

Dave and Morris's Excellent Easter Adventure - Ride Report

David

Day 1 - Friday 6th April 2007

I was all packed up and ready to go early in the morning so I headed off to the Caltex Bolivar which was our planned departure point. I arrived there to find Bryan, Paul, Sonya, Joyce and a few others waiting for us and then Tony, Wayne and Grant rocked up as well. They were joining us on the first part of our journey to Port Wakefield. How fantastic, a SABERS escort!! When Morris finally arrived and we had all checked out his homemade gear rack we were off. Pace up the Port Wakefield Road was kept steady and very much at the speed limit as we had seen plenty of police heading north. We passed 2 motorcycle police on the way.

As we got close to Port Wakefield, the traffic became very busy and slow and we dawdled into town in 1st and 2nd gear. I pulled off to the left as I thought that if I crossed the road into the Shell service station, we would never get out again.

Morris and I said our farewells and we were soon heading off towards Kimba. The traffic thinned a lot once we passed the Yorke Peninsula turn off and there were no more traffic jams.

At Port Pirie, we stopped for fuel at the same station we had used on our Wilpena trip. After refuelling and having a drink break, we had a chat to one of the local police who was quite friendly before he darted off to catch up with his colleague who had gone after some hoons who they had already warned earlier that day to behave.

From there we continued north at a steady pace and rode through Port Augusta onward to Kimba amazed at how fantastic the scenery was. These roads were definitely not boring or straight. We decided to turn off at Iron Knob and found a shady spot to have some lunch. Homemade frittata, ala Chef. Iron Knob, dry dusty and not much happening, but I can now say I have been there.

Back onto the highway and a short while later, we were in Kimba. At the petrol station, we topped up and found that the caravan park was next door which was great.

After getting unpacked for the night and relaxing for a while we went and had tea at the roadhouse restaurant and then watched a bit of TV before retiring for the night.

Although the roads had some straight long bits, and we resisted the temptation to blast out the cobwebs, the scenery was great, the hills spectacular and some nice sweepers to break up the straight bits. Morris missed a 60cm long skinny lizard by fraction and apart from that, the only wildlife we saw the whole trip were dead kangaroos on the side of the road. My shoo roo on the front guard must have been working well, or the roos were hiding anyway.

Day 2 - Saturday 7th April 2007

After a good nights sleep, we geared up and headed off to Ceduna via Kyancutta and Wudinna and then on to Streaky Bay. The roads remained in good condition, long straight stretches broken up with nice curves and fantastic Australian scenery. We pulled into a massive petrol station in Ceduna, filled up and had lunch. After lunch we headed into Thevenard and had a look around before continuing on to Streaky Bay via Smoky Bay.

The coastal scenery is absolutely fantastic and photos were being snapped at every stop.

We pulled into Streaky Bay mid afternoon and found the caravan park, checked in and set up our tents.

The caravan park is right on the beachfront (check out the photos) and whilst there we met a guy named Rob who is travelling around Australia in a camper van towing a purpose built enclosed bike trailer with a ZZR1100 in it. What an awesome setup. Solar powered DVD, etc in the van and the bike trailer had Morris drooling big time! So we sat with Rob well into the evening chatting about South Australia and bikes and SABERS and hopefully Rob will join us on the Clare run.

Day 3 - Sunday 8th April 2007

Up early today as who can sleep in in a noisy caravan park. Tent packed up and off to Port Lincoln today via Venus Bay, Elliston and Coffin Bay. Road was good, not too much traffic and again the coastal scenery was great.

Found a great bakery in Elliston and had brunch and then onto Coffin Bay for another wander and leg stretch.

All these towns are great if you like fishing and a have a boat. Some beautiful calm waters and lots of fish around.

From Coffin Bay we headed into Port Lincoln and after fuelling up and getting some directions, we found the caravan park and our cabin. Just as we were leaving the office, Rob showed up on his ZZR1100 as he had got it out of the trailer and gone for ride up the coast a bit.

The caravan park has a great view over the sea and although it is on quite a slope it was still a nice place to stay.

Once we were unpacked and settled, Rob took us all into town in his van and we found a great pub overlooking the ocean and ate real nice steak with oysters and veggies for tea. When we returned the caravan park we helped Rob hitch the trailer back up and then called it a night. Rob had said he would join us for a while in the morning as we headed to Whyalla on the bikes so we were looking forward to that.

Day 4 - Monday 9th April 2007

Had a leisurely morning, no one up too early and by the time we were ready to go, Rob had come up to our cabin so we headed off to Whyalla. We gently cruised out of town and headed north to Tumby Bay and Cowell. Both picturesque spots and we found a bakery in Cowell so Morris could have meat pie which he had been craving for for days. At Cowell we said our goodbyes to Rob and hoped to catch up with him once he was in Adelaide for the Clare Run.

On to Whyalla and there we found another flat caravan park right on the beachfront. Here we managed to relax for the afternoon and just sit around and contemplate the amazing country side and sea side views that Australia has to offer.

Pizza for tea, delivered to the caravan park and time to sit down and watch "Mythbusters" and "Southpark" before I retired for the night because I was stuffed, leaving Morris to watch "Pizza" on TV.

We had by now ridden over 1500 kms with the final 400 kms to be tackled on the following day.

