



Daylesford Sunday 5th August, 2012

Willem Vandeveld	Honda ST1300	Andrew Newbury	Kawasaki ZX10
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10
Ben Warden (leader)	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Peter Jones	Honda CBR1000	Jason Wilson	Kawasaki ZX9
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Gordon Heydon	Kawasaki ZX6
Wes Ashton (1 st ride)	Honda VTR1000	Phill Hotschilt	Suzuki GSXR1300
Craig Morley	Honda VTR1000SPI	Ron Johnston	Suzuki GSF1250
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Chris Pointon	Suzuki GSXR1000
Jesvin George	Honda CBR600	Ken King	Suzuki GSXR1000
Ed Simonis	Moto Guzi 1200S	Bill Simpson	Suzuki GSXR1000
Dave Byrne (3 rd ride)	Husqvarna 900	Geoff Dick	BMW R1100GS
Terry Duggan (1 st ride)	Triumph 955	Mick Bush (1 st ride)	BMW F800
Anna Macaulay (1 st ride)	Triumph 675	Paul Simonson	Aprilia RSV4
Rob Langer	KTM 990		<i>27 bikes, 27 people</i>

Who said “It’s not easy being Green”? I think it was Kermit but I vaguely remember saying the same to Cliffy back in the day when Green Kwakas on an MSR rider were as rare as a decent set of teeth at a Collingwood match. In contrast, this weekend was a sight to behold. Kawasaki after Kawasaki! They were everywhere. It reminded me of drinking Crème de menthe almost to the point of death then vowing everything that colour was now out of bounds for the rest of my life. Of course deep down I know they are popular for a reason. That is ‘cos they go alright despite their colour. I even said to Gordon at Whittlesea, “If one more Kawasaki rolls up, I’m going home”. Then, hello, it’s Marc. Lucky for me I didn’t stick to that statement because not only would I have ridden 140 km’s getting to the start line for no reason but I would have missed out on a fantastic day of riding and some great company as well.

Cliff and I had spoken on the phone on Saturday night and organised where and when we would meet before heading up the Princess Hwy Whittlesea bound. Normally I’m the first one there but today the shoe was on the other foot. The trip up the highway was relatively uneventful except the gorgeous sunshine we were enjoying had no correlation to the temperature. To put it simply, my

fingers were freezing. The rest of me was okay, just the fingers. I guess at 8am on a winter's day, what should one expect?

After arriving at the starting point and refuelling, I made my way over to where I recognized a few familiar faces. Peter Jones greeted me with a huge smile, his huge frame and his huge hair. It made me laugh to the point where I even commented to him along the lines of "due for a haircut hey mate". The reason I found this funny was because I had just had a hair cut myself the day before as I too had gone a bit caveman over the winter period. Lucky for me, Pete saw the funny side of it.

No need to add to the whole story about how many green motorcycles were at the start line. But they weren't the only manufacturer represented on this ride. In fact, that's probably one of, if not the biggest group I've ever seen on an MSR ride. 27 bikes, 27 people. And what makes that amazing is the fact it's winter time! It was a very healthy turn out to be sure. There were some new faces (some prettier than others) and lots of old faces as well. Then after the ride brief was completed the fun began.

The first leg of the ride saw us heading in the direction of Woodend. The roads were mostly tight sweepers with patchy wet areas which always keep me alert. But I had no issues and when we stopped at the Woodend bakery for a cuppa I didn't hear anyone else say they had any problems either. The bakery looked like old McDonalds farm, with an oink, oink here and an oink, oink there. The boys in blue were everywhere! When I saw 6 or 7 of them, my first thought was "is there a special on doughnuts today?" But the doughnuts were the regular price and they were just grabbing a bite to eat before heading off on a day's revenue raising. God bless 'em!

It was here that Craig and Anna (a first time club rider) decided to leave us but Jesvin rocked up to join the ride. He had missed the start due to a flat tyre I think he said!

Leg 2 and approximately 130 kms to Daylesford was the plan but somehow I think we did a little more than that due to a missed corner or wrong turn. No harm done. Pulling into the servo in Daylesford I quickly realised that if I waited in line to get petrol with that many bikes all trying to do the same thing, it could be a slow process, so I dashed off to the other petrol station on the other side of town. Here I found Paul and Cliffy already at the bowsers, one step ahead of me. A few others rolled up shortly after. Clearly they had been thinking the same thing.

Off to the never quiet town centre of Daylesford for lunch. A rather delicious "chicken, leek and bacon pie" was consumed. This was washed down by a hot cup of tea. Perfect, as by now the weather had gotten quite chilly. I told Pina that I had just had a chicken pie for lunch hoping that she would ask me "how was it"? And she did. This of course was the lead in I wanted so I could tell her it was "fowl". She was very concerned that my lunch was so sub-standard but with a little nudge and a wink from Cliff, she saw my average attempt at humour and we all had a bit of a laugh.

A couple more riders had decided to call it a day at this point which was understandable. The weather was getting quite nasty with the wind being the biggest issue. Ron Johnson now arrived to join us, missing the 10 am start due to circumstances I never found out about.

The third leg of the ride started off in a state of confusion. Three riders hadn't returned to their bikes from lunch but as far as the rear rider and the two corner markers (Misho and me) were concerned we hadn't been told of their intentions. We waited for some time but Misho did a quick scout around and on his return gave the rear rider Willem and me the okay to head off.

The skies were looking dark and the temperature was dropping too. I thought back to the start of the ride and remembered how sunny it had been only to think, this crappy weather is not what I'd hoped for, but I was still relatively warm and except for a very runny, nose which isn't pleasant inside a motorcycle helmet let me tell ya, I was holding up well. I've had a rotten head cold for about three weeks now, so deciding to go out on an all-day ride on a winter's day may not be the smartest thing I've done but equally it's not the stupidest thing I've done either.

Talking a lot about winter and the yucky weather it brings, it is also in many ways a beautiful time of the year as well. I know many won't agree with me but as I ride through the Victorian country side I see greenery, full dams, rock formations, brilliant cloud formations and moments of sunshine attempting to warm the inhabitants below. Awesome properties and houses, creeks and rivers and don't forget the roads, of course. All of which makes me glad to be alive.

Arriving at the finish line, we mingle and talk, debriefing each other on the day's riding, the good, the bad and the ugly, the near misses, the wild, windy weather and the bumpy roads. Ben says, "Let's get a photo". So we head over to the bench seat and pose for the group shot which you see on both the front and rear of the Club's awesome monthly newsletter. Pina is sitting in front of me and whilst it was a bit of a low act I couldn't resist giving her a "Wet Willy". If you don't know what that is, then Google is your friend. Mental note, don't do that again Billy. Lol.

The usual farewells were exchanged and the very long cold wet and windy ride back to Geelong commenced. On a few occasions I thought I was going to be blown clean off the road. But I didn't and I arrived now shaken but not stirred and glad I attended this ride. As always, thank you everyone for your attendance and company and I look forward to seeing you again in the near future.

Billy Simpson



