



Camperdown Sunday 19th August, 2012

Quinn Myers (2 nd ride)	Kawasaki ZX14	Ben Warden (rear)	Honda CBR1000
Andrew Newbury	Kawasaki ZX10	Tim Emons	Honda CBR1000
Cliff Peters (leader)	Kawasaki ZX10	Dave Byrne	Honda CBR1000
Aiden Baker	Kawasaki ZX10	Michael Macrae (2 nd ride)	Honda CBR600
Rob Langer	Kawasaki ZX10	Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600
Bill Kennedy	Kawasaki Z750	Jesvin George	Honda CBR600
Bill Simpson	Suzuki GSXR1000	Geoff Jones	Yamaha R1
Chris Pointon	Suzuki GSXR1000		<i>15 bikes, 15 people</i>

Camperdown is a township at the centre of Victoria's lush Western District pastoral area. Located on the Princes Highway and with a population of around 2000 people, Camperdown is surrounded by an ancient volcanic field. Today the only remnants of this field are several volcanic lakes and an extinct volcano called Mt Leura.

On today's outing, Cliffy led us on a well put together ride to explore this area of the west that is seldom visited by the MSR. At the riders briefing at Point Cook, he informed us we would be heading out through Werribee, Anakie, Maude and Meredith where we would stop for morning tea.

The morning was cold and I turned up well prepared with several layers of thermal underwear. Dave Byrne arrived on a demo Honda CBR1000 after deciding to trade his Husky Nuda in for a fully faired bike.

As we passed through the back blocks of Werribee I spotted Billy Simpson travelling in the opposite direction. I later found out it was indeed Billy who was on his way to fuel up before joining the ride.

The roads were in good condition. I especially enjoyed the section through the Brisbane Ranges with its variety of sweeping curves.

Morning tea at Meredith was a welcome opportunity for hot coffee and a chat till we were all warmed up and ready to head onward.

On the next section until lunch I recognised very little as we zig-zagged our way westward travelling through places such as Woodbourne, Mt Mercer and Rokewood. The final stretch before lunch saw us crossing the Hamilton Highway as we turned onto the Foxhow Camperdown Road. We passed between Lake Corangamite (Victoria's largest lake) on our right and Lake Gnarpurt on the left. My enthusiasm with the throttle had consumed my 17 litre fuel supply and my reserve light came on as I passed a signpost saying, Camperdown 45kms. I slowed right down to conserve fuel and soon had rear rider Ben tailing me the final few kilometres to lunch.

Camperdown was a hive of activity when we arrived with a major cycling event underway. The main street was blocked off and police were everywhere, directing traffic through the town.

We stopped off at the bakery on the edge of town that was still easily accessible and joined the large queue inside waiting to be served, but before being served my patience ran out and I decided to skip lunch and just have the bottle of water I had brought with me. I sat next to Tim, which was a mistake because the yummy smell of his Italian meatball focaccia soon had me back joining the queue to order one for myself. From the bakery we had a birds-eye view of the peloton as it passed through the town, with a police escort, followed by a large entourage of support vehicles.

[Geoff Jones left us here with a blown rear shock. ...Ed.]

After lunch and a refuel we departed town via the tight winding road which led us to the summit of Mt Leura and its lookout. Ben took a group photo as we all enjoyed the 360 degree panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. From the lookout we spotted thick black clouds rolling in from the south and before we mounted up and headed off, the first of a few showers forecast for the afternoon arrived. We had to pass through Camperdown again and were held up at a roadblock for fifteen minutes till the last gaggle of cyclists came past and the road was reopened to all traffic.

Cliffy led us onward to Lake Bullen Merri which is another of the district's attractions. Lake Bullen Merri is a volcanic fresh water lake and is kept well stocked with rainbow trout and quinet salmon. I can remember coming here many times during my childhood and fishing for rainbow trout using mudeyes (dragonfly larvae) as bait.

After a brief viewing of the lake we were off again, now homeward bound. Riding past Lake Purumbete and then through Swan Marsh and Barongarook we arrived at Deans Marsh for afternoon tea after 110 kms. The rustic hotel at Deans Marsh makes good coffee and we sat outside as we drank up and chatted about anything and everything.

The final 60 kms ride to Batesford via Moriac was like a dash to the finishing line and all the ZX10s arrived at Batesford with their reserve lights on. Someone noticed coolant leaking from Dave's CBR radiator and the boys set to work by trying to siphon Stop Leak into the coolant reserve tank. The attempted fix did not work and Dave resorted to calling RACV Roadside Assist to transport the bike back to Melbourne. The group slowly went their separate ways, most heading for the freeway to Melbourne. Cliff stayed with Dave for 40 minutes till the flattop arrived and loaded up the CBR.

All up we travelled 390 kms from Point Cook to Batesford and I thoroughly enjoyed the day. Thanks Cliff for putting together this interesting ride and Ben for rear riding.

Rob Langer