



Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Aiden Baker	Kawasaki ZX10
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Chris Pointon	Suzuki GSXR1000
Nigel Oman	Honda CBR1000	Geoff Shugg (rear)	Suzuki DL650
Simon Wastney (leader)	Honda VFR800	Dennis Lindemann	Suzuki DRX400SM
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Stu Hosking	Aprilia RSV4
Jordan Burley (1 st ride)	Honda CB250F	Paul Robson	KTM RC8
Michael Srb	BMW S1000RR	Richard Hewson (1 st ride)	Yamaha R1
Dave Chisma	BMW F800		<i>17 bikes, 17 people</i>

Well there's a first time for everything - and a last! This is my first time writing an article and will be my last time asking Ben for a favour as he picked up my MSR T-shirt, then forced me into doing the write up...

I was deliberating whether to ride or not as the weather man said there could be hail in the arvo, but with the sun shining and a message from Richard (first-time rider on a new R1) asking if I was riding, I was left with no choice.

Arriving in Officer, it wasn't too cold and was still looking like a nice day. A few members were worried that they'd been done by the new speed cameras installed on the Monash Freeway near the Burke Road overpass. Hopefully, the cameras are not switched on yet. Saving lives.

It was an uneventful yet enjoyable ride through to Neerim South for morning tea, dodging potholes. Next, Powelltown with the wettest section of road for the day, ridden cautiously soon followed by Old Warburton Road which always keeps you alert in less than perfect weather.

We filled-up in Warburton but didn't stop for food so I thought I'm going to have to fly through the Reefton as I could already feel my hard earned muscles, or "gadgets" as Piña calls them, fading. I needed eggs fast! It helped that Misho waited for me at the bottom and we carved it up together, with some good dry sections of road. Misho stopped at the top while I continued on into heavy fog with Paul and Cliffy. We passed a couple a guys on L-plates and I thought this fog would test them.

We got to Marysville which was very busy with families on school holidays going to Lake Mountain. I got my eggs, crisis averted! I did feel slightly skinnier, but I think this was just the freezing temperature.

First-time rider Jordan had a low speed crash on wet bark on the way over Reefton resulting in a few scratches and missing mirrors on his bike. Thankfully, he was fine. John Willis and fiancée Lou met us for lunch in Marysville. Wedding December 15th.

Continuing on to Healesville normally means the fun is coming to an end, but with the roads drying, we had a pleasant run up Acheron Way, the surface surprisingly good. I also had a good run through the Black Spur, though there were lots of cars.

Finishing at Yarra Glen, I had a quick chat to Ben who said he had a bit of a moment near Nayook where both of his tyres went for a slide which he blamed on a pine tree in mating season, covering the road it's sperm or 'pollen'. Of all the excuses for crashing, or near crashing, I've ever heard, I think this is the best...

Great day with no rain or hail. Richard said to say thanks to everyone. Hopefully he'll be back.

Aiden Baker