

Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Mark Copeland	Kawasaki ZZR1100
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Marc Marais	Kawasaki ZX10
Ian Payne (rear)	Honda CBR1000	Sam Serham (1 st ride)	Kawasaki Z1000
Craig Morley	Honda VTR1000SP	Phill Hotschilt	Suzuki GSXR1300
Ron Johnston	Honda CBF1000	Billy Simpson	Suzuki GSXR1000
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Steve Mudford	Suzuki GSXR750
Rob Langer	KTM 990	Mark Edmonds (1 st ride)	Suzuki GSX600
Tony Ripepi	KTM 990	Rod Merrett	BMW S1000RR
Ed Simonis	Moto Guzi 1200S	Dave Chisma	BMW F800ST
Cindy Lee	Triumph 675	Geoff Jones (leader)	Yamaha R1

A chilly start to the day on the ride from home to Whittlesea made me wish I'd worn my winter gloves; it seems winter is here and time to switch to thick gloves, which I hate, as I lose some feel on the bars. I'm also wondering if it's time for some heated grips!

Eventually I arrive at the meeting point and am pleasantly surprised by the number of bikes/people. 22 bikes! An excellent turn out again. Even though the weather is chilly, the roads are dry and it's shaping up to be a great day!

We head off on the first leg to Seymour via Highlands. I haven't been up this way recently and the change of scenery was welcome. After carving up some good roads we all made it into Seymour to regroup at the burger place (great burgers, but a bit too early for me). I settled for a coffee from Maccas as the burger place only has instant. Some riders topped up their tanks, including me, as the next fuel stop was supposed to be Woodend.

We hit the road for Woodend via Pyalong and the bumpy Burke and Wills Track including a quick stop in Lancefield for fuel. Perhaps Geoff thought that many riders wouldn't make the full distance to Woodend.

The Mt Macedon road was practically a gravel road after road works – absolutely atrocious. I have no idea why they leave the roads in such a hazardous state.

After gingerly making our way through the gravel we stopped for lunch in Woodend. Over lunch we socialised and admired the many old bikes on display. Ben took a group photo. Seven riders left the ride here, while the rest of us headed to Meredith via Greendale and Ballan.

The last leg into Diggers Rest was eventful. I was probably three bikes behind the leader with a reasonable gap between me and Mark (first time rider on a Bandit 600) when I came around a corner only to notice a bike pulling out from the side of the road. I had to get on the brakes to avoid running into him. Even though he knew I was there and was braking heavily, he refused to get up to speed and continued to crawl along in the 100km/h zone. I was tempted to overtake to avoid him on the upcoming double solid lines, but as I got closer, my 'spider sense' noticed it was an unmarked BMW police bike with panniers and disco light fittings. So I decided against overtaking. Once he noticed I hadn't taken the bait to overtake, he took off like a bullet after Mark. After a while we came across Mark pulled up by the copper, Mark not looking happy.

We stopped at Diggers Rest where the ride ended and waited for a while, but no sign of Mark.

All in all a good ride. Condolences to Mark and thanks to Geoff for leading and Ian for tail end duties.

Marc Marais