



Strathbogie Ranges MK II Sunday 26th August, 2012

Quinn Myers (3 rd ride)	Kawasaki ZX14	Ben Warden (1/2 rear)	Honda CBR1000
Andrew Newbury	Kawasaki ZX10	Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000
Cliff Peters (leader)	Kawasaki ZX10	Misho Zrakic/Pina Garasi	Honda CBR1000
Mark Copeland	Kawasaki ZX10	Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000
Rob Langer (leader)	Kawasaki ZX10	Mick Canny	Honda CBR1000
John Willis	Kawasaki Z1000	Ian Handforth (1/2 rear)	Honda XL1000
Rod Merrett	BMW S1000R	Jesvin George	Honda CBR600
Pierre Ong	Aprilia RSV4R	Nigel Holden (1 st ride)	Triumph ST1050
Dave Williams	Aprilia RSV4R	Jim Tynan (1 st ride)	Yamaha R1
Steve Mudford	Suzuki GSXR750		<i>19 bikes, 20 people</i>

Riding along our usual route to Whittlesea, Misho's Akrapovic happily sings some boisterous tunes praising the Sunday morning's sunshine, a sentiment which did not resonate fondly with the speed enforcement officers we encountered over the crest of this usually deserted farm road. What's more, they had also just stopped Ben Warden after "tracking" him for a short time and finding that he was a touch over the speed limit.

"Any reason for speeding?" the policeman asks Misho, to which Misho responded with a "What?"..."Any reason for speeding?" he asks again, to which Misho responds "Can't hear you" thereby avoiding a direct response. "We heard you coming, and from the sound of your exhaust, we can tell that you were doing a lot more than 124km/h." (Hmm, I thought to myself, if only you knew what I saw on the speedo.) "We heard you slowing down suddenly and we only got you at 124km/h". Licence check. "Record very good; you're 'lucky' today you're not losing your licence. Only three points and \$282" Carbon copy for Ben.

All this nonsense made us late for the ride take-off point and consequently we had no idea of where morning tea was. All I knew is what Ben told me before departing Whittlesea while we filled up with petrol - "Turn left at Flowerdale, don't worry, you'll catch the ride." All good in theory except as we start riding through Whittlesea in the 50km/h zone a female motorist in front of us decides she likes the look of the car park space immediately to her left and sharply turns into it giving

Misho no time to swerve anywhere but to brake hard, eventually scrapping her front passenger door. She's mortified and most apologetic.

Meanwhile I'm having my own episode of momentary post-traumatic stress as I had anticipated we were going to be knocked off. Misho did a great job of "saving" us. Good man! I recovered immediately and proceeded to quickly gather licence/vehicle details as the "discussion" between the female driver and Misho started to slowly escalate into an argument. The driver said she was calling the police because the issue of who is at fault was under dispute. I told her she can call whoever she likes because we're not waiting, so "bye-bye, we'll let the insurance companies work it out".

We were on a mission to catch the ride, no matter what. "Left at Flowerdale." Upon reaching Strath Creek we had a geographic dilemma, left or right? Misho checks the MSR itinerary on his iphone: morning tea at Yea, so "right" we go. Unfortunately, his iphone was not displaying the 'updated' itinerary whereby morning tea was changed to Seymour.

Waiting, waiting at Yea. No MSR, so ring Ben. No answer. Ring Mark Copeland: "We're at Seymour and you had better get going now." Oh Jesus, here we go again, as fast as we can with care to not get caught speeding again. Thirty kilometres later, we 'catch' the Club as they are leaving Seymour and breathe a sigh of relief. It was all worth it!

We start to enjoy the day. Being in the company of our riding friends lifts our spirits and satisfies the need for a "fix". At lunch we recount our morning misadventures and enjoy the ensuing wicked laughter which arises from the MSR interpretation of the incidents.

Misho feels we've fulfilled our quota of three unfortunate events for the day and all will be good from now on. Well, it kind of was, but we did have a very fortunate and hilarious episode of re-visiting Craig Morley's corner on the Merton-Euroa road whereby, at great speed, we followed Steve Mudford up a gravel road leading into someone's property. "Oh no, there's a gate! THE GATE IS OPEN, thank God, otherwise Dave Ward would have accused me of being a "serial gate crasher"! Not a very becoming reputation.

We got to Yarek for the afternoon coffee stop; more re-counting and stirring about our choice of dirt road rather than bitumen as there were a few witnesses to this episode.

Off again, along some curly country roads, with the thrilling finale of the Flowerdale sweepers which I enjoy immensely.

We depart company at Kinglake West, by which time it was rather chilly, happy, however, at having spent the day in the great company of the MSR Club. Thanks to all our fellow riders, and also to Rob for leading... you did a good job.

p.s. When I asked Misho if he wanted to add anything to this ride report, he said "What?" I gave up!

Pina Garasi