

## Jindabyne MK II



Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Rob Jones	Suzuki GSXR1000
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Bart Hutchinson	Suzuki GSXR1000
Nigel Oman	Honda CBR1000	Geoff Dick	BMW R850
Dave Byrne	Honda CBR1000	Rob Langer	BMW F800GS
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10
Peter Feistl	Ducati Panigale		<i>11 bikes, 11 people</i>

There were a couple of extra riding sections not covered in Nigel's great write-up when he had an early day. For instance, after the trip down to Eden and back, the plan was to go to Charlotte Pass – 80 km there and back. We went directly to the Shell servo to fuel up but somehow lost Peter Feistl, leaving Ben, Misho, Pina, Cliff and Rob Langer. Nigel and Geoff had gone home directly and *Beer* O'clock for Rob J., Bart and Dave.

It still only costs \$6 for a Kosciuszko National Park Motorcycle Day Pass which has been good value for years now. I see that my pass is time stamped at 4.30 pm. It is a fantastic road with lots of steep uphill 65 km/h corners. At this altitude the air is thin making for an effortless and quiet ride. The road was dry, smooth and clean and sight lines are always excellent. A perfect road.

On Day 2, the same hardy crew left the stinking hot Tumut for the pleasant cool climate offered on the Wee Jasper Road – 43 km of bliss to Bondo and beyond. Unbelievable corners, fabulous visibility, and a great opportunity to use the bike in its intended environment. And while I remember, Misho got away with a severe reprimand for parking on the footpath in Tumut (corner marking) - \$280 fine, 3 demerit point = 6 demerit points on this double jeopardy weekend.

One obvious observation commented on by keen observers is that Pina has turned some sort of metaphorical riding corner: if she can see the corner exit, then she is on the gas hard. She loves the high speed sweepers, and with Misho's determined promotion of taking the correct line, the improvement is now rapid and accelerating as her confidence rises. Hence, in the high country (like

Charlotte Pass and the Wee Jasper Road described above) and the 100 km stretch between Bombala and home base which we did four times, she flies! Often I was surprised to see her arrive, only moments behind the lead bikes. And her speed through the tighter stuff is improving too – so long as she can see! One telling comment from her, “Yeah, but \$1.50 seems slow!”

I think Peter will have another chapter to write on that Panigale. The rear brake lever fell off on Day One possibly on Beverley’s Road and a couple of hours later the gear change lever was only a thread or two behind, caught in the nick of time. He went ahead on the last day and rode slowly looking for the bits, somewhere between Bruthen and Briagolong. Then there was the apparent oil leak with oil all around the rear rocker cover – hopefully just a breather hose venting due to the sustained high revs. Then there are the known issues which Ducati (hopefully) will rectify in the next release like the boiling clutch fluid that has to be bled every 1000 km or so, and the right footpeg that is too hot to hold 5 minutes after you have stopped due to the radiant heat from the exhaust and heat shield, despite Peter’s determined effort to fix the problem by coating the shield in ceramic. And it drinks fuel such that every 100 km regroup was a fuel stop for Peter. But it goes and handles and looks fantastic, and it catches the eye of all the passers-by, so all is forgiven. [Stop press. A call to Peter today notes that replacing the clutch master cylinder bracket with some carbon fiber bling has fixed the problem. My theory of oil cavitation due to the extreme shaking of the master cylinder such that the air in suspension becomes compressible - still stands. Peter did not have to bleed the clutch all weekend.]

Not that my Honda was much better in the mechanical department. The right fork seal sprouted a leak at the starting servo and was patched up with cable ties and tissue paper, Rob Jones donating the cable ties. Luckily, being a Honda, it self-healed and was no issue from that point onwards.

Then there was the small problem of needing 1.75 litres of oil. (Gosh, it’s turned into a regular oil burning CBR and now I will have to carry a squeezey sauce bottle of oil (like Misho carries) to squirt into the (ridiculously) small filler hole. And who stole the sight window? It was there on my 954.) Then there was the low tyre pressures and green puddle of coolant – both of which could be considered owner errors.

And I have dinged the rear wheel again, judging by the gentle thumping at 115 km along the freeway everyday going to work and back this week. Hard to see but Misho spotted the flat spot.

Then there’s the rattley cam chain, hopefully remedied with the installation (tonight, Friday 1<sup>st</sup> Feb) of a manually operated design care of eBay and America – effectively a screw and a locknut. Yes! And it only took me 1.5 hours to install! Though it was the usual struggle to get access to the two mounting screws, I didn’t have to dismantle the bike this time, just took the pain and scratches! I even had time to change the oil and filter afterwards.

At least the fuel economy was the usual awesomeness. I was pushing the Honda to every second fuel stop and sometimes every third stop – best tank 297 km. It was achieving an average of 19 km/l with a worst tank of 18.2 (Eden to Jindabyne) and best 20.1 (Jindabyne to Adaminaby). The dash display can be configured to show you how much fuel you have used – a great feature. Knowing you have say 7 litres left means you can easily make the next 100 km fuel stop.

Accommodation was spectacularly good as usual. This time we stayed in family units at the NSW Sport and Recreation Centre (as distinct from all being in the Torino Lodge) and had even more room and comfort including the use of the most effective drying room facilities. The outdoor, undercover free gas-fired BBQ with all the right tools attached on chains made for a very easy first two night’s meals in relaxing surroundings. So laid back that a family of seven kangaroos visited next morning, quite unperturbed by our presence.

A great trip with no close encounters of the police kind and only the smallest of crashes though probably the end of the bike. The trip was made all the more enjoyable by great company and the usual high standard of anecdotes and (mis)behavior mixed in with support and knowledgeable experience when needed. And of course the weather was generally great for riding despite the two particularly wet periods. Yes, it did lightly rain on and off from Khancoban up to Dead Horse Gap,

but it was more the high humidity and fogging of our visors that made the ride very challenging. And the 30 km of heavy rain from Bombala towards Dalgety was exciting, and in the big scheme of things, 15 minutes (or less) is not much lost time – and makes you appreciate the dry roads all the more!

Did I mention how good the roads were? It was noticeable the amount of road works and resurfacing completed since our last visit. The Inlay Road (NSW Vic border towards Eden coast) was generally pretty good with the huge bump at the starting bridge now gone and lots of resheeting mid-corner replacing the widow maker potholes). The Bonang Highway up from Orbost (163 km of uninterrupted twisty road) was in excellent condition – except for the leaf litter and occasional large tree across the road. The leaf litter could be ignored completely, though it did make for interesting times riding in a fierce leafy vortex following Misho for 30 km. Airbox will be interesting.

Even the Rosewood to Tumut Road was in better condition this time. And the Wee Jasper Road needs investigation on the side branches as the plantation workers seem to have stopped lengthening it. All the signage is up now. Cliff, I have a job for you!

Till next time.

**Ben Warden**