

Samrats ride report for Sun 17 March 2013

Ride leader Ken / Tail end Charlie Noel

13 of us showed up at the BP St Mary's meeting place for a quick ride around the Strathalbyn district. I thought we would take in a roughly circular route around Strath and transverse some of my favorite roads in this area. We took Main South Rd until Panalatinga where we climbed up Piggot Range Rd which has nice curves and a good road surface. Next leg was left at Clarendon Rd and a zig zag to Sugar Loaf and on to Main Rd which we followed until a right turn into Cherry Gardens Rd. At the end of this road is a right turn into Ironbark Rd which becomes Stuart Valley Rd and goes on to Stirling.

All this route is an excellent mix of curves and undulations up and down the hills and as luck would have it on this day we encountered very little traffic to contend with until we reached Stirling. A right turn at the round about and into Mount Barker Rd where we come up behind one slow car after the other going at 20 kms under the speed limit and breaking at every corner, a sure sign of an absolutely hopeless driver. A few kilometers later we were able to get past the cars and we travelled south along Aldgate – Strathalbyn Rd to Echunga and then on to Macclesfield for a toilet stop as the facilities at Strath railway station park are currently closed for renovations.

Next leg was Macclesfield to Strathalbyn which proved to be quite difficult due to the shocking state of the road surface making a tendency for the bikes to slip out on the corners as the tyres could not find enough traction on the broken up road surface. The Alexandrina Council has stated that the speed limits have been lowered on some of their roads not because of state government or police pressure but because of lack of available funds to repair the roads to a 100 kph standard. My view on this is that the Bull Creek Rd from Ashbourne to Meadows does not deserve to be reduced to 80 kph as the surface is quite good but Macclesfield to Strath is definitely unsafe at above 80 kph. It appears to me that most of the roads in the Adelaide Hills are on average in worse condition than they were 3 to 5 years ago and fixing them would do much more to reduce accidents than reducing speed limits and having harsher penalties.

Strathalbyn for morning tea then off to a circuit of Milang to Langhorne Creek to Eckert Rd then left into Carlington Rd and back to Strath all being great motor cycling roads with lots of long sweeping curves. We headed straight back through Strath and along the Goolwa Rd until reaching the southern tip of Bull Creek Rd where we turned right and headed north up this iconic motor cycling way. Some of us got past the numerous cars more easily than others and as there are long sections of no overtaking double white lines some riders at the back of the pack were probably some what frustrated but that is the luck of the draw.

At Meadows we had lunch and a friendly chit chat and decided to call it a day as we had done our 220 kms and it was only 2pm and in time to go home and watch the Moto GP or have some other fun. Thanks to all the riders who came out to play on the day and especially to Noel on the 3 wheeler who is doing a stirring job as tail end Charlie.

Ken King Samrats Coordinator