



Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Steve Mudford	Suzuki GSXR1000
Ian Payne (leader)	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters	Suzuki GSXR1000
Raphael Alikakos	Honda CBR1000	Chris Pointon	Suzuki GSXR1000
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Tony Stegmar	Suzuki GSXR1000
Adrian MacGeraghty	Honda CBR600	Jon Hoare	Suzuki GSXR600
Jesvin George	Honda CBR600	Chrys Kioseoglou (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Suzuki TL1000S
John Willis	Kawasaki ZX10	Geoff Shugg	Suzuki DL650
Al Sobotker (2 <sup>nd</sup> ride)	Kawasaki ZX10	Neville Hoare	BMW K1200RS
Cindy Lee	Triumph 675	Michael Srb	BMW S1000RR
Rob Langer (rear)	KTM 990	Dave Mann	BMW S1000RR HP4

*20 bikes, 20 people*

The difficulty in leading a MSR ride around the Dandenong Ranges is that they are now a tourist zone which means low speed limits and lots of cars! So I had to try and find roads away from the tourists but still enjoyable from a motorcycling perspective. I had explored minor roads around the area linked up with regular MSR routes. Fortunately, this exploration showed that the first planned stop in Monbulk would be unsuitable as there would be a hot-rod show! Bugger! Now to find an alternative first stop. So with a new route planned and checked with Google maps, I felt confident that the overall ride would be to an acceptable MSR ride standard.

What a pleasing turnout we had at the servo – and it was great to see Tony out after his recent health issues. So with Rob at the rear we headed off towards Pakenham, then north to Toomuc Valley and Beaconsfield Upper. Along this section we picked up Chrys who had been trying to find our start point at the servo!

We continued along to Cockatoo, Mt Burnett and Gembrook. I had been mostly on my own up until this point but just as I entered the twisties who should come barrelling along but Steve Mudford and Dave Mann; time to extract the digit I think! Later on Steve said “I wasn’t trying to hurry you up, I was just checking how your suspension was working!” Just shows the different level of skills - while I was concentrating 100% on riding this challenging section of road, Steve was doing that **and** analysing my suspension. Awesome!

Up to Hoddles Creek and then we cut across to Woori Yallock on a newly sealed link road. From here it was to Yellingbo, Macclesfield and Monbulk where the main street was overflowing with people.

Glad I'd decided to go to the Emerald bakery, but on arriving at Emerald it too was packed with people. Just my luck the local CFA was having a fundraising fete!

Finally, after everyone had something to eat and drink, we headed off to the ride's destination of Johns Hill Lookout, venturing on the recently sealed Kallista/Emerald Road. Along the way we picked up Adrian who had missed the start. This lookout has excellent views of Port Phillip and Westernport Bays and in days gone by was a 'parking' spot for the local lads and lasses!

From Johns Hill Lookout it was down to Selby and then on to another narrow, recently sealed road which bought us out at Cardinia Reservoir. We continued on to Harkaway and then some familiar roads through Beaconsfield Upper and Cockatoo proper then out to Woori Yallock for a touch of déjà vu as we traversed some earlier ridden roads.

After Launching Place I headed across to Don Valley and up through the dirt to Panton Gap and then Badger Creek and Healesville for petrol. At this stage I noted Ben was missing but then Rob informed me that he had a puncture and would catch up once it was plugged.

I planned to lunch at the Beechworth Bakery where we were pleasantly surprised to find Lou (John's fiancé) and Ron and Julie Johnston in attendance. What wasn't so pleasant was the huge crowd of people! Turns out the bakery was celebrating its 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with clowns and entertainment. Man, I just couldn't win with my stops on today's ride!

After a leisurely lunch (mainly caused by the crowds) we headed off to Myers Creek which was a great run until we got near the Toolangi Tavern and the local 4WD Plod gave us both lights and siren, indicating we were a tad over the speed limit! Fortunately, he didn't stop anyone so we continued on to

Chum Creek then Old Healesville Road to Yarra Glen and Christmas Hills. Just near Sugarloaf Reservoir I headed north to St Andrews and then Panton Hill, Cottles Bridge and Hurstbridge.

Now it was back on to the narrow undulating local roads that dissect Kangaroo Ground and Wattle Glen, including a few kays of dirt! One unsealed stretch of Reynolds Road signposted 'Very Steep' kept the adrenalin pumping. We zig-zagged around a few more back roads before reaching Research and then on to the narrow, twisty undulating Mt Pleasant Road (pity much of it is 50 km/h) which led us all the way to Eltham and the local Shell servo where the ride finished.

Eltham was Ben's old stomping ground and he had quite a few stories of the area - like mowing the lawn of the Reynolds', of Reynolds Road fame; like the cemetery we just passed having his father buried there. Yes, I even remember lobbing in to Mrs Warden's home after a ride for a cuppa!

Goodbyes were now in order and a guide was needed for Cliff 'where-the-hell-are-we' Peters to get him on to familiar roads.

While admiring the HP4 of Dave Mann he remarked that he wouldn't be around for a while as his young son is under-going major surgery and his weekends would now be spent with the family helping with his son's recovery. I wished him all the very best and we would see him when all was okay!

Thanks to all those that came for this 'different style' of ride and also to Rob for the rear riding duties.

**Ian Payne**