



Yarra Ranges

Sunday 23rd September, 2012

Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Detlef Kreuzer (1 st ride)	Suzuki GSX1400
Mick Canning	Honda CBR1000	Dave Humphries (3 rd ride)	Suzuki GSX1200
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Steve Mudford	Suzuki GSXR750
Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Geoff Shugg (rear)	Suzuki DL650
Ian Payne	Honda CBR1000	Garry Boucher (1 st ride)	Kawasaki ZX14
Dave Byrne	Honda CBR1000	John Willis	Kawasaki Z1000
Simon Wastney	Honda VFR800	Ken Goederee	KTM RC8
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Tony Ripepi	KTM 990
Rob Langer (leader)	BMW R1150R	Tony Grande	KTM 990
Dave Williams	Aprilia RSV4		<i>19 bikes, 19 people</i>

Spring seems to have arrived with the trek out to Yarra Glen not the usual bitingly cold early morning start that seemed to be the case a month ago. The bike was purring away happily under me, fresh from its 24,000km service.

Into Yarra Glen ten minutes early so enough time to top up with fuel and have a chat. The crowd quickly built from about 6 bikes up to a total of 19 starters, mostly familiar faces after me riding with the Club for a couple of months or so.

A scan of the bikes indicated that the lime green brigade were absent, Adventure tourers were plentiful, and there were less of the really big 'can't have too much power' bikes this week.

Ben turns up uncharacteristically late. Some story about stopping to have a chat with a man in blue uniform on the approach into town. [Not quite. Two hi-vis TOGs and a marked divvy van in Diamond Creek, and a bunch of NetRiders with an "escort", all of which slowed progress. ...Ed.] Misho and Pina skipped past avoiding being stopped. On reading through recent back issues, this is a recurring theme.

A quick pre-ride briefing from Rob, rear-rider Geoff appointed, and we were off.

It was pleasant riding weather. Though cloudy and looking like there might be rain about, the roads were all dry for the first section. You think you know your way around this area, but the MSR seems to keep finding great new roads.

I came across a group of our guys stopped, and expecting the worst, I started looking for a bike lying on its side. Fortunately, things weren't as I first feared. Nothing much going on it seemed as people started moving on.

We waited at the level crossing for Puffing Billy to chuff through, and then into Emerald, glistening and green like the gemstone it's named after. It looked like we had just avoided a rain shower. The break in Emerald afforded time for an envious look at Dave's shiny and fairly new Aprilia RSV4R.

It was a great ride through to Warburton for fuel. A few people had been watching flashing fuel warning lights for some time, but no worries for me. The VFR can still get thirsty when pushed along, but the 22 litre tank is big compared to the 18 litre tanks for most of the bikes present.

Next followed a nice fast ride up the Reefton Spur. I got away early, ahead of most of the group, on my own for most of the way. I thought that I was not quite as slow as I used to be before the pack started arriving. Next a loose moment. I was going into the corner a too quickly, braked hard, recomposed myself, and got back into it.

Photo stop time. Numbers seem to have dropped by a few at this stage. Of those left, every other person present seemed to be a Tony.

Up until now the roads were dry. Then there was the stretch through from Cumberland Junction to Marysville: lots of rain and some hail thrown in for good measure. I slowed right down, the wet shiny stuff looking slippery. And there was a lot of tree litter on the road to contend with.

Lunch break in Marysville. I was getting a bit hungry by this stage so I went all-out bakery goodies before joining the group eating fruit and discussing the evils of sugar, food additives, etc. Ron Johnston made an appearance via car with his wife Julie.

There was a discussion on where to finish the last stage. Rob decided to stick with Plan A, through to Warrandyte. A few riders opted to head off home from Healesville.

The Black Spur was smooth compared to most of the roads we had been riding. Alas, it seemed most of Melbourne were also enjoying the trip over the Spur. I must have passed about 25 cars and one boat, though I crawled through the short straight section that earned me a month of walking and catching trams this time last year. Here comes the cavalry: John, Steve, Misho and Ben, also revelling in breaking free of the traffic and getting into clear road.

On I went beyond Healesville enjoying every moment. It's always nice to get back to where you started the ride, except in this case I wasn't supposed to be back in Yarra Glen, having missed a corner mark somewhere. Oh well. *[Simon went straight at the lights in Healesville with another group of riders, while the Club turned right up the Myers Creek Road to Toolangi. ...Ed.]*

I gave Ben, now in Warrandyte sipping a latte, a call to let him know I had accidentally departed the group.

Great ride. Thanks Rob for leading us on a good day out.

Simon Wastney