

Damir Djikic	Honda CBR1000	Darryl Mills (2 nd ride)	Suzuki TLR1000
Ian Payne	Honda CBR1000	Chris Pointon	Suzuki GSXR1000
Nigel Oman	Honda CBR1000	Gadas Lansodis (1 st ride)	Suzuki GSXR600
Misho/Pina Garasi	Honda CBR1000	Byron Morrison	Suzuki GSXR600
Tim Emons	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Paul Simonson	Honda CBR1000	Michael Srb	Kawasaki ZX10
Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Tony Herman (1 st ride)	Kawasaki ZX10
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Paul Cail (3 rd ride)	Yamaha R1
Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Frank Hutchinson	Yamaha R1
Ron Johnson	Honda CBF1000	Dave Chisma	BMW F800 ST
Phil Tolsmer (1 st ride)	Honda VTR1000SP1	Peter Fisher	MV Augusta 1090
Roman Biarozza	Honda CBR600	Pierre Ong	Ducati 1098
Uyen Nghiem (1 st ride)	Honda CBR600	Peter Hill	KTM 990

I was fortunate to score two free tickets from Ha Du to attend the Isle of Man film titled “TT3D” and took advantage of these the night before the Licola ride. A great movie and I thoroughly recommend it to anyone. Thanks Ha. Unfortunately, my mates and I had a bad experience at dinner afterwards in Lygon St at the *Key on the Wall*. The food was poor and the service ordinary but I didn’t care because I was going on one of my favourite rides the next day.

I woke on Sunday morning and decided to stay in bed for another five minutes. That’s a joke and anyone who has seen TT3D will understand this and Guy Martin’s warped sense of humour.

I had suggested to Paul (Simonson), Byron and Frank that they should attend this ride as it would not disappoint.

At Berwick I noticed a few people and bikes that I hadn’t seen before. Peter Fisher’s MV 1090 was looking very trick and an immaculate R1 race rep which would later have an unfortunate ending.

Damir gives his spiel and we are off. As we leave two new riders, Uyen and Gadas, arrive. I’m a little concerned with Gadas, given she is wearing only jeans. Pina also shows concern and whispers something Italian in my ear. I’m not sure of the translation but I understood. Ben to the rescue and he goes over to explain the corner marking system, who is leading, etc.

We head down the freeway, a good time to relax in anticipation of the technical ride ahead.

Whilst corner marking on the Old Sale Road, Darryl informs me that my friend Paul Symonson has crashed back near Jindivick. He was not one hundred percent sure so I went back to check. Turns out it was Uyen. Misho had stopped to assist and suggested Uyen park the bike, given the broken state of his helmet.

I arrive in Moe, glad to see Paul Simonson in one piece. Darryl apologises for the misunderstanding. All is good. A quick chat with Dave and I’m envious of his upcoming ride day with Troy Bayliss. Ron tells me that he sampled John Willis’ Z1000. I think he was very impressed. Could we see Ron on a new bike shortly?

As we leave Moe, a fight breaks out between two locals. I want to stay a bit longer to watch but Damir has already left. Perhaps I’ll see round two at my next stop in Moe.

A quick stop in Tyres for fuel and then on to some of the best roads in Victoria. The ride over the Glen Maggie wooden bridge is always magical and the water looks inviting. Next I pass a bend that I remember very well from a previous Licola ride. Unfortunately, my memory is not a great one seeing Tony Raditsis lose the front end and destroy his immaculate Aprilia RSV1000.

I follow Paul Symonson up the mountain towards Licola but cannot keep up. All I see is long dark lines left on the road. I wish I had the confidence and skill to open the throttle that hard exiting corners. We arrive in Licola and Ben, Marc and a few others continue on up the McCalister River Road. Although I’m totally stuffed, I’m determined to continue. If someone with broken ribs can continue the ride, so can I. A few kilometres later I give in and turn around.

I have a well rested stop in Licola and strike up a conversation with Lyn. She was riding her Suzuki GSXR1000 K1 and tells me that she does not come out this way that often. Sinful, considering that she is classed as a local.

Paul Southwell informs me that Paul Cail has crashed his R1 on the way in to Licola. So on the way out we stop at the accident scene and I'm horrified to see Paul's bike down a steep embankment. Ben's email a few days later with pictures of the crash show how lucky Paul was to get away with this. I wish him all the best with his recovery.

As I leave the crash site a local drives past and yells abuse. I guess he sees bikes crashing a lot. I end up passing him a few minutes later - a legal pass of course, at the correct speed (Not!). I'm behind Misho and Pina and attempt to overtake. Something is not quite right as Misho is braking just as hard as me and carrying equal corner speed. I'm not sure how he is doing this given Pina is on the back. Very impressive riding, Misho. Or should I say, very impressive pillion skills, Pina.

The last stop is Tyres for fuel and a change of plan due to the lack of time available for the rest of the route home. Instead of going along Icy Creek Road to Noojee, we finish at the servo near Longwarry North.

Whilst parked at the servo a group of Hong Kong tourists converge on our group. One approaches Misho. "Ah, CBR1000! This is my favourite bike." Lots of photos by the tourists which I'm sure will end up on Facebook at some stage .

Overall, I had great day and so did (almost) everyone else. Thanks Damir for leading and Ian for rear riding duties.

Pierre Ong