



Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Quinn Myers	Kawasaki ZX14
Ian Payne	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Mark Copeland	Kawasaki ZX10
Misho Zrakic & Pina Garasi	Honda CBR1000	Andrew Newbury	Kawasaki ZX10
Simon Wastney (rear)	Honda VFR800	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10
Kurn Bridgeman	Honda CBR600	Ronny	Kawasaki ZX6
Lyn Duncan	Suzuki GSXR1000	Rob Langer	BMW F700GS
Steve Mudford	Suzuki GSXR750	Cindy Lee	Triumph 675
Geoff Shugg	Suzuki DL650		<i>17 bikes, 18 people</i>

As many may know I've been working overseas in South Africa the last couple of months. The one thing I have missed the most (apart from the family of course) is the weekly rides with the Club.

Well, I finished off a stint and arrived back in Australia on the 14<sup>th</sup> December. I immediately checked what the ride destination would be the coming Sunday: Mirboo North. Gippsland is always good for clearing out the cobwebs so I got the bike ready by removing the trickle charger. Other than that, it's always ready to go; pristine, serviced and on its stands anxiously waiting its master's return. Practically sitting up and begging for me to take it out and give it the berries.

I arrived early at the start point and waited for the rest of the group to arrive while enjoying my morning coffee. After a quick catch-up on the last few weeks that I'd been away and hearing how awesome Dargo was (wish I could've made it) we had the regular briefing and were off.

As usual the first stretch is along the freeway, then through Drouin to Korumburra, the first stop. I always enjoy the road coming into Korumburra with some good corners and higher speed sweepers.

After the morning coffee (second cup), we're off again doubling back the way we came but turning off on the Arawata road with its short stretch of dirt. Joining back on the main road to Leongatha (Strzelecki Highway), there are awesome corners coming down the hill before we turn left at Leongatha heading towards Mirboo North via several back roads. The Limonite Boolarra South road upset Quinn on his ZX-14. He didn't make a corner and shot off up a driveway messing up a

poor local's flower garden. Snapped the top triple clamp and fairing damage on the bike but other than that Quinn was unscathed! Lucky. Pity about the bike. I hope it's back on the road again soon.

In spite of Andrew Newbury's fuel consumption issues on his thirsty ZX-10 (Gen 4) he decided to waste even more fuel on the way by allowing the fuel hose come off just outside of Mirboo. I was coming marking at one point when he passed and accelerated. I noticed the bike was spluttering and not sounding well. When I left the corner after the rear rider had come through, I soon smelt fuel and eventually noticed Andrew on the side of the road trying to figure out what was wrong. I didn't realise at the time something was amiss, although I should've put two and two together.

At the next regroup at the end of the Grand Ridge Road bitumen, Steve went back to help out. Then Ben went back with a siphon and tools but not before nominating Cliff temporary leader for the last 30 km to Boolarra South and Mirboo North for lunch.

Eventually we all regrouped at Mirboo North. A loose bolt on a fuel line was the culprit on the Andrew's ZX10, quickly remedied, after getting access to it!

After lunch at the Bakery we did the famous loop down to Hallston and back to Mirboo North to pick up a couple of riders that decided to sit out the 60 km loop. This loop includes my favourite set of tight sweepers on the Strzelecki Highway near Hallston.

Then on to Trafalgar enjoying the Thorpedale fast sweepers. A short stop in Trafalgar before we're off again via Old Sale Road, Crossover and Jindivick finishing at Officer South.

A great day out on the bike with wonderful people. It was good to be back even just for a little while before I fly back to work. Fortunately, there's still Christmas and New Year to enjoy with the family until I hop on the plane.

Thanks for leading, Ben.

**Marc Marais**