



Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters/Ron Johnston	Suzuki Bandit 1250
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Rod Merrett (leader)	BMW S1000RR
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Michael Srb	BMW S1000RR
Ian Payne (rear)	Honda CBR1000	Aiden Baker	Kawasaki ZX10
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Glenn Worth (1 <sup>st</sup> ride)	Triumph 675
Adrian MacGeraghty	Honda CBR600		<i>11 bikes, 12 people</i>

No... I haven't dropped off the planet - it just looks like it. On Saturday I rang Cliff and asked him if he was going on the ride to Jamieson, and if so, would he mind taking me on the back of my bike? He said he would. I said that would be good and that I would see him Sunday at my house. So out to the garage, tools out, wind up the rear spring one turn, (Cliff said it was a bit soft last time), check the tyres, lube the chain and we're ready.

Sunday morning I get the bike out, ready for Cliff's arrival from Geelong. But I couldn't make up my mind what to wear! Leathers or DriRider gear. I opted for the DriRider suit because it might be cold; better to be rugged up than be cold.

Off we go to Yarra Glen, a few bikes already there when we arrived. New rider Glenn on a Triumph 675 arrived just before we left. Ben had a quick word, giving him a few pointers.

The route was the usual Main Road through the Glen, on to the back road to Healesville, followed by a quiet ride over the Black Spur, thinking about hidden cameras. There were only a few cars on the road - holiday makers – all seeming to be heading for Marysville like us.

In Marysville I was surprised to see a completed housing development on the left at the first roundabout. They have cleared the land across the road as well, with more new buildings on the right. Maybe I need to get out more. We stopped at the usual coffee shop.

Before we left, Glenn said he would "pass" on the rest of the ride because he had other commitments. When we were leaving Simon Wastney arrived on his VFR800. "That's good," I thought.

Back on the road again to Buxton, Taggerty and Thornton where we struck fog, and a sudden temperature drop. Then it cleared up and was okay.

We had a quick regroup at the Jamieson turn off, and then it's on for young and old. Remember the gravel patches from eight weeks ago? They are still there, not as bad, but still there. Caution! Huh. As if. Cliff and I went quite well, but had to slow for the gravel, making the riding difficult but we did it with only a couple fast riders passing us. My back didn't get sore like last time, because my jacket had the back protector in it which stopped the rack from digging into my back.

On we go through the twisties and stop at the lookout. Just prior to stopping, we came across a couple of blokes wearing camouflage gear, one with his face blacked out, which I thought was odd!

Whilst at the lookout Michael on the BMW goes screaming past. A few of the boys whistled and waved arms, but to no avail. Michael would get to Jamieson before us.

A gentle ride to Jamieson followed before we parked in the side street outside the cafe. I bought a salad sandwich at the store down the road where it's cheaper while the others found seating in the sun around the side of the café. The owners' white terrier dog sat calmly, minding its own business.

A couple of Police Nissan Patrols cruised by, adding a little excitement to the day.

Back on the road again, we set off at a brisk pace. Cliff let the fast ones go and we followed Paul Southwell most of the way. The bike doesn't go too badly two-up, but you have your work cut out, that's for sure. Nearly at the other end, in the gravel, we were coming around a right hander when suddenly both Cliff's and my left foot came off the footpegs. The bike's back end had a bit of a slide, but we stayed upright and kept going, not having time to think about it, too busy holding on!

Eildon for fuel, visor clean and a chat. I asked Ben, "Where's Simon?" "He was at Marysville but didn't follow us." That's terrible, me only realising he is not here at this late hour of the day.

Over Skyline, taking care, the road damp in places. On to Alexandra and the Molesworth Road. Here we come; it's on for young and old again.

At Yea we corner-marked. I had to get off the bike because my right knee was giving me grief. I'm not used to sitting with my knees up for long periods. We waited quite a while as the group negotiated the unmarked, five-aerial, dark grey Commodore TOG ute in Molesworth which did a U-ey and started stalking the group. Not today.

Then on to Junction Hill, a favourite of mine. No-one wasted any time going up over the top and on to Kinglake West where we finished up. A dark green Commodore running at 20 km/h over the speed limit posed a serious dilemma around Flowerdale for a few kilometres as bikes chocked up behind it, but eventually the temptation of the pending sweepers was too much with the usual mayhem ensuing.

Total distance to Kinglake West 320 km. Good day, good company, no incidents, everybody had a smile on their face and that's all that matters. Everyone went their own way home from here.

When Cliff and I got home I could hardly get off the bike, my knee that sore it wasn't funny. But I still had a smile on my face. Thanks to Cliff for taking me out; much appreciated. The ride got me out of the house for the day. I miss riding, but have to wait until December before I get my licence back - for Christmas.

**Ron Johnston**