



Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10
Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Mark Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Scott Bowden	Honda CBR1000	Tony Stegmar	Suzuki GSXR1000
Ian Payne (rear)	Honda CBR1000	Stu Hosking	Triumph Speed triple
Simon Wastney	Honda VFR800	Glenn Aspden (leader)	Triumph 675
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Cindy Lee	Triumph 675
			<i>12 bikes, 12 people</i>

The deal was that Cindy would write the first three legs to *Eildon via Jamieson* and I would write-up the last leg of the ride back to Kinglake West.

The weather forecast was dismal but once over the ranges after Marysville the roads dried and the clouds evaporated. It was hot and humid in Jamieson and only marginally less so in Eildon.

Marty Thompson was waiting for us with his two super friendly dogs but I didn't get much of a chance to talk to him as I lay on the ground under Marc's ZX10 trying to track down a coolant leak which turned out to be a pinhole high up on the right hand side of the radiator, courtesy of a stone, managing to avoid the radiator guard. Not enough to worry about and rectified later in the week.

Cindy left us at Eildon reducing the group from twelve to eleven.

Back on the bikes, Glenn led us up through Fraser National Park and along Skyline Road which no doubt has magnificent views of Lake Eildon, but who can chance a glance on this most highly crashed road, only recently toppled from the MSR number one position by the Licola Road. Every second corner has someone's name on it.

Everyone was on a high after surviving the Jamieson road in both directions. Misho and I had had a fast paced trip from end to end, my brand new rear tyre not so new anymore, boots and pegs polished a smidge. Just the one bike on our side of the road this time compared to the two big 4WD's towing boats on the way in to Jamieson, hogging most of the road. We just caught Glenn and Stu near the

finish, Stu making tremendous and rapid progress in the last few months it seems. Practice. Practice. Practice. Great to see.

On to the Molesworth Road with Pina in tow, the area holding a number of bad memories for her and hence much better to be following behind someone else these days. I settled on a pace fast enough in the sweepers to wonder whether she would follow. She did. Excellent!

Next the treacherous Maroondah Highway from Molesworth and wait for the support team to arrive, which they duly did, allowing a more reasonable pace to be maintained.

Heading out of Yea, Scott having departed, I could see the mist over the ranges ahead. Sure enough as we rose up Junction Hill, most of the remaining riders all bunched up behind the leader, mist and light rain and cold descended. No real effect on our relaxed speed as grip in the wet almost a non-issue these days with modern tyres.

Tony peeled off at Flowerdale down the Glenburn Road to home in the likely very moist Dandenongs while we continued on to the dark and gloomy and most definitely wet Kinglake West, huddling inside the bus shelter from where we dispersed, agreeing the ride length was in the order of 323 km. Thanks Glenn for leading and Ian rear rider duties. The ride flowed, always a good sign.

I left with Pina struggling to put on wet gloves (the single use variety) knowing Misho and Pina would eventually catch up. They did around Whittlesea and we travelled together till parting ways at Donnybrook Road, Cliff and I parting company on the Western Ring Road some 20 km further on.

A good solid day's riding with the hardcore MSR riders – riding rain, hail or shine. I was pleased my newly installed steering head bearings dramatically improved the clunk in the front end and was even more happy that my riding form from Towong had not dissipated with plenty of corner entry speed and lean angle. Oh what fun it is to ride a motorcycle!

Ben Warden