

The big one – The JD 2013.

A personal look at the JD by Beeza Geeza, Andy Stead

I know you are all wondering how big Beeza Geeza and little Beeza Geeza (Tarryn Rice) went on this significant run?? Well wonder no more – all will be revealed:

We went VERY badly. In fact suffice it to say that other than the prestige and fame of participating, it is probably the worst rally from a results POV ever. I mean I know I am a no hoper, but little Beeza Geeza is always in with a chance and assuming no break downs she could one day achieve fame.

Before I get into this let me add that this year I was also fettling a Sunbeam model 9 for an Aussie bloke, and a Zenith Super 8 for a pom. No names no pack drill, but it was a lot of work, and even though assisted once again by the ever helpful and skillful PDK some things obviously slipped through the net.

From the start everything good. All away on time and the route out quite trouble free. Little Beeza Geeza out front with the three of us tailing in formation. All fine until that Garage stop – you know the one that said “Leave garage turn left. Traffic lights CSO and THREE SECONDS LATER turn left”. Three seconds later turning left would have taken you straight into the bushes without even a footpath to assist – my reading of route schedules has obviously not improved.

In any event I digress. At said garage getting ready to go after two pies (or was it three??) and a coke, and BANG – the clutch cable parts way at the handlebar control. Lots of help and offers of other cables but nothing fits. In the end the Aussie bloke appears with a cut-off 15amp plug ends and eureka it fits. Lost about 30 mins here I think.

Off again, losing another 10 minutes as well for seemingly none existent turn left road, and head for Volksrust as fast as trusty V twin can manage. Lots of slow times here because of road conditions, but in spite of this reckon I touched 80kph at times. On this same stretch Zenith Super 8 loses its rear extremely fancy white tire, so it's on the trailer for poor Pom.

At Newcastle both Beeza Geeza's and the Aussie still going. Frantic repair of Zenith Super 8 fancy white tire, and also ready to go the next day.

Day two – a disaster. Going down a long hill near Colenso see little Beeza Geeza on side of road. “The bikes got no power” she wails - so out with the tool box and try and determine power loss. Note that engine is covered in oil and won't start. After much fiddling starts but belching white smoke and pushing oil out of everywhere, so not a quick fix. Sadly – with much weeping – on the trailer.

Back on trusty V twin; start up, but now V Twin gone in sympathy with the Empire Star, and also no power. Continue for a while and now popping out the exhaust too. No power a simple one – top of carb came off, but popping a mystery until find that it coming through the insulator of the front plug which is clearly on its way out. Can't get plug out so continue to Escourt where hope to find a workshop that can assist.

Bloody hell – have you ever been into workshops in Escourt – DON'T – they are all a total disgrace – so no help there. Decide can make Notty's so off again. See that Zenith Super 8 is back on the trailer again – another blown back tube. I tell you those clincher fancy white tires might look good BUT they don't stay on the rim too well.

So at the start on day three it's just the Aussie bloke and me and guess what – it's raining. Have I ever told you that the trusty V twin hates water? I mean REALLY hates it. You see it has a protruding mag at the front with # 1 cylinder's pick up pointing out straight into the rain. “Why haven't you put a cover over it” I hear you ask?? Well I have been meaning to for 10 years but somehow never got around to it.

After three clicks it's on to one cylinder as expected and as a 385cc it aint so hot. SO, stop on road with no verge and pouring rain and try and fix. Got it on two pots again but only for another couple of k's, and back to being a 385cc – this happened a couple more times and then enough already and on to friendly sweep Steve's trailer.

SO at the end it's just the wretched Aussie that finishes, but I suppose since Lat came all that way it's justified, but having an Aussie beat you still tends to piss one off a bit.

End of story?? Not quite. Whilst the Zenith Super 8 could not be helped (28” white tires anyone – contact Mark at London Bridge??) I managed to get the V twin and little Beeza Geeza's bike going at the finish and we rode in to the City hall with all the rest of the stout fellows. We could almost pretend that we had finished the rally, but we hadn't – maybe next centenary year??.

A great event. Some fantastic people both riding and organising. Thank you thank you thank you – and see you all next year.



Tarryn Rice, Andy's daughter, arriving in Newcastle on her BSA Empire Star



In the rain. Andy Stead and his BSA V-Twin