

Riding the map of Tassie Fair Dinkum style.

You know when you have had a good ride when the group want to do another next year, that's how it went for our annual ride in Tasmania in march 2006.

After our Cape York ride last year with Dave from Fair Dinkum Bike Tours the "Horsham has beens" have wanted to do something different for this year so Dave suggested a ride in Tasmania. With Dave contacting Malcolm of Devil Trek to organised 16 riders for a 5 day tour all we had to do was get there, Dave was making the trip from Cairns with his bike he didn't want to miss out.

That was the hardest part of the trip, trying to get 16 guys organised with bikes, gear, utes is like getting a Thai massage for free, a lot of talking but you end up doing it yourself. After numerous calls and paperwork it was all set. (the wives had to step in to handle the technical arrangements, thanks girls)

We arrived on the docks in Melbourne to find out the Ulysses rally was to be held over the weekend so 4000 bikes going on the Ferry, was a long wait to get loaded. We got our rooms sorted and hit the bar. Simon "riggers" and Matt "Couta" were the last to hit the fart sack that night and they payed for it the next day.

We unloaded next morning to be met by Matt one of our guides for the ride, a good bloke who was eager to help out and get started. After a scenic drive we grouped up at the starting point where we met Clive and Malcolm the other guides for the tour.

With the first day looking like it was going to be cool we slipped on the jackets and were away. We were into the ride for 15 mins and came to what we called "hamburger hill". It claimed the first victims, as the night before proved not so good now. "Riggers" face looked like a pimple ready to burst. After numerous attempts a few decided to save themselves and rode around the bottom to cop a lot of heckling from the boys then Matt the lead rider got the first flat for the ride.

After a top days riding with a fantastic ride up the mountain on top of Ben-Lomond we were at our lodgings for the night. It was with a sigh of relief for a few that had partied too hard the night before. The accommodation was first class with a top meal. We ended up in the only bar on the mountain with Glen " no Doze" Hoffman stripping of to his themals and looked like a sack of potatoes gone wrong, luckily we were the only ones there. "Riggers" ended up with the purple helmet for his riding skills that day.

Next morning was a chilly -1 deg so we were keen to get down the hill and thaw out. We had another top days ride with a variety of different terrain. Bryan decided to take his GAS GAS for a swim and then found he had no plug spanner, so a little thinking from Dave got the Gasser going. Meals had proven excellent and Malcolm doing a mighty job on the support. The dust was a little heavy as it had been the driest month so far, and a few trees down we had to clear. That night was into the town of Scottsdale for the nightly celebrations.

After routine service the boys hit the pub, "No Doze" had the helmet cam set up so we all had a giggle at the footage. Bryan won the purple helmet for his swim, so then it was into the near misses and usual how good was I stories.

Next morning proved a little fuzzy as the beers had tasted pretty good, we soon got over that as the sand tracks sorted the boys out. The dust spread the riders out and once again there were the usual antics from some who would blast past to fill you in, all good fun. Craig "Robbo" had a few sleeps on a couple of hills his GAS GAS was looking pretty second hand with the usual battle scars. Darryl Hobbs tried out the superman over a rise to end up in a creek and snapped of trees as thick as your arm. We gave him 10 point for effort. He was a bit banged up so he sat out the rest of the day in the truck after lunch. Darren Pilgrim wanted to ride Kym Grossers CRFX 450 so Kym's parting words to Darren were "Don't crash it and take it easy", 5 mins later Darren tries to jump a bridge that wasn't there and ended up in a ditch, obviously a communication problem somewhere.

We ended up in ST Helens a pretty little town on the coast that is a popular tourist spot for our overnight stop. After a swim in the heated pool and Hobbsy visiting the local hospital for xrays it was into the bar for more war stories. We met a few locals who proved real characters and long ago neighbours.....Darren won the purple helmet for failing simple english.

Next Day was a half day with a few who wanted to ride the beach and a couple of other trails, with the others just cruising around town for a dingos breakfast (piss and a look around).

Dave helped out the local bar maid with repairs to her car so she shouted the boys to a few freebies later in the pub, On Ya Dave.

Later that night a pool party was in full swing when it was decided that sitting in the pool all night was not good for the complexion so we pulled up stumps in the early hours of the morning.

Last day we headed of into the rain and cold. It was a welcome change for some as we had sucked dust for the whole trip so far, with goggle fogging up, wet gear and cold climate was proving a bit uncomfortable. Flat tyres were the order for the day as it was rocky and hilly, this had the group spread out over a large area. Matt showed us the flying fox set up to get bikes across one of the rivers when in flood.

We arrived back at our cars after a great 5 days with top meals and Devil Trek doing a mighty job. We said our goodbye to the crew and headed of to Launceston for our last night. It was Carls birthday so to celebrate we all chipped in for some entertainment and a few beers.

Sadly like all good things they must end so thanks to Dave from Fair Dinkum Bike Tours and the Devil trek crew for a memorable ride. Next year 2007 a Fair Dinkum Tour in conjunction with Lyndon Heffernans Detour at Bateman's bay sound like us.