



Ben Warden (leader)
 Ian Payne
 Nigel Oman (rear)
 Misho Zrakic/ Pina Garasi
 Simon Wastney
 Michael Srb
 Jason Wilson

Honda CBR1000
 Honda CBR1000
 Honda CBR1000
 Honda CBR1000
 Honda VFR800
 BMW S1000RR
 Kawasaki ZX9

Chris Pointon
 Tony Stegmar
 Geoff Dick
 Tony Ripepi
 Cindy Lee (1/2 rear)
 Jason Gorman (2nd ride)

Suzuki GSXR1000
 Suzuki GSXR1000
 BMW R850R
 KTM 990
 Triumph 675
 Aprilia RS125
13 bikes, 14 people

At the BBQ

Ben Warden
 Ian Payne
 Paul Southwell

John Willis
 Misho Zrakic
 Tony Stegmar

Lou Tickner
 Pina Garasi
 Simon Wastney

Rob Langer
 Geoff Dick
 Nigel Oman
12 people

Write up, write up, write up... something no one wants to do. I know others do lots in the club, that's what keeps the whole thing rolling, the team-work. Like today, a BBQ at Rob Langer's. Was it just Rob doing everything? No, there were a team of Santa's elves cooking, preparing salads, cool drinks, and a wonderful cool aircon... So I thought I would do something since all I did at the BBQ was eat, chat and watch.

The plan was to meet at the BP at Officer. It was a new meeting place for me. I looked it up on Google and it looked easy enough to get to, but I was running a bit late and did not want to stuff up so I set the address in Google maps on my phone running through a Sena head set. This meant on the trip over I had a nice female voice in my ear telling me what to do and where to go, and we all know what that's like... The servo was very busy and easy to find. There is a big eating place next to it so if you're needing food or coffee before a ride it probably has all you need.

It was good to see the usual crew and some new faces. I had not been out with the Club since the Aussie day weekend. I had done a few rides myself and felt like I had half of one of my balls back... maybe I

picked it up from someone on the long weekend. Have a quick check boys to see if everything is still there cause I seem to have got it from somewhere.

There were 14 people at today's ride, 13 bikes. We set off a little late but it was to be a short blast to Mt Donna Buang so we had plenty of time. Ben was keen to get everyone going, whipping us all individually and collectively. I suppose someone has to do it, and he is good at it...

I was tail rider today so I waited for the stragglers to get going. On leaving the servo there was not a bike in sight just lots of cars. We weaved our way through quickly sighting helmets in the distance turning off to the left. Not far after the turn there was the crew, waiting for a train. We were back together. It's so cool when we ride close. From the rear it looks like I'm in the GP, bikes everywhere... I felt a bit sorry for the front car. He probably got there first, but by the time the train passed we had swarmed around him. Some people seem to freak out when bikes pass them at lights etc, even more with a big group. But this was a Sunday ride. They had no need to worry; once the train went, we were gone the first left out of there...

This was another new ride for me. I had no idea where I was all day. I knew where we were going as I checked the inter-webby thingy, Plan: *Upper Beaconsfield, Cockatoo, Pakenham Upper, Gembrook and Warburton for coffee after 85 km. Mt Donna Buang, BBQ*; But I did not know where I was unless there was a sign. There was a nice *bogan* sign on the Upper Beaconsfield big rock. However, I did have someone trying to tell me what to do. When I stopped at Officer I thought I had turned off the Google maps app, but I hadn't. So all the way from Officer to Warburton I had that nice female voice telling me where I should be going. It was nice to know that a road was ahead in 400m and if I turned left I would be going where she wanted me to go. I thought racing with the boys across Victoria with your own voice in your head was hard enough, but with this voice as well, oh my... lucky for me I have been married before, use to go on long drives, so I'm used to ignoring that nice female voice as I travel along, nodding, with the occasional 'yes dear'...

The roads were great, lots of twists and turns. Not many cars and no Mr Plod. Nice work, Ben ☺. There were lots of leaves and bark on the side of the road, but maybe it was the whirlwind of bikes before me that cleared the way... that is until we got to the part before Warburton where there was unexpected gravel in tricky places.

I am finding that after almost a year since my dance with a roo, my riding pace has increased. I don't tense up passing every dead animal. I took Pina's advice and have become more conscious of unnecessary braking in corners. I am now more used to the lower tyre pressures and feel comfortable hitting the corners harder and lower. I find as a tail rider you ride at the back of the group and after some time the fast ones have gone and some of the more moderate riders and I form a nice chain. Then when I get to a corner and slow to an almost stop depending on when the corner markers realise it's the rear rider, and the guys I was riding with zap off. Today I found once we got going again, the corner markers could not lose me as quickly as they did in the past.

Later, when we were travelling back to Rob's, I saw Tony on the side of the road. He indicated something but I just came on him too quickly to understand. So I turned around to see if I could render assistance. Found out later it was just a zipper issue. By the time I got there he was ready to go and took off as I was turning around. By the time I was on track he was almost out of sight. I kicked my steel horse as hard as I dared and chased. At times I thought I was gaining ground. Before long we caught the tail of the crew. This meant when we hit the freeway we were all together again. I could see Ben exiting the roundabout as I entered... it looked impressive a roundabout full of bikes. Nice one, boys.

It was a good ride along the freeway. Lots of cars, tight spaces. I could see some of the crew either don't like/ or are not use to slicing through traffic. It is a different art form therefore a slightly different nerve and skill is needed than that of carving out sweepers or twisties. Cars are funny on the freeway. Some seem to change lanes and get out of your way. Others close any possible gap between them and any/everything else almost jealous of the bike's ability to make its own lane. Maybe we need a national ad campaign informing drivers on what to do when approached by motorcycles... that is, just be consistent and let us through.

Lunch at Rob's was great. The food, cool drinks, stories, TV, and aircon, ☺ nice one Rob!

Thanks all for another wonderful crash-free MSR adventure. Special thanks to Ben for leading, Rob, Ian, Paul, John and Lou for all their work at the BBQ.

Ride safe & hard.

Nigel Oman