Day 5 - Tuesday 10th April 2007

A bit of a sleep in today as we had a long day ahead of us. We had packing our bikes and being ready to leave down to a fine art by now and within $\frac{3}{4}$ or an hour we were ready to roll.

I was glad to be heading towards home and my own bed, Morris would have stayed travelling for another week or year if he could have.

From Whyalla we cruised very much on the speed limit to Port Pirie where we got fuel and had a break, then all the way home to Adelaide. Nearly 400 km with 1 stop. This was the only day I was a bit sore whilst riding and was glad to get off at the end of the ride. On all the other days that had been broken up by more stops, I had felt great.

I arrived home about 2pm and put the bike to bed for the rest of the week. It got its well deserved clean the following day and boy did that screen have a few bugs on it. Thank goodness for waterless wash.

Considering we had done just under 2000 kms in about 5 days of riding, the bikes had behaved perfectly. Morris's I had expected that from as it is quite new. Mine being 12 years old and having 122,000 kms on the clock, well I just did not know. It is booked in for a major service after the Clare Run. It deserves it.

I was quite surprised at how well the ST1100 just cruised all day, never missing a beat, accelerating quickly when I wanted to overtake, stopping quickly if I needed to. If only it was not such a heavy beast to manoeuvre around car parks and caravan parks, on gravel and sand. But that is my only complaint about it.

The trip was a great one with memories and photos (see the SABERS Gallery) that will last forever. No accidents, no-one fell off whilst we were actually moving and no speeding tickets (surprisingly we rarely sped). If Morris can get his speedo adjusted, we will be able to cruise at the same indicated speed. There was a 10km/hr difference at 100km/hr, Morris's said 110km/hr and mine only 100 and neither of us will admit that it is ours that is wrong.

So in summary, a fantastic long Easter weekend and a great chance to see the South Australian country side and coast. Was a pity more people could not come.....

Morris

We set off on a Friday morning on a journey that, from my perspective has left a distinct mark, on my future traveling around oz.

The mark left on me is, I believe, the same insane one that drove very courageous and intrepid explores 150 years ago, crossing this continent.... In this instance the Eyre Peninsula. With our technology and way of communicating, during our trip, I have learned that this awesome country of oz deserves respect.

Isolation, vastness, long distances.... and our 1100cc horses... and no communication, immediate one at least.... One needs to be prepared!

On long trips I always start with a good degree of apprehension not knowing what lays ahead, but seeing all the SABERS to escort us to Pt Wakefield and wish us a good trip was good enough to boost the right confidence for this journey... thank you all I was not expected to see you on that day.

As David and I left what some of you call the boring straight road up to Port Augusta, the real majestic, openness and raw country side was appearing in front of us...
With Port Augusta behind us we started climbing toward Iron Knob this is another long straight. What we had in front of us was scenery of indescribable proportion...
Old trees, ancient rocks and hills.. Surreal... go and see for yourselves...
Around these monoliths, away from Iron Knob... the road opens up amidst, more prehistoric trees, bushes and rocks... after a short straight... the fun began!
On long sweeps one could have set the pace on 150-180kms/hr and glide through them... one handed, I did that... long, long sweeps... hundreds of meters.... Once the right one had ended was time to reposition the body on the seat and take the left one. The bike was almost "flying" through the long "corners", no gravel, no shiny grip less tar leading into the corner... just the right apex for top fun!
It was like that for most of the trip.... No my friends, the Eyre Peninsula is not a boring ride... on the contrary... it is captivating!
We had four or five major straight... and I won't bore you telling you where they are, you can ask me on one of our runs, the rest of the trip was pretty much a roller coaster of beautiful well kept, safe, roads changing from black to deep reds...
Kimba and Ceduna... we are in the never, never land, riding up high on top of a hilly country side, through farm lands and solitude.
I really liked Streaky Bay, friendly people as we encounter throughout our trip.... Good camping ground and surroundings...
We traveled through some other coastal towns, some having more appeal than others; they are isolated spots in an ocean of land... and sea. Spots of some sort of civilization in a vast land!
And then there is Coffin Bay.... 60kms from Port Lincoln, the scenery changes completely, the vegetation takes a more green look even with some pine trees along the road before the turn off to Coffin Bay... more modern and "cosmopolitan" than the other coastal towns...
After a brief stop, minutes later we reached Port Lincoln... and again we climb a bit to get to our camping ground... Port Lincoln is on a hill beautiful and green and our campsite overlooked the bay... awesome view...
The surrounding hills mean fairly twisty roads, up and down, high plains.
SABERS could have an overnigher, for the crazy ones wanted to push that far in one day...
Otherwise a long weekend, such as two nights, it is worth the trip!
Sadly we had to come back... the road to Whyalla is again, not boring... it has some straights but again it is high country so the roads follow the contour and its shapes.
Long sweeps have been major feature of this trip as far as roads go.
Again the coastal town we visited were nice and humble... worth mentioning Elliston, bakery... and Cowell bakery... we could do a run there!!!
After we left Whyalla... the scenery went back to the vast sprawl or ancient trees and land and rocks with the Southern Flinders Ranges in front of us... At the Kimba turn off I was tempted to go back and do the trip all over again... It was a fantastic journey... we met very nice people and viewed our huge backyard.
We need to do it again.

Stealth.

Easter Eyre Peninsula 1945.7 kms run.