

Strathbogie Ranges Sunday 24th March 2013

Cliff Peters (leader)	Kawasaki ZX10	Ian Payne	Honda CBR1000
Nigel Oman (rear)	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10

I can't believe it's been two weeks since Tasmania already! I didn't get to ride last Sunday as I had a kid's birthday party to take my son to, so I've been itching to get back out on the road. Not just to get my fix but to check whether I'd sorted out my power issue I encountered on the last few days of Tasmania (bike not going over 6-8000 rpm under throttle). Cliffy suggested the fuel pump could be clogged and I had managed to service the so-called unserviceable ZX-10R fuel pump and needed some open space to test if the issue had been resolved. I also installed a 1/5 throttle mod on the bike the day before. The stock configuration is 90 degrees of rotation for 0 – 100% throttle. This mod changes that to 72 degrees giving better response and more power with less twist. So there are three reasons why I wanted to get out on the road.

With the ride start in Whittlesea I had to get up a bit earlier to ensure I got there in time. It's a slog up the Hume freeway from Melbourne, and this particular morning the Bolte on-ramp was closed due to a walking/cycling event. I was not impressed; I had to go over the Westgate and all the way around on the Ring Road to meet up with the Hume. Anyway, I left early enough so it wasn't a problem and I arrived with enough time to have my first coffee for the day.

I was the second to arrive after Cliffy. By 10am it was Cliffy, Nigel and myself with Ian on the way. Apparently Ian had issues starting his bike due to a low battery and was running late. Bear in mind the rest of MSR are up in Dargo on a weekend trip. (Wish I had the time!)

At about 10:10am the four of us set off towards Flowerdale. At least corner marking would be minimal!

It's been a while since I've been out this way and it's good to be back. The roads are bumpy as usual with gravel in places. It seems nothing has changed, but there are some good stretches and a fair share of 'twisties'. I kept thinking back to Tasmania two weeks before and can't help but miss those awesome roads. Tasmania (I'm sure I don't have to tell anyone), is motorcycle heaven. Pure bliss! But I need to concentrate on the roads, stop thinking about other things, there's lots to contend with – gravel, corners, leaf litter, bumps.

We eventually arrive in Yea for our first stop. I grab another coffee and a 'bite sized' sausage roll as I haven't had breakfast yet.

From Yea we head out towards Highlands, Caveat, Gobur, Merton, Strathbogie and finally in to Euroa for lunch.

After lunch we headed back to Yea along a similar way with some different roads that I didn't recognise. The ride was going to end in Kinglake but after some discussion it was more convenient for everyone to end the ride at Kinglake West. The road back from Yea takes us through Junction Hill (which I love!) and the last few 70km/h twisties after Flowerdale just before Kinglake West.

Well, the good news is the bike's power problems are solved; cleaning the fuel filter sorted it out. The 1/5 mod is fantastic – it feels like I've got an extra 20hp on tap. It feels great, especially accelerating out of the apex with an even smaller twist-of-the-wrist!

Thanks to Cliffy for leading and Ian for rear riding. A great day out with all my check boxes ticked!

Marc Marais