

Licola Sunday 7th November, 2012



Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Ron Johnston	Suzuki GSX1250
Nigel Oman	Honda CBR1000	Mark Rigsby (rear)	Suzuki GSXR1000
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Steve Mudford	Suzuki GSXR750
Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Geoff Shugg	Suzuki DL650
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600
Dave Byrne	Honda CBR1000	Jesvin George	Honda CBR600
Damir Djikic	Honda CBR1000	Raman Biaroza	Honda CBR600
Tim Emons	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters (leader)	Kawasaki ZX10
Matt Considine	Honda CBR1000	Andrew Newbury	Kawasaki ZX10
Simon Wastney	Honda VFR800	Cindy Lee	Triumph 675

Awkward ride to Licola.

Licola ride is my favourite. As Cliff mentioned in the morning spiel, it is also the most dangerous. That is true enough; first time I was on the ride - Paul went off, the second time it was Steve. Who will it be now? Hopefully, nobody.

As I started off from home, I realised what I've forgotten my knee guards. Just kevlar's are good, but guards would be better. Half an hour later, then rain started, I realised what I've forgotten my racing waterproof boots at home. Touring ventilated boots are good, but waterproof would be better.

Weather wasn't promising, but I was surprised to see so many riders at Berwick servo. Obviously, it wasn't just me, who loves that ride.

Then the motors roared, and ride had started. I was prepared for a long boring ride to the bosom of Macalister river, but the fun stuff started even earlier. On the first roundabout off M1 freeway I was pretty low to the ground, when I passed the first pair of corner markers, then even lower when I passed the second set of markers. Right foot was scratching asphalt when I saw the third pair far on the right. Or was it just two pairs and I got dizzy running clockwise?? Anyway, I wasn't prepared and run wide out, onto on the grass. Luckily enough, I was slow on reaction and didn't brake. There was nothing else to do but to pretend I was designing the line like that and continue on with straight face :))

Slow legal touring past Bunyip, Longwarry,.. Tyers. Do not remember much apart from being freeze'd and uncomfortable in some corners on wet surface.

When I go out of servo station I saw a lot of people surrounded my bike. And they were not for the sign of admiration. Tony noticed my exhaust was loose. It turns out I've lost two mounting bolts

somewhere. Fortunately, I was riding with the most experienced guys around Melbourne, so they helped and fixed it with the bolts from right footpeg. Thanks Ben, Ron, Tony and other guys.

As we were out of the main group, Ben led me to the next meeting point. It was a great chance to see how the top gun rides, as I had to keep up. (Most of the time I just ride at the end of the column). What can I say? Ben rides effortlessly. Minimum motions, very lazy on brakes, not a single steering correction. Very, very consistent and smooth.

When we got to the hills, the ride become real fun. I got adrenalin rush, got hit, got high. So many frequent tight corners, what a fun! Throwing the bike from right to left, from left to right, feeling the road on your wrist, what could be better? I am so in love with tight twists, I should seriously think about Moto-gymkhana.

Sometimes to make a corner, I had to get a little bit to the next lane. Third or quarter of the second lane, no more, I promise :) And I always thought - no good, what if there is oncoming SUV? And at least twice it was there! I don't know how I made it, but reflexes worked as they should, hug the tank, swift correction and we pass each other. Why the hell they always drive huge bulldozer-type SUVs there? What happened with good old Toyota Yaris and Daewoo Matiz?

At the end of the third leg I found clutch bolt almost unscrew itself. And again, Ben was there with bunch of lovely prepared nuts to fix it up. Thanks again, Ben. I don't know how to excuse the bike. Probably, I was shaky because of the cold and the vibration of my shake has transferred to exhaust mounting bolts, and that is why they gone. And the clutch bolt - I recently serviced it, the lube was probably too good, too slippery...

And by the time we get back to Tyers, Jason noticed the tail section of my left fairing gone loose. WTF? The plastic holding finger was broken. Yeah, definitely shaking vibration.

Nothing to add, but what is said on MSR site: the rides are tough on the bike and the rider.

Raman Biaroza