



PART 2

Brisbane to Melbourne

DECEMBER 2015 | 7 DAYS

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MICK GRAY PICKED ME UP FROM BRISBANE AIRPORT AND TOOK ME STRAIGHT TO MY BIKE AND I COULDN'T WAIT TO GET STARTED ON MY SECOND TRIP. MICK WENT TO WORK AND I LOADED UP AND WENT TO START THE BIKE AND IT WOULDN'T START. BUGGER, WHAT NOW. I CHECKED THE CARBURETTOR AND FUEL AND THAT SEEMED FINE. THERE WAS NO SPARK SO I CHANGED THE PLUG. STILL NO GO. I STARTED PUSHING IT DOWN THE ROAD TO A GARAGE NEARBY. FOR SOME REASON I TOOK THE KEY OUT OF THE IGNITION TO OPEN THE TOP PANNIER. WHEN I PUT THE KEY BACK IN I THOUGHT I'D TRY IT ONE MORE TIME AND IT STARTED STRAIGHT AWAY. WHAT A SURPRISE TO FIND THAT ONE OF THE KEYS DIDN'T HAVE A CHIP IN IT SO I THREW THAT KEY AWAY.

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Finally, I'm off heading to Melbourne and there was only one particular place I wanted to visit and that was Mount Panorama, Bathurst. Nothing else was really planned except riding as many dirt roads as I could and going through National Parks.

I had Tenterfield in my sights with lots of nice dirt roads on the way and the countryside was certainly different from my first trip around Queensland. The first National Park was Washipool National Park then Guy Fawkes River National Park to a small place called Nowendoc.

Barrington Tops National Park turned out to be the most exciting riding with real narrow back country roads and rain forest trees. I found an awesome loop in here from Scone to Moonan Flats and that's where I came across my first wild dog running down the road in front of me. From there I went across to Barrington, down to Forbsdale then back across to Scone. At one stage I thought I was totally lost and going to run out of fuel as the road started to get narrow, then into a farm track and across a broken concrete ford. Eventually I came across a road sign hidden behind an overgrown tree. What a relief, as I was a bit worried then.



Plan your trip
thoroughly with fuel
stops marked and check
weather conditions in
that area in advance.





South to Denman through the Wollemi National Park towards Bathurst. Every so often I'd find a rough firebreak road that was a little more challenging just because I could. Too bad if I broke down as I'm the worst mechanic in the world and no-one would know where I was. Before entering into a National Park I would text Steve in Emerald so at least someone knew roughly where I was. I realise now that I was very irresponsible not having a Spot Tracker or Sat Phone. One of my mates said that Carol had enough wood for 10 years so when she got cold she may wonder where I was.



Motorbikes are a very good conversation topic wherever you are. I remember having a cuppa at Mussellbrook when this old bloke (Alistair 67) came up to me and said, "Where are you off to young man." I said "I'm heading south to Melbourne on dirt roads." He left and came back five minutes later on a new BMW and said, "follow me young man and we'll ride some good dirt roads heading South." One hour later we stopped at an intersection and he pointed me in the right direction. People are always coming up telling you about their trips and giving good advice where not to go and what to look out for. I arrived at Mt Panorama just before dark and found that the track is always open to ride around so off I went to check out why Holdens always kick arse here. The track was a lot steeper than it looked on TV. I set up my camp site at the top of the hill where it said "no camping." Kiwis can't read. Woke up at 5am looking over Bathurst, and then did another few laps of the track. I could only do 50 kms per hour through the dipper and the V8 cars do 90-100 kms per hour.



Mt Panarama

From Bathurst I headed south on more dirt roads to Rockly, Burruga and on to Crockwell then across the Hume Highway to Australia's capital, Canberra.

It was a stinking hot day and I wondered what the hell I was doing in a city again. I had only one destination here and that was Parliament House. I started riding up the steps until a security guard came running down towards me. I turned around and went back down which was handy for him as he ran out of puff and lost interest in me. Ten minutes in Canberra was long enough for this country boy and I couldn't wait to get back to country roads, so this time south bound through the Kosciuszko National Park. First, I had to stop at the park headquarters to get a permit to camp overnight. This was another beautiful ride but too hot to stay still. Twisty dirt roads ideal for the Transalp and me so Cooma was the next stop where I found a nice river to camp beside. Put up my tent, heated up a tin of stew, made a cuppa tea and watched the sun go down thinking that life doesn't get better than this. I tend to wake up before sunrise so I was packed up ready to ride by 6 am. I decided





to go towards the coast for a change. There looked like a good road between the Deua National Park and the Wadhilliga National Park to Bodalla then down to Erobodalla and back across to Cooma. It rained again at the top of the park with visibility not very good and I was cold. Roads became very greasy but I was still enjoying the ride.

I'm pleased I did a little research before taking on this trip by working out fuel stops and my Camps Australia book is a must. Distances between towns are not too far in this State, however, I have got a habit of taking alternative routes just for the sake of it.

Thredbo is a large Ski Resort and obviously high up in the mountains and again it was raining and the roads slippery. I was going to camp up there but due to the extreme weather I thought I'd keep going down the other side hoping it would get warmer. I made it to Corryong and found a nice camping ground on the river that had just been prepared for a large music festival the following weekend. An honesty box with a \$10 charge was well worth it.

From Corryong I headed down through the Alpine National Park on nice winding roads that seemed to go on for miles. I loved this part until more rain came and I decided to hit the Bitumen on the Great Alpine Road so I could open the throttle to Bairnsdale and towards my final destination at my little brothers (Alan) house in Moe which is 138 kms east of Melbourne City where my bike was to stay until my next trip.

This trip has been absolutely amazing and I just can't wait to do my next adventure on my Transalp.



1. Thredbo Ski Resort with an elevation of 672 metres.
2. Tanjil Bren on Mt Baw Baw, Victoria.
3. Flooded Road.