



Lenniesrus Ride with Dual Purpose Adventures 25/26/27 February 2011

The Ride to Tontel- what?

To do an adventure bike trip is always cool, and Michael's Dual Purpose Adventure trip to Lenniesrus in Tonteldoos (tontel-where you might ask?) yes Tonteldoos, or translated to "Tinderbox" in Engels was one to look forward to. It's a smart little almost-village just west of Dullstroom nestling in a long valley between the hills.

We all rocked up on one by one on Friday morning to Roxy's in Bronkies, until the line of bikes packed for a trip grew nice and long out front. Some of the guys straggled in wearing wet gear, a little bedraggled after the heavy shower of rain passing over Jozi had caught them out. But that was the last of the wet for the weekend and the weather thereafter was great for the most part. But high spirits prevailed as the guys met old buddies or made new ones as hands were shook and faces crinkled in smiles.

Michael is an old fox when it comes to knowing the back roads of this country and he took us out on a scenic series of dirt roads that made for great riding, heading out north and east past Loskop dam game reserve where we could hang on the cable and feel the rush at the front of the group or just cruise along contentedly at the back as the whim took us. With twelve bikes in the group it flowed along like a sinuous metal cobra scything across the countryside, headlights shining like the sun's reflection off the reptile's scales.

Everyone is always keen on the first part of any ride, and we didn't hang about as we enjoyed the freshness of the green countryside after the recent good rains, blasting along the road watching the trees and kopjes flashing by. The part I always love is when we leave the tar for the first time, and gun the bike's motor to make the transition between tar and dirt into a little leap of unbounded enjoyment, then revel in the feeling of the dirt under the tyres for the first time. Now all of a sudden, an adventure bike is on home ground, doing what it should be doing, and a good handful of throttle to roost some dirt and feel the back slide and drift a bit always bring a grin to my face.

To put it mildly, I was well pleased to be riding along with Michael and the rest of the gang on this fine morning.



The road, sweet as it seemed, lay in wait with a mud-slicked trap where the water had dammed up leaving a thin layer of modder-snot lying on a concrete-hard surface that flung Michael down the road in a blink of an eye, before taking Leon out as well. I was just plain dof, and seeing the guys waving excitedly slowed down to what I thought was a tortoise pace but saw my butt as well as the ice-rink shrugged off my full knobbies with disdain and tossed me into the dirt. Shit happens, so one just deals with it and rides on.

We had a beaut ride along a winding dirt road that tracked through the mountains, blasting along the sweeping curves and sudden bends with engines singing the wild songs of freedom to the rushing wind. Life is sweet when the road lies ahead like this, beckoning one on inexorably to explore the hazy distances. If ever you have ridden a bike down the long and winding road then you will know this feeling that brings a quickening of the pulse and a glint to the eye as the gravel unfolds ahead.

With a towering cumulo-nimbus storm-cloud sputtering and flashing its malevolent fang-strikes at the earth below its darkened belly we dropped into the Stoffberg valley and circled the storm as we headed for our camp at Lenniesrus. The blue-black storm clouds obligingly surged away down the valley leaving us to enjoy the exhilarating ride in clear air up the narrow dirt road that snaked up the hillsides toward

the Tonteldoos road. Here the road soon turned to glutinous mud for the final few kilometres in the wake of the rain and we gingerly tip toed along in the dying rays of the late afternoon sun to the turn off to the camp. Christa and Tanya in the 'Cruiser pulling the trailer had preceded us up the rocky trail that led to the camp perched on the crest of the hill, and liberally coated the going with slippery red mud that had the guys concentrating hard for the last few hundred metres. The girls in the Cruiser, having taken a shortcut had had a torrid time getting up the dirt from the other direction in the aftermath of the torrential rain as the road became a mudbath and they had struggled along in four-wheel drive and low ratio to grind their way out and up the hill. Well done to them in the difficult conditions for doing it all with a smile!



Bikes in the bush, the trail hidden by the long summer grass

The camp on the crest of the hill at Lenniesrus



Tired, thirsty and hungry the guys trickled into camp one by one, and here lay a very pleasant surprise in store for them. The camp is a group of rustic huts under shady trees set in an ancient stonewalled cattle kraal dating back a couple of centuries, with a very comfortable spot around the fire to rest weary bones and klap a few ales. Here Michael and Christa's super smooth organisation came to the fore, as a delicious supper was produced in seemingly a few minutes while all around the fire the guys got stuck into a few cold ones and chilled out after the good ride. I must say I was particularly impressed with this easy and relaxed yet very efficient way in which the Dual purpose Adventures weekend progressed, and I can't wait to do another trip with them. Michael has got the handle of how to do this the right way, and it was a real pleasure for me to be there as part of his group.

The Dullstroom Drift along the railway line



Saturdays riding was sublime as we explored the surrounding country side in our own time, checking out some nice routes and places, as well as sampling the delights of Roos Senekal and Dullstroom before making our way back to camp much later for another really great evening around the fire. After a nice and leisurely start to Sunday morning we were on the road again to wend our way back towards the bright lights and home once more.

Thanks to a great bunch of guys for a great weekend's riding; I hope I get the pleasure of doing another with you boys again one day.

Joe