

Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Nigel Oman	Honda CBR1000	Geoff Jones	Yamaha R1
Willem Vandeveld	Honda ST1300	Chris (1 st ride)	KTM Motard

Holidays: it seems one has less time to relax and catch up on well-deserved R&R than during the year. I'd only managed to go on one or two rides over the December - January period, and having missed out on Jindabyne, was eager to clear out the cobwebs.

I arrived at Whittlesea to see Tony, Geoff, and Vince Green. Vince was the Club president before Ian Payne. I wasn't expecting many people as most of the regulars were having fun in Jindabyne. I wish I'd been able to join them, of course. A few more riders appeared before we started off the ride with Tony, Geoff (leading), Willem (tail end Charlie), Chris (new guy on a KTM), Nigel and me.

Our first stop was Seymour at the hamburger hut. The route was via Whittlesea, Flowerdale, Strath Creek, Trawool, and Highlands (with the usual gravel and bumps). Being our first stop, it was a bit early for a heavy lunch so most had a snack instead.

From Seymour we headed off towards Pyalong, Emu Flat, Baynton, Burke & Wills Track to Lancefield, Cobarr, and Mt Macedon to our next stop - lunch in Woodend.

Due to limited numbers we used one marker per corner. I was corner marking the Lancefield turn, just out of Pyalong. But even with my conspicuous lime green paint and frantic hand waving, new rider Chris missed me and kept heading down the highway. But I had to wait for Willem before giving chase. When Willem arrived I indicated to wait while I went after Chris. I took off and eventually caught him only to find Willem and Nigel following me! Clearly something was lost in translation.

In retrospect, I won't be chasing riders that miss a corner unless it was my fault for not being in a good visible position; it's far too risky speeding to catch the lost rider, especially when they are riding at the speed limit or more. Perhaps when explaining the Corner Marking System the leader should elaborate on the "look carefully for corner markers" in addition to "how to corner mark"? *[or use the prescribed two corner markers ...Ed.]*

We arrived in Woodend shortly after and had lunch. Changes to the route so as not to end up out in Werribee, far from most riders' homes, were discussed. We were eager to avoid any long stretches of boring freeway, especially in the 37 degree heat. Geoff decided to lead us to Trentham Falls where we walked halfway down the steps and had a look.

After the pleasant break the ride continued on to Blackwood, Greendale and Bacchus Marsh for fuel. Then on to Riddells Creek, Clarkefield and Bulla, finishing on the exciting Wildwood Road under the Tullamarine airport flight path.

No one hung around as there was no shade. I felt like I'd been roasted alive in my leathers so I headed for home and got to enjoy the other great aspect of motorcycle riding: filtering through traffic! The Kings Way exit from the Westgate Freeway seems to always back up on Sunday afternoons.

Thanks for leading the ride, Geoff, and for tail-end Willem (in the morning) and Tony (in the afternoon). Sorry to hear about your licence, Tony. We'll miss having the 'Club Photographer' not on the job.

Marc Marais