR1000
Jesvin George	Honda CBR600	John Condon (1 st ride)	Suzuki GSXR600
Matt Considine	Honda CBR600	Rod Merrett	BMW S1000RR
Rob Langer	KTM990	Peter Fisher	BMW S1000RR

An old article from Ha Du says "...if there is an awkward silence following the word `article' or write-up, keep looking at the ground"

This is exactly what happened this Sunday at the pre-ride brief. After a short pause Ben looked at me and I knew what was going to happen next. Ben cheerfully volunteered to spell my name and here I am twitching my fingers on the keyboard.

I was hesitant to ride with the Club, my new CBR600RR only two weekends old. Given the pace we do, and a sore wrist, I thought I would rear ride for the first two legs and then go home.

It was my first Club ride in three months and I eagerly reached the scene. Oh boy, I didn't expect 24 riders including three new riders and Simon Wastney's first Club ride as a member. By the time I was on the scene Willem was determined to do the rear riding and who can reason with a man who has got fluoro clothing and blue headlights.

I met a few familiar faces – Ben the Man, Paul with cap (recognises me as *Boy from the Bush* after the Lancefield ride incident in April 2012, Craig with the VTR, Rob the Orange rider, Cliff and Misho - smiley men, Phil the Busa Man, Pina – the lady in need of speed, Aiden and Andrew on their new ZX-10s.

Just before we started there was another small group of between 6 and 8 riders who made a noisy departure from the fuel station.

We started from Whittlesea to Yea under the leadership of Geoff Jones. Everyone seemed to enjoy the fast sweepers. Shift a gear down, body slightly to the corner, full throttle and enjoy the long sweepers and screaming music from the under-seat exhaust - motorcycling is bliss.

There were few wet areas on the road but no one seemed to care. After a while we rode into fog and although visibility was not too bad, I couldn't see a thing on the road surface. Look where you want to go? Where exactly in the fog should I look? A few riders overtook me through the fog, flogging the fog rule. I turned on the bright light, took it easy and eventually reached Yea where I enjoyed the warmth of the café with a few riders.

Rob Langer mentioned that his on-board computer was flashing between 1°C and 1.6°C while flying through the fog. The conversation soon progressed to where someone asked how many bikes Rob owns. He casually mentioned a KTM, a ZX-10 and a few dirt bikes. Lucky man, eh? I remembered an old article where it is mentioned that Rob's house is a boys' den with cars, bikes and vehicle parts, ending up on the dining table. I made a mental note to seek an apprenticeship at whatever job Rob is doing, or buy next Tuesday's Tattersalls lotto. Graeme, do you know the winning numbers?

We had more time on our first break than planned while Geoff altered the route to avoid the fog. We started towards Euroa along boring straights at the middle and end of the route, cautiously scanning for suspicious vehicles. Now with no trace of fog or cops, occasional fun was had along this route.

Lunch at Euroa where I saw Ron Johnson. Wait a sec! I didn't see him at the start of the ride. Where did he come from? Ron was happy chatting with a mate about his new Suzuki GSX1250. He was taking it easy until the engine break in was completed, but the tyres were scuffed nearly towards the edge! Aiden and I are going through a similar phase of transition to super sports riding position although he doesn't whinge about sore wrists. During the ride I saw him banging past a few times and I reckon he is leaning more into corners than he used to on his Kawasaki ER6N.

Just before the next leg, we spotted a cop on a BMW in town, but he didn't take much interest in us.

Everyone enjoyed the next leg [*Strathbogrie, Merton, Gobur, Caveat, Highlands, Yea ...Ed.*] the most with a mix of everything: long and shorter sweepers, medium to tight corners, two or three hairpins, uphill, downhill, damp, bump, crest, gravel, and a few wet places. What did I miss? Snow, ice, rain, bush fire and leaf litter. Right in the middle of some of the corners were wide wet patches across the width of the road – a flowing water path.

I have ridden under 10,000 kilometres in Australia so there is heaps of everything to improve, and with a new bike, I have nothing else to point the finger at other than myself.

On the straights someone was doing spectacular monos; we need more of them. [*Johnno, GSXR600*]

Time to check the max speed of the CBR600 and I was blown away by the wind. 6 kms short of max speed. Wow! But that is not the essence of motorcycling; any fool can twist a wrist on the straights.

I followed Pina for some time on the twisties. With typical MSR fashion, the top guns went past me but at the speeds they overtake, I can hardly recognise the bikes, especially as my concentration was completely on road. But it is good fun to chase them for a short time.

Finally, we reached Yea with a YEAH. That section of road best suited my current skill level and riding with the other 23 riders was great fun.

Fuel up and photo time at Yea. I noticed two ladies on bikes at the fuel station, one on a Honda cruiser and other one wearing a Ducati jacket riding a Hyosung 650.

The last leg from Yea to Kinglake was boring as there was a rumour of cop/speed camera within a small bunch of riders. I'm not sure how other riders did it.

Official ride finished with 374km and first time Club riders Andy and John seemed to be in high spirits. Hopefully we will see them again.

Thanks, Geoff, for leading with timely breaks, and thanks to Willem for rear riding.

I started from home with 600km on the odometer and reached home with 1130km and now the bike is due for the first service at Peter Stevens. I need to find out how to do an oil change myself.

Sore eyes, numb wrist, uncomfortable back, and hungry, but satisfied to the core.

Checking the next ride on the MSR website soon after a hot shower only to find that Ben has already updated today's ride!

24 bikes, 24 people, 374km, 14 deg. fine and sunny; fog till 11.30 am and cold!

Jesvin